

Cape-Atlantic Conservation District Minutes

January 27, 2021

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND PUBLIC NOTICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Chairman Allen Carter, Jr., called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m. via video conference.

Chairman Allen Carter, Jr. stated that in review of the Sunshine Law, Chapter 231 PL 1975 adequate notice of this meeting has been provided by mail to The Press of Atlantic City and Gazettes of Atlantic and Cape May County specifying time and place this meeting is to be held.

FLAG SALUTE

Chairman, Allen Carter, Jr. led the salute to the flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Supervisors: Allen Carter, Jr. Robert Fenton, Cormac Morrissey, Joseph Lomax and Richard Dovey

Staff: Michael Kent, Glenn Ward and Marie Rogowski

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): Michelle Pedano

ANNUAL BOARD REORGANIZATION

Chair – A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Robert Fenton to nominate Allen Carter, Jr. to serve as District Chairman.

Vice-Chair – A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to nominate Robert Fenton to serve as Vice-Chairman.

Secretary – A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Robert Fenton to nominate Joseph Lomax to serve as Secretary.

Treasurer – A motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Robert Fenton to nominate Cormac Morrissey to serve as Treasurer.

Appointments were accepted by nominees and all motions passed unanimously.

MINUTES

A. Minutes of December 2020 Meeting

Copy of minutes were emailed to Board prior to meeting. After Board review, a motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Robert Fenton to approve minutes from the December 16, 2020 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCES

A. Treasurers Reports – December 2020

December 2020 District and Plant Materials Center (PMC) Treasurer's reports were emailed to the Board prior to meeting.

After review and discussion, a motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to approve the Districts December 2020 treasurer's report, balance sheet and expenses in the amount of \$41,828.80. The motion passed unanimously.

After review of the PMC monthly expense report for December 2020, a motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Robert Fenton to approve treasurer's report, balance sheet and account balance of \$9,121.59. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plans

December 2020, 251 Certification and re-certification reports were emailed to the Board prior to meeting for review.

1. December 2020 Certifications

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Robert Fenton approving all Plan Certifications listed on the December 2020 Application Report. Cormac Morrissey recused from application 599-20. Cormac Morrissey abstained from motion. The motion passed.

2. December 2020 Re-certifications

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey approving application 104-86 listed on the December 2020 Re-Certification Application Report. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Robert Fenton approving applications 13-17 and 139-86 listed on the December 2020 Re-certification Application Report. Joseph Lomax recused and abstained from motion. The motion passed.

B. Farmland Program

1. Conservation Agreement

After board discussion a motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to approve the following Conservation Agreement:

- a. Kevin Lowery, Hamilton Township, 9.7 acres.

The motion passed unanimously.

C. PERS Contribution

Michael Kent updated the Board on employer annual PERS contribution invoice and cost increase. After discussion there was Board consensus to table discussion until next meeting giving Supervisors time to review additional information.

D. FY-2020 Audit

A motion was made by Robert Fenton and seconded by Richard Dovey to pay FY-2020 audit preparation invoice in the amount of \$4,026.17. The motion passed unanimously.

Copy of FY-20 Audit was emailed to board for review. After discussion, a motion was made by Robert Fenton and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to accept FY-2020 Audit.

Joseph Lomax discussed following recommendation of the auditor for the District to devise a policy for future unusual expenses that may incur.

E. Ocean County SCD Shared Service Agreement

Michael Kent updated the Board on the current shared service agreement with Ocean County SCD.

After discussion a motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Richard Dovey to have Glenn Ward continue to assist Ocean County SCD on an as-needed basis and to have Michael Kent obtain an updated MOU to be presented to the Board at next meeting for approval. The motion passed unanimously.

F. State Agricultural Development Committee (SADC) 2021 Farm Inspections

Michael Kent reported that the Governor has lifted the freeze on farm inspections. The District received a new agreement from SADC for 2021 farm inspections. Agreement will run from January 1st - June 30th 2021, under same terms and number of inspections as in the 2020 agreement.

Allen Carter, Jr. stated that due to time constraint he has signed 2021 agreement prior to meeting.

After discussion, a motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Robert Fenton to ratify agreement for SADC 2021 farm inspections.

