

SUSSEX COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Board of Supervisors Meeting
February 26, 2014 - 4:30 PM
District Office-186 Halsey Road, Newton, NJ

NEXT MEETING: April 23, 2014 – 4:30 p.m.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT: Barbara Rosko, Fred Hough and Philip Deacon. Late: Matthew Fox. (4:40 p.m.)

SUPERVISORS ABSENT: James Kilduff

OTHERS PRESENT: Clifford R. Lundin-District Manager, Dan Mull, District Conservationist, USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Chairman Rosko called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m. declaring that adequate notice had been provided in accordance with the NJ Open Public Meetings Act. The members joined in in a salute to the flag.

ROLL CALL: A call of the roll confirmed that a quorum was present.

MINUTES:

On motion of Mr. Hough seconded by Mr. Deacon and properly carried on roll call vote, the Board approved the minutes of the regular meeting of January 22, 2014. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Hough-yes, Mr. Deacon-yes, and Mrs. Rosko-yes.

CORRESPONDENCE:

On motion of Mr. Deacon, seconded by Mr. Hough and properly carried, the attached correspondence list was reviewed and approved for the files. Special attention was given to the highlighted items.

TREASURER’S REPORT:

Monthly Report: On motion of Mr. Deacon, seconded by Mr. Hough and properly carried, the Treasurer’s Report was approved, subject to audit, by roll call vote as follows: Mr. Deacon-yes, Mr. Hough- yes and Mrs. Rosko- yes. The Treasurer’s Report included the following: Income Statement for the Eight Month Period ending February 28, 2014, Cash Disbursements-Check Register for the period of January 22, 2014 to February 26, 2014, Cash Receipts Journal for the period of January 22, 2014 to February 26, 2014, Cash Account Balance Report as of February 26, 2014, Consulting Engineer-Cash Disbursements Journal for the period from July 1, 2013 through February 26, 2014, General Ledger Trial Balance as of February 26, 2014 and Balance Sheet dated February 28, 2014.

Mr. Lundin reviewed the overall financial report. With few exceptions, all expenditure accounts are either within budget or under budget. However for the first 8 months of this fiscal year, income has fallen approximately \$80,000 under projections. Despite spending cuts, as of this date, for FY2014, the District has a negative balance of approximately

\$63,000.00. Approximately \$20,000 of this would be offset by administrative fees earned but not credited from the performance bond account. As of the close of FY2013, the District chapter 251 reserves had a balance of \$285,000 which is designed to be used to address any deficits. The Board agreed to discuss this matter further in the Executive Session later in the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Chapter 251:

Monthly Report: On motion of Mr. Hough, seconded by Mr. Deacon and properly carried, the attached 251 Project Card Summary Sheet dated February 26, 2014, the Project Status Report dated February 26, 2014 and the Performance Bonds Remaining Report as of February 28, 2014 were approved. The motion included authorization for the chairman to certify the plans listed under the report heading: "Projects Certified 1/22/2014 to 2/26/2014"

Exempt Municipality Reviews: The SSCC requires the District to conduct an annual review of the performance of the exempt municipalities. Of the five remaining exempt municipalities within Sussex County, the District administers the program for three: Fredon Township, Frankford Township and Vernon. Those three municipalities are therefore automatically rated as "Satisfactory." Mr. Lundin and Mr. Hansen met with Benjamin Jones of Golden and Moran who administers the program for Andover Township on February 20, 2014. The review consisted of a review of the quarterly reports, the review of the approved plans, and a random windshield survey of sites within the Township. Mr. Lundin recommended that the Township also be rated as Satisfactory. The Green Township review is currently scheduled for March 12, 2014. Two earlier meetings had to be postponed due to snow events. On motion of Mr. Hough, seconded by Mr. Deacon and properly carried the Board approved the Exempt Municipality reviews for Andover, Fredon, Frankford and Vernon.

Mr. Fox arrived at this time.

Problem sites: Mr. Lundin briefed the Board on the following sites:

- 1) St Jude the Apostle Church Expansion- HY259: There is no change since the January meeting. Construction of the site improvements has been temporarily halted due to the winter conditions.
- 2) Maggio Property- Wantage. The District is still awaiting the application that was due to be submitted by December 1, 2013. A follow-up letter was sent to Mr. and Mrs. Maggio on January 17, 2014. One additional follow-up letter will be

sent. If the owner fails to comply, Mr. Lundin is authorized to seek judicial or other relief as necessary.

- 3) Whispering Woods- VR-748. The applicant has abandoned the site. The remaining undeveloped lots in the development are owned by the lender. The roads and drainage have been deeded to the Homeowner's Association. Major work remains to be completed. The Township's bond is insufficient to complete all work. The Township is still developing a proposal to address the most significant issues. Mr. Lundin indicated that within the past month, he successfully located the former owner, Mr. Robert Handler, who indicated that he had no objections to the lapsing of the certification.
- 4) Wantage Excavating-Wantage. This is an uncertified operation that was somehow overlooked in the transfer of the SESC program from Wantage to the District. Any prior Township certifications have lapsed. Mr. Lundin met with one of the owners of the site on February 24, 2014 to review the District requirements.

Statewide Trends: Mr. Lundin provided the Board with the most recent Quarterly Summary report from the SSCC. SESC activity is clearly increasing in the eastern and more urbanized counties of NJ. Sussex and Warren Counties continue to show little or no new construction activity. Mr. Deacon noted that Builders Association statistics are showing a similar trend.

Agriculture-NRCS: Dan Mull, the District Conservationist from the USDA-NRCS Hackettstown office was in attendance.

