

# Cape-Atlantic Conservation District Minutes

March 29, 2023

## **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND PUBLIC NOTICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

Chairman, Robert Fenton called the meeting to order at 8:04 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 County 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, Richard Dovey, Cormac Morrissey and Allen Carter, Jr.

Staff: Michael Kent, Glenn Ward, Haley Jackson, Riley Blankenship, Lauren Tighe and Marie Rogowski

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): Michelle Pedano

Rutgers Cooperative Extension (RCE): Claudia Gilarroyo

## **MINUTES**

### **A. Minutes of February 22, 2023, Meeting**

After Board review, a motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to approve minutes from the February 22, 2023, meeting. Allen Carter, Jr., abstained. The motion passes.

### **B. Executive Session Minutes of February 22, 2023, Meeting**

After Board review, a motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to approve the executive session minutes from the February 22, 2023, meeting. Allen Carter, Jr. abstained. The motion passes.

## **FINANCES**

### **A. Treasurers Reports**

1. District Financials – February 2023

After Board review and discussion, a motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Allen Carter, Jr. to approve the District's February 2023 treasurer's report, balance sheet and expenses in the amount of \$56,788.76. The motion passed unanimously.

2. **PMC Financials – February 2023**

After review of the PMC monthly expense report for February 2023, a motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to approve treasurer's report, balance sheet and account balance of \$19,692.43. The motion passed unanimously.

**B. Morgan Stanley**

Michael Kent updated the Board on how Morgan Stanley reports earned interest on District CD account.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plans**

**1. February 2023 Certifications**

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey approving all Plan Certifications listed on the February 2023 Application Report except for application 37-23, 100-23 and 102-23. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Cormac Morrissey approving applications 37-23, 100-23 and 102-23. Joseph Lomax recused. The motion passed.

**2. February 2023 Re-certifications**

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Allen Carter, Jr. approving all applications listed on the February 2023 Re-Certification Application Report. The motion passed unanimously.

**B. Farmland Program**

1. Conservation Agreement
  - a. Fluffy Farms, LLC – 58 acres, Galloway Township
2. Conservation Plan
  - a. Hammonton, 107 acres, Center Pivots, Conservation Crop Rotation, Cover Crop

After Board review and discussion, a motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Joseph Lomax approving the conservation agreement and conservation plan. The motion passed unanimously.

**C. District Board of Supervisors Reappointments**

District Supervisor appointments for Joseph Lomax and Robert Fenton will expire June 30, 2023. Mr. Lomax and Mr. Fenton will continue serving on District Board. Renomination forms will be completed and forwarded to the State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) for review and approval.

**D. Office Equipment Disposal Request**

A motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Joseph Lomax authorizing the disposal of office equipment listed on request. The motion passed unanimously.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

**A. Atlantic County 4-H Sponsorship**

Atlantic County 4-H Association is seeking support for their 2023 4-H Yearbook. The District will purchase a half page ad for \$100.00 as previously budgeted.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**A. Education**

Haley Jackson

- Update on District poster contest and entries received.
- Working on creating PowerPoints for school presentations.

Glenn Ward

- Update on 2023 Envirothon. District has five teams registered for the event.
- Planning for upcoming Earth Day events.

**B. Grants/Agreements**

Riley Blankenship

- Update on work being conducted under the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Technical Assistance grant.

Michael Kent

- Commented on agreement with NRCS. After discussion, a motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Richard Dovey consenting to the District entering into a five-year agreement with NRCS for financial support towards the training of a certified conservation planner. The motion passed unanimously.
- Due to tight time constraints the District postponed applying for the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation-Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund Grant. The district will prepare application and apply when next opportunity is available.

Joseph Lomax

- Discussed having subaqueous soils analysis performed in Atlantic and Cape May Counties. A motion was made by Richard Dovey and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to have Mr. Lomax draft letter requesting analysis. The motion passed unanimously.

Haley Jackson

- Commented on the following grant opportunities the District applied for:
  1. NACD/NRCS-Urban and Community Conservation Grant Initiative. Submitted proposal on 3/13/23. Award recipients will be announced in April.
  2. USDA-Urban Agricultural and Innovative Production Competitive Grants Program. Submitted proposal on 3/27/23. Award recipients will be announced in June.

**COMMENTS**

**A. Staff**

**Michael Kent**

- Thanked the staff for all their hard work during this time of rebranding as a District.
- Thanked the Board for allowing the District to take on other opportunities allowing the District to grow.

-Commented on how David Reilly is providing a great deal of assistance to the District until new staff are trained.

**Glenn Ward**

-Update on 251 program and the number of larger projects coming into the District.  
-Reported on interns and tasks they've been working on.  
-Excited to see the District is evolving and growing.  
-Update on newest District employee, Lauren Tigue.  
-Reported that Joseph Girnius will