G. NRCS Civil Rights Review

Copy of NRCS Civil Rights Policy was emailed to the Board prior to meeting. Michelle Pedano conducted annual review of NRCS Civil Rights Policies. After review and discussion, a motion was made Richard Dovey and seconded by Robert Fenton to accept policies as presented.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

OLD BUSINESS

A. Education

Glenn Ward

- Reported that Atlantic County Earth Day has officially been canceled. No word yet on Cape May County event.
- Update and discussion on postponing District poster contest this year.
- 2021 Envirothon details are still being discussed. Unable to attend recent committee meeting. Will reach out to Camden SCD for updates.

B. Grants

Michael Kent

- Reported that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant ended December 31, 2020. Final payment request has been submitted and final report will be submitted by end of week.
- Ashley Hines has moved into the Civil Engineer Technician (CET) position effective January 4, 2021.
- Chris Miller would like new PMC seasonal employee to start at the end of February. When term ends in 6 months, agreement will end due to the ability for the center to hire a full-time employee.
- National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Technical Assistance (TA) Grant continues to move forward. District in the process of applying for 2021 extension.
- Discussed the use of District vehicle's for employees working out of NRCS field offices.

C. Fee Schedule

Michael Kent reported that he continues to work with Frank Minch on District's fee schedule update. New rate will be presented at the next State Committee meeting for approval.

D. Supervisor Standards

State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) is looking to update Supervisor Standards. Copy of Standards were email to the board for review. Comments from the District are requested by the end of February. Joseph Lomax commented on supervisor performance standards and changes looking to be made.

E. Exit Interview

Exit interviews for Arianna Efstatos and Luis Almeyda were conducted by Allen Carter, Jr., Cormac Morrissey and Michael Kent. Allen and Cormac updated the Board on feedback received during exit interviews.

F. Strategic Plan

Meeting to be scheduled with Richard Dovey, Joseph Lomax and Michael Kent to finalize Strategic Plan.

G. PMC Vehicle Repair

Repairs have been completed and vehicle returned to the PMC. Payment will be made by the District as per previous discussion and approval.

COMMENTS

A. Staff

Glenn Ward

- Reviewed 251 quarterly report that was emailed to the board prior to meeting.
- Reported on 251 activity. District continues to remain very busy. Starting to see submission of larger projects.

-Update on Rachel Thornton, Stockton University intern that started on January 19th.

-Update on Districts social media page.

Michael Kent

-Attended and commented on State Committee meet.

-Visiting NRCS Vineland field office and attending NRCS Cart Training as part of grant requirements.

B. *Supervisors*

Richard Dovey

-Update on new contracts for trash collection and recycling.

-Reported on waste-water projects.

-New education and training facility to be built at wastewater treatment plant in Atlantic City.

Cormac Morrissey

-Commented on new stormwater rules. Most towns must adopt new rules by March 2, 2021.

-Reported on uptick of development applications.

-Discussed potential new hire and shift of duties.

-Commented on Supervisor Performance Standards and a check list for meeting attendance.

-Commented on new hire interview process. Impressed with staffs prep work and candidates interviewed.

Joseph Lomax

-Reminder that NACD National Meeting starts next week. Agenda is on-line for the ten day long virtual conference.

-Commented on NRCS office in urban agricultural.

-Christine Hall new assignment update.

-Suggested the District prepare a summary outlining fees collected and acres impacted by 251 applications to assist in marketing for future grants.

Allen Carter, Jr.

-NACD conference website is active and has interactive calendar to assist with organizing sessions.

-Update on Farm Bureau meeting and American Farm Bureau Convention.

-NJ State Agricultural Convention will be held virtual on February 17, 2021. Will sit on Resolutions Committee.

-Vegetable Growers Convention will be held virtual on February 22-25, 2021.

-Update on deer hunt numbers.

-Commented on new hire interview process. Thanked the staff for narrowing down applications.

C. *USDA-NRCS*

Michelle Pedano

-Commented on NRCS monthly activity report.

-Virtual NOFA Winter Conference will be held January 30-31, 2021.

-Will be participating in the NACD Annual Meeting on February 8th and 9th.

D. *Public*

Opened meeting to public comment.

No comments from public.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to go into executive session at 10:00 a.m. to discuss personnel issues. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Richard Dovey to end executive session at 10:15 a.m. and return to the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ON ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Robert Fenton to offer Chelsea Steffes the position of a Level I site Inspector/Plan Reviewer with a start date February 15, 2021. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Allen Carter, Jr. adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday February 24, 2021 at 8:00 a.m.

Marie Rogowski,
Administrative Assistant