

**SUSSEX COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Board of Supervisors Meeting

April 23, 2014 - 4:30 PM

District Office-186 Halsey Road, Newton, NJ

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**NEXT MEETING:** May 28, 2014 – 4:30 p.m.

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**SUPERVISORS PRESENT:** Barbara Rosko, Philip Deacon, Matthew Fox and James Kilduff

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**SUPERVISORS ABSENT:** Fred Hough

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

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Chairman Rosko called the meeting to order at 4:43 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. Deacon seconded by Mr. Fox and properly carried on roll call vote, the Board approved the minutes of the regular meeting of February 26, 2014. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Deacon-yes, Mr. Fox-yes and Chairman Rosko-yes. Mr. Kilduff abstained because he was not in attendance at the meeting.

On motion of Mr. Deacon seconded by Mr. Fox and properly carried on roll call vote, the Board approved the minutes of the Executive Session meeting of February 26, 2014. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Deacon-yes, Mr. Fox-yes and Chairman Rosko-yes. Mr. Kilduff abstained because he was not in attendance at the meeting.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

On motion of Mr. Kilduff, seconded by Mr. Deacon 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. Kilduff and properly carried, the Treasurer's Report was approved, subject to audit, by roll call vote as follows: Mr. Deacon-yes, Mr. Fox- yes, Mr. Kilduff-yes and Chairman Rosko- yes. The Treasurer's Report included the following: Income Statement for the Ten Month Period ending April 30, 2014, Cash Disbursements-Check Register for the period of February 26, 2014 to April 23, 2014, Cash Receipts Journal for the period of February 26, 2014 to April 23, 2014, Cash Account Balance Report as of April 23, 2014, Consulting Engineer-Cash Disbursements Journal for the period from July 1, 2013 through April 23, 2014, General Ledger Trial Balance as of April 23, 2014 and Balance Sheet dated April 30, 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 10 months of this fiscal year, income has fallen approximately \$105,000 under projections. Despite spending cuts, as of this date, for FY2014, the District has a negative balance of approximately \$85,000.00. Approximately \$21,000 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.

Budget transfer: Due to the budget situation, the Board on motion of Mr. Deacon, seconded by Mr. Fox and approved on roll call vote, adopted the attached Resolution transferring \$1,500.00 from the Education Reserve to the operating budget to pay costs association with the Envirothon and with the Conservation Poster Contest. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Deacon-yes, Mr. Fox-yes, Mr. Kilduff-yes and Chairman Rosko- yes.

Rent increase: Mr. Lundin reported that as of 5/1/2014 the rent on the District office has increased by 2% to a total of \$1,389.42 per month.

District Vehicle: Mr. Lundin reported that the District's 1997 Tracker is currently out of service due to an electrical/battery problem.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Chapter 251:**

Monthly Report: On motion of Mr. Deacon, seconded by Mr. Fox and properly carried, the attached 251 Project Card Summary Sheet dated April 23, 2014, the Project Status Report dated April 23, 2014 and the Performance Bonds Remaining Report as of April 30, 2014 were approved. The motion included authorization for the chairman to certify the plans listed under the report heading: "Projects Certified 2/26/2014 to 4/23/2014" Mr. Lundin reported that the number of new applications and recertifications/extensions appeared to be increasing.

District Quarterly 251 Report: On motion of Mr. Fox, seconded by Mr. Kilduff and properly carried, the Board approved the attached District Chapter 251 Quarterly report for the period of January 1, 2014 through March 31, 2014.

Exempt Municipality Quarterly 251 Report: On motion of Mr. Deacon, seconded by Mr. Fox and properly carried, the Board approved the attached Chapter 251 Quarterly Reports for Andover Township and for Green Township for the period of January 1, 2014 through March 31, 2014.

Exempt Municipality Reviews: The SSCC requires the District to conduct an annual review of the performance of the exempt municipalities. The Green Township review was conducted on March 12, 2014. Mr. Lundin reported that the review concluded that the municipality's administration of the Chapter 251 program was satisfactory for 2013. On motion of Mr. Fox, seconded by Mr. Deacon and properly carried the Board approved the Exempt Municipality reviews for Green Township.

