

Cape-Atlantic Conservation District Minutes

September 26, 2024

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND PUBLIC NOTICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Chairman, Robert Fenton called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m. at the District Office in Mays Landing, NJ.

Chairman, Robert Fenton 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 Counties specifying time and place this meeting is to be held.

FLAG SALUTE

Chairman, Robert Fenton led the salute to the flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL & DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

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

Staff: Michael Kent, Glenn Ward, Lauren Tigue, Connor Smilon, Renee Capetola, Riley Blankenship, Daniel Bononcini, John Hooven, Sharon McKenna, and Marie Rogowski

USDA-NRCS: Michelle Pedano

MINUTES

A. Minutes of August 29, 2024, Meeting

After Board review, a motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to approve minutes from the August 29, 2024 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Executive Session Minutes of August 29, 2024 Meeting

After Board review, a motion was made by Allen Carter and seconded by Joseph Lomax to approve executive session minutes from the August 29, 2024 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCES

A. Treasurers Reports

1. District Financials – August 2024

After Board review and discussion, a motion was made by Allen Carter and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to approve the District's August 2024 treasurer's

report, balance sheet and expenses in the amount of \$137, 694.17 The motion passed unanimously.

2. **PMC Financials – August 2024**

After review of the PMC monthly expense report for August 2024, a motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to approve treasurer's report, balance sheet and account balance of \$24,964.34. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plans

1. August 2024 Certifications

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey approving all Plan Certifications listed on the August 2024 Application Report. The motion passed unanimously.

2. August 2024 Re-Certification

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey approving the application listed on the August 2024 Re-Certification Application Report. The motion passed unanimously.

3. 251 Updates

Glenn Ward

-Update on 251 program and projects coming into the District.

Lauren Tigue

-Update on large Higbee Beach restoration project in Lower Twp.

Renee Capetola

-Update on large marina improvements project in Avalon.

B. Farmland Program

None

C. Board of Supervisors Meeting Dates

Marie Rogowski

-Discussed conflict with meeting dates for December 2024, January, and February 2025. Modified dates as discussed and will be posted to District website.

D. District Website

Michale Kent

-Discussed seeking outside company to create new website for the District. A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Allen Carter to authorize \$5,500.00 to have On Your Mark Designs create new website. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Local Working Group

Dates have been selected and meeting rooms secured for the 2025 Local Working Group meetings. Promotional material is being created for distribution.

CORRESPONDENCE

None

OLD BUSINESS

A. Education

Sharon McKenna

- Distributed and commented on report of past and upcoming events.
- District will be utilizing the soil tunnel for Somers Point, Jordan Road School field day October 18, 2024.

B. Grants/Agreements

Michael Kent

- Civil Engineer Technician (CET) and Ag. Conservationist Specialist positions have been filled. Waiting on NRCS for a start dates.
- Ryan Jiorle's last day with the District will be October 4, 2024. Advertisement will be going out to fill his vacancy.
- District was awarded NFWF grant. Waiting on official contract.
- Preparing paperwork to be submitted for quarterly grant reimbursements.
- Shared service agreement with Ocean Soil Conservation District will be expiring. After discussion, a motion was made by Allen Carter and seconded by Joseph Lomax to renew agreement for an additional three (3) years. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Meetings

Michael Kent

- Distributed and commented on list of previously attended, upcoming meetings, conferences, and events.

D. Forestry Update

Daniel Bononcini

- Distributed and commented on list of previously attended and upcoming events and training opportunities.
- Prepared and distributed report from Merrill Creek New Jersey Society of American Foresters (NJSAF) meeting attended.

John Hooven

- Update on field activities and site visits.
- Chair elect for NJSAF. Results expected at the end of the month.
- Thanked the Board for the opportunity to participate in the NJ Woodland Stewards Project.

Michale Kent

- Commented on the opportunity to have the District create forestry plans to build planning portfolio.

E. Agriculture Update

Riley Blakenship

- Preparing quarterly grant report to submit with reimbursement request.
- Update on preserved farm inspections for next year. Received agreement from SADC for 2025 calendar year. After Board discussion a motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to enter into agreement. The motion passed unanimously.

-Commented on replacing Michale Kent as District representative on Cape May County Board of Agricultural.

F. Subaqueous Soils

Joseph Lomax

-Update on the subaqueous soils request. Encouraged all to participate in virtual meeting today at 10:30am.

G. District Employee Handbook

Michale Kent

-Would like sub-committee to schedule a meeting to wrap up final edits to employee handbook. Would like final draft to be approved at October's meeting.

COMMENTS

A. Staff

Glenn Ward

-Update on current intern. Advertisement will be going out for two spring interns.

Connor Smilon

-Commented on the PMC New Field Staff training event attended on September 23, 2024.

Renee Capetola

-Commented on the PMC New Field Staff training event attended on September 23, 2024.

John Hooven

-Commented on the shortage of foresters in the state.

Daniel Bononcini

-Continuing to remain busy with school and forestry training.

Marie Rogowski

-Commented on Supervisor quarterly mileage reimbursements.

B. Supervisors

Joseph Lomax

-Commented on the history of work at Pine Creek.

-History update of the Plant Materials Center

Allen Carter

-Update on crop prices, quality, and quantity.

-Commented on issues Farm Bureau has been working on throughout the state.

-NJ Farm Bureau Convention scheduled for November 18-19, 2024.

-Commented on DEP's new rules.

-Update on the SADC Executive Director position.

Richard Dovey

-Attended and commented on State Committee Meeting attended September 9, 2024.

-Agenda being finalized for NJACD Annual meeting scheduled for November 25, 2024.

-Burlington Soil Conservation District will be hosting the 2025 Envirothon.

Cormac Morrissey

-Commented on power infrastructure and the significant rise in consumer electric bills.

Robert Fenton

-Commented on Eastern Native Grassland Symposium attended September 9-12, 2024.

-Commended staff and supervisors on the great work being conducted.

C. USDA-NRCS

Michelle Pedano

-Distributed NRCS monthly activity report. Commented on program signup and cutoff dates.

-Commented on FY-2025 Farm Bill Financial Assistance Programs and the accelerated contracting being offered.

D. Public

Opened meeting to public comment.

No comments from the public.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Allen Carter to go into executive session at 9:36 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to end the executive session at 10:18 a.m. and return to the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

ACTION ON ITEMS FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to eliminate one of two District forester positions. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Robert Fenton adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m. The next meeting will be held Thursday October 24, 2024, 8:30 a.m. at the USDA-NRCS Plant Materials Center, Cape May Court House, NJ. The motion passed unanimously.

Marie Rogowski
Office Administrator

Executive Session Meeting Minutes
Cape Atlantic Conservation District
September 26, 2024

The motion to go into executive session was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Allen Carter at 9:37am. The motion passed unanimously.

Attendees:

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

District Staff: Michael Kent and John Hooven (Personnel discussion only)

Personnel:

Discussion was had with regards to continued performance deficiencies by an employee within the District's forestry program.

Michael Kent informed the Board that Riley Blankenship will be enrolling into Health Benefits program do to change in family circumstances.

Meetings:

The Board suggested potential invitees who should represent the District at the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary Celebration.

District Capacity Building:

The Board discussed the various programs and opportunities the District may want to investigate as it continues to build its capacity.

Forestry Program:

The Board discussed opportunities to aid in moving the Forestry program forward.

A motion was made by Allen Carter and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to end the executive session at 10:18 a.m. and return to the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Michael Kent