

**STATE SOIL CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
MINUTES
TRENTON, NEW JERSEY
MARCH 9, 2020**

The March meeting of the State Soil Conservation Committee was called to order by Chairwoman Monique Purcell at 9:41 A.M. at Health and Agriculture Building in Trenton, New Jersey. Mr. Minch stated that the Open Public Meetings Act requirements have been met. Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. adequate notice of this meeting was provided by giving the time, date, and location and to the extent known the agenda of this meeting. At least 48 hours in advance this notice has been posted on the third-floor bulletin board, Health and Agriculture Building in Trenton; mailed to The Star Ledger, the Courier Post and filed with the Office of Secretary of State.

The Flag Salute was recited.

Call of the Membership Roll indicated the following:

Members Present Associate Members and Others

Monique Purcell

Joe Lomax

Matt Ward

Diane Gray

Dr. Stephanie Murphy (rep R. Goodman)

Ray Cywinski (conference call)

Sylvia Kovacs

Tony DiLodovico

Mike Rigolizzo

John Kocubinski

Mike Haberland (rep. B. Schilling)

Cristin Mustillo, Deputy Attorney General

Frank Minch, Executive Secretary

John Showler, SSSC, NJDA

Tim Fekete, SSSC, NJDA

M. DePalma-Hunterdon SCD

Dave Reilly, C/A SCD

Dennis Dougherty, Camden SCD

Ines Zimmerman, Freehold SCD

Christine Raabe, Ocean SCD

Glen Van Olden, HEP SCD

Nick Saumweber, USDA, NRCS

Theodora Wang- Mercer SCD

Lily Mehl- Ex. Dir, NJACD

Jim Hill- Hunterdon SCD

MINUTES OF JANUARY 13, 2020 MEETING

On motion by Mr. Ward, second by Mr. Lomax, the minutes of the January 13, 2020 meeting were approved. Dr. Murphy abstained

CHAIRWOMAN'S COMMENTS

1. Secretary Fisher could not chair the meeting today due to a conflict.
2. Due to the Corona Virus all international travel has been suspended. All approved domestic and "in" state travel must be re-approved.
3. The budget process is ongoing.
4. The Department is working through the process of backfilling two vacant positions in the Division of Agricultural & Natural Resources.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY'S REPORT

Mr. Minch reported on the following:

1. **Appeal- Maus Property, HEP SCD-** The appeal scheduled for this meeting has been postponed by the applicant due to a family emergency. The appeal hearing will take place at the April meeting. This would be well within the timeframe to render a decision. In light of the appellant postponing the appeal hearing, Ms. Kovacs questioned when the appeal timeclock actually begins for the appeal. A lengthy discussion was held. Ms. Purcell indicated that the timeframes are negotiable since the applicant is the one that requested a postponement of the hearing. Mr. Ward (HEP Supervisor) went on record as stating that since the appeal concerns the HEP denial of an application, he will recuse himself from voting but, when open for public comment, he retains the right to comment.
2. **SCD Audits-** Handouts were provided to SSCC members regarding district audits. Summaries will be provided to the districts at the Regional District meetings. Mr. Ward emphasized the need for a protocol to identify any district in financial distress before it's too late. A discussion was held regarding district reserves.
3. **Camden SCD Supervisor Appt.-** On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Mr. Ward, Valerie Brown was appointed to fill a vacancy on the Camden SCD Board. Mr. Rigolizzo recused himself and Mr. Haberland abstained.
4. **Upper Delaware SCD Supervisor Appointments-** On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Mr. Rigolizzo, the following individuals were appointed to the Upper Delaware SCD Board: Wayne Jarvis, Sylvia Kovacs, Marilyn Miller Heath, Ben Jorritsma and Natalie Burger. Ms. Kovacs was absent from discussion and recused herself from voting.

SOIL EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL ACT

1. **Keegan Landfill-** This operating landfill is within the jurisdiction of the NJ Sports and Exposition Authority regarding jurisdictional boundaries. Presently the landfill is moving toward closure. The HEP SCD would like to inform the SSCC Board of the potential future issues regarding the closure of the landfill. The HEP SCD will keep the State Committee apprised.

- 2 **Engineering Report-** Mr. Showler provided a brief engineering report regarding his activities including several sites in Warren County that have basin and outfall structure issues and training for Ocean SCD staff. In addition, Mr. Showler also reported on a dam safety course he attended in Maryland and the revised DEP Stormwater Regulations

CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Mr. Minch provided the following update:

1. **Poster Contest-** All district wide winning posters should be sent to Trenton for statewide competition and judging.
2. **NJ Envirothon-** To date, 25 teams are registered.

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE

Ms. Gray provided an update on NRCS programs and, also, reported on the following:

1. Ms. Gray will be the Acting State Conservationist until sometime in June.
2. Michelle Pedano is the new District Conservationist in the Vineland Service Center.
3. NRCS is in the process of backfilling the Public Affairs Specialist vacancy.
4. Under Secretary Bill Northey will be in NJ tomorrow. He will be visiting several farm sites in the state.

NJ ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

Mr. Dougherty reported on the activities of the NJACD including the following:

1. Lily Mehl was introduced as the new NJACD Executive Director. Ms. Mehl is in the process of Updating the NJACD website and is also coordinating the “Fly In” meeting in Washington DC Later this month.
2. There are two teams from NJ set to travel to Washington DC for the “Fly In” on March 25th.
3. Regional supervisor meetings are scheduled to be held on the following dates: March 18th (central), March 31st (south) and April 2nd (north).

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (NACD)

Mr. Cywinski and Mr. Lomax reported on the following:

- 1 The annual NACD meeting.
- 2 The Cape Atlantic and Morris SCDs have applied for Technical Assistance Grants.
- 3 NJ serves on the NACD Human Resources Committee and the By-Laws Committee.

RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Mr. Haberland reported on the following:

1. A new County Agent was hired for Cumberland County. He will be working with commercial agriculture issues.
2. Ongoing searches are being conducted to fill County Agent vacancies in Cape May and Salem Counties.
3. NJ Agricultural Extension has formed a hemp working group which has been tasked with research, outreach, chemistry and production of this commodity.

SCHOOL OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

Dr Murphy reported on the following:

- 1 Numerous personnel changes within the university including the following:
Dr. Robert Barchi is stepping down as President of Rutgers University effective July 1, 2020. The new President will be Jonathan Holloway. Dr. Holloway is presently Provost at Northwestern University. Dr. Robert Goodman is stepping down as Executive Director of NJAES and Executive Dean of Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences. Dr. Goodman will remain on staff. Dr. Brad Hillman is stepping down as Director of NJAES. Dr. Hillman's replacement is Dr. Wendy Cohick.
- 2 Various upcoming meetings and events including Ag. Field Day (April 25th).
- 3 Various projects Dr. Murphy is working on including a review of Nutrient Management Standards and a review of fertilizer calibrations.

PUBLIC AND AGENCY COMMENTS

1. Ms. Raabe suggested reviewing the DEP NJ Stormwater Management Rules which are presently published for comment. She has come across some inaccuracies and will coordinate comments with John Showler.
2. Mr. Van Olden requested ID badges for new HEP SCD employees.

On motion by Mr. Lomax, second by Mr. Ward, Ms. Purcell adjourned the meeting at 11:23 AM. All actions were by unanimous vote unless otherwise noted.

The next SSCC meeting is scheduled for April 13, 2020. The location is the Health and Agriculture building in Trenton.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Minch
Executive Secretary, SSCC