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

- 1) St Jude the Apostle Church Expansion- HY259: The site is not fully stable. A recent inspection revealed several problems. The contractor has been directed to address the outstanding items.
- 2) Maggio Property- Wantage. The District received the application in mid-March. Staff comments have been provided to the applicant's engineer. Mr. Lundin has requested the assistance of the state engineer in the review of the application.
- 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.
- 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. Wantage Excavating has retained a surveyor and engineer and the application is expected within the next month.
- 5) Grinnel facility- SP-666. Mr. Lundin toured the site on April 17, 2014 with the SSCC engineer, John Showler. A multitude of problems were identified. We are awaiting a formal report from Mr. Showler.
- 6) Sandyston sites- Mr. Lundin reported that the District has been served with an Open Public Records Act request relative to several sites within the Township. It appears that the Sandyston Construction Official may have issued building permits without the necessary SESC certifications.

Statewide Trends: Mr. Lundin provided the Board with the most recent Quarterly Summary report from the SSCC for the period of Oct. to Dec. 2013. SESC activity is clearly increasing however the average size project is decreasing. The increase in activity is more evident in the more urbanized counties of NJ.

**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 April 2014. There are 47 active NRCS contracts within Sussex County representing assistance in the amount of \$1,086,192.21 on 1,687.2 acres. NRCS is currently evaluating 5 AMA applications, 37 EQIP applications and 4 WHIP applications. The Board also reviewed the attached chart outlining the changes in the various programs under the 2014 Farm Bill. Implementing regulations are still being developed. The Board approved the report on a motion by Mr. Deacon seconded by Mr. Fox and properly carried.
- 2) Cooperators: On Motion of Mr. Deacon, seconded by Mr. Kilduff and properly carried, the Board approved the application for Conservation Assistance from Jared F. Finck for a 6.2 acre parcel located on County Route 565 in Augusta.
- 3) NJ-NRCS- Training Initiative: Chairman Rosko and Mr. Lundin reported on conversations with NRCS- State Conservationist Carrie Moseley relative to the training of District staff so as to enable staff to conduct agricultural outreach and verification. Additional discussions will ensue as the program is developed.
- 4) SC Board of Agriculture letter re changes to appointment procedures: The Board is in receipt of a March 29, 2014 e-mail from the SC Bd. of Ag. relative to a proposed change in the procedure for the appointment of the Board of Managers, an advisory body to the NJ Agricultural Experimentation Station. The Board had insufficient information to take an informed position.
- 5) Bain Farm: The District is in receipt of a letter from the NJ Land Conservancy re the Bain Farm in Frankford Township. This parcel was the subject of a 2013 complaint. The Land Conservancy now owns the parcel and is leasing the same to a local farmer and to a hunting club. The leases require the implementation of the Farm Conservation Plan.

**State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) Report:** Mr. Minch was unable to attend on behalf of the SSCC. Mr. Lundin briefed the Board on the following matters:

- 1) Website: A SSCC committee has reviewed the websites of the 15 Districts to determine compliance with the statutory requirements. The District website was found satisfactory in all aspects. A summary report is attached.

- 2) Permit Extension Act: Mr. Lundin distributed an SSCC guidance letter dated March 10, 2014 relative to the implementation of the NJ Permit Extension Act of 2012.
- 3) Representation by the Attorney General's Office: The District reviewed two letters from the HEP District dated February 7, 2014 and April 7, 2014 re the lack of assistance of the office of the NJ Attorney General in issues of statewide significance.