- 1) NRCS Report: Mr. Mull provided the Board with the attached NRCS report dated February 2014. There are 49 active NRCS contracts within Sussex County representing assistance in the amount of \$1,160,009.86 on 1,719.7 acres. NRCS is currently evaluating 1 AMA application, 25 EQIP applications and 4 WHIP applications. Mr. Mull requested Board approval of one Farm Conservation Plan for a property located in Frankford Township and relative to an EQIP application. The Board approved the report on a motion by Mr. Deacon seconded by Mr. Hough and properly carried.
- 2) Cooperators: No new applications for Conservation Assistance have been received since the last meeting.
- 3) Farm Bill: Mr. Mull provided the Board with an overview of the recently adopted Federal Farm Bill. The conservation title emerged intact. The current WHIP

- program will be combined into EQIP and the various conservation easement programs will be consolidated.
- 4) Forest Habitat for Wildlife: Mr. Mull distributed information relative to a new NRCS initiative aimed at Forest Habitat Improvement. The program partners include NJ Audubon, USF&W, NJF&W, NWTF and NFWF. A meeting is scheduled for February 27, 2014 in Augusta.
 - 5) Soil Disturbances on Preserved Farms: Mr. Lundin distributed information received from NJDA relative to a recent NJ Superior Court case wherein the conversion of 14 acres of farmland to greenhouse use was found to be in violation of the farmland preservation deed of easement. The Board asked Mr. Lundin to obtain a copy of the actual opinion.

State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) Report: Mr. Minch was unable to attend on behalf of the SSCC.

Education:

- 1) 2014 Poster Contest: The deadline for entry to the District is March 17, 2014. This year's national theme is "Dig Deeper-The Mysteries of the Soil." The brochure is also available on the District's website.
- 2) 2014 Northern NJ Envirothon Field Day Training. Mr. Lundin reported that at this point only one team has registered to the Field Day training scheduled for Thursday, April 10, 2014 at Swartswood State Park.
- 3) 2014 Envirothon: The next planning meeting for the 2014 Envirothon is scheduled for March 6. Mr. Lundin and Mrs. Rosko will attend. The 2014 National Envirothon has been cancelled due to funding issues. The 2014 NJ Envirothon will be held at the NJ School of Conservation on May 2 and 3, 2014.

Meetings:

- 1) Sussex and Warren County Construction Code Officials: Mr. Lundin indicated that he had appeared as the guest speaker at a meeting of all Sussex County Construction Code Officials held on February 6, 2014. Mr. Deacon moved seconded by Mr. Hough to authorize Mr. Lundin to become a member of the group. The annual dues are \$35.00 with an initiation fee of \$10.00. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Deacon-yes, Mr. Hough-yes, Mr. Fox-yes and Mrs. Rosko- yes.

- 2) Northern Regional State Park Service: Mr. Lundin reported that he met with Steve Ellis the Northern Regional State Park Superintendent on February 10, 2014 to discuss items of mutual concern.
- 3) NJACD Northern Regional Supervisors Meeting. The NJACD has scheduled the northern regional supervisors meeting for March 25, 2014 at Mattar's outside Hackettstown. Mr. Hough, Mr. Fox and Chairman Rosko will attend.
- 4) NACD 2015 National Meeting: Mr. Lundin reported that the 2015 NACD National Conference has been scheduled for February 1-4 in New Orleans.

Common Waters Initiative: No new items to report.

North Jersey RC&D: No new items to report.

NEW BUSINESS:

2014 Supervisor Nominations: The sole Supervisor with a term expiring in 2014 is Mr. Deacon. A preliminary review indicates that he has met all requirements for reappointment and that he is interested in being nominated for the position. Mrs. Rosko appointed the following Nominating Committee: Chairman Donna Traylor, Freeholder Richard Vohden, Glen Vetrano, Margaret McGarrity and Nathaniel Sajdak.

March Meeting: Mr. Deacon moved, seconded by Mr. Hough and properly carried to cancel the regular March meeting. In the event of emergent issue, the Chairman is authorized to call a special meeting.

NJ Audubon: NJ Audubon has requested the District endorse an application it is submitting to the UDF&W for funds under the Delaware River Restoration Fund. Assistance is sought for riparian restoration projects in three sub-watersheds including the Upper Paulinskill. The Board had insufficient information to make a decision at this time.

Proposal to Sussex County: Mr. Lundin indicated that he has had preliminary discussions with Eric Snyder and with Dennis McConnell relative to the possibility of the District performing the annual inspections of preserved farms (formerly done by Donna Traylor.) The Board was generally in support of this effort and provided Mr. Lundin with guidance for the proposal.

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New Business (Continued)

Workman's Compensation Insurance Audit: Mr. Lundin reported that we have been notified by our insurance carrier of a Workman's Compensation Audit to be conducted on March 12, 2014.

PUBLIC SESSION:

Chairman Rosko opened the meeting to the public at 5:30 p.m. There being no one desiring to speak, the meeting was closed to the public at 5:31 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mr. Deacon moved, seconded by Mr. Fox to go into Executive Session for the discussion of personnel matters. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Deacon-yes, Mr. Fox-yes, Mr. Hough-yes and Mrs. Rosko-yes. The Board returned from Executive Session at 5:45 p.m. Mr. Deacon-moved, seconded by Mr. Hough to ratify the personnel actions authorized during the Executive Session. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Deacon-yes, Mr. Fox-yes, Mr. Hough-yes and Mrs. Rosko-yes.

ADJOURN:

The Meeting was adjourned at 5:50 p.m. on motion of Mr. Hough seconded by Mr. Deacon and properly carried.

Respectfully submitted for Fred Hough, Secretary/Treasurer

By Clifford R. Lundin, District Manager