**Education:**

- 1) 2014 Poster Contest: Mr. Lundin distributed the attached list of the winners of the 2014 Poster Contest. This year's national theme is "Dig Deeper-The Mysteries of the Soil." Over 180 entries were received from 6 schools. Mr. Lundin is currently in the process of arranging the awards ceremonies.
- 2) 4H Annual Presentations: Mr. Lundin reported that he had represented the District as a judge on March 7, 2014 at the annual 4H Presentations.
- 3) 2014 Northern NJ Envirothon Field Day Training: Mr. Lundin reported that the District coordinated the Northern NJ Envirothon Field Day training on April 10, 2014 at Swartswood State Park. Thirty six students and 6 advisors attended. This represented 6 Envirothon teams from 3 schools. Mr. Lundin thanked Chairman Rosko for volunteering all day at the session.
- 4) 2014 Envirothon Planning Session: Mr. Lundin attended the Envirothon Planning Committee sessions on March 6 and April 15, 2014.
- 5) 2014 NJ Envirothon: The 2014 NJ Envirothon will be held at the NJ School of Conservation on May 2 and 3, 2014. The District is acting as host and sponsor. On motion of Mr. Deacon, seconded by Mr. Fox, the District determined to donate \$1000.00 toward the cost of the 2014 Envirothon. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Fox- yes, Mr. Deacon- yes, Mr. Kilduff yes and Chairman Rosko- yes.

**Meetings:**

- 1) NJACD Northern Regional Supervisors Meeting: Chairman Rosko and Mr. Fox reported on the NJACD northern regional supervisors meeting held on March 25, 2014 in Hackettstown.
- 2) NACD 2014 Northeast Regional Meeting: The NACD NE Regional Meeting is scheduled for Newport Rhode Island from August 24-27, 2014.

- 3) 2015 National Meeting: 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:** Chairman Rosko and Mr. Lundin reported on the ongoing discussion to merge or otherwise coordinate operations with the Musconetcong Watershed Association. The District is in receipt of an invoice from NJRC&D for the dues for 2014. The Supervisors debated the wisdom of the donation in light of the District's current financial condition. After discussion, Mr. Fox moved seconded by Mr. Deacon to authorize the payment of the annual dues. Roll call vote as follows: Mr. Fox- yes, Mr. Deacon- yes, Mr. Kilduff yes and Chairman Rosko- yes.

**Other:**

**2014 Supervisor Appointment:** The SSCC has notified the District that the term of Supervisor Deacon is scheduled to expire on June 30, 2014. The nominating committee will meet over the coming month.

**Worker's Compensation Insurance Audit:** Mr. Lundin reported that an insurance company auditor had visited the District on March 12, 2014 to review our records. All was found to be in order. The District is receiving a credit of \$56 against its premium.

**Proposal to Sussex County for Preserved Farm Verifications:** Based upon the Board's discussion at the February meeting, Mr. Lundin communicated the District's proposal to Eric Snyder, County Planner. The County appears to be proceeding with the hiring of a replacement for Ms. Traylor at this time.

**Caggiano OPRA Request:** Mr. Lundin reported that Mr. Caggiano continues to submit OPRA request to Board Special Counsel William Haggerty, Esquire.

**Reforest NJ:** Mr. Lundin reported that the District served as a distribution point for this NJDEP effort. NJ seeks to plant 500,000 trees over the next 5 years to replace trees lost during Superstorm Sandy. The District distributed in excess of 7000 trees to 5 participating Sussex County municipalities. Mr. Kilduff served as coordinator for Franklin Borough.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**SC Chamber of Commerce Dues:** The District is in receipt of an invoice from the Sussex County Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$295 for its 2014 dues. Mr. Fox moved, seconded by Mr. Deacon and properly carried that in light of the District's financial condition that it not join the chamber for 2014.

**New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD) Dues:** The District is in receipt of an invoice from the New Jersey Association of Conservation District in the amount of \$750 for its 2014 dues. This is a 50% increase. Mr. Fox moved, seconded by Mr. Deacon, and properly carried, that in light of the District's financial condition that it not join the NJACD for 2014.

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

Chairman Rosko opened the meeting to the public at 6:07 p.m. There being no one desiring to speak, the meeting was closed to the public at 6:07 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

**PERSONNEL REDUCTION IN FORCE/FURLOUGHS:** In light of the continuing financial condition of the District, by consensus the Board determined to continue the reduction in staff/furlough program that was imposed at the February 2014 meeting. The Board will again consider the issue at its May 2014 meeting.

**ADJOURN:**

The Meeting was adjourned at 6:08 p.m. on motion of Mr. Kilduff seconded by Mr. Fox and properly carried.

Respectfully submitted for Fred Hough, Secretary/Treasurer

By Clifford R. Lundin, District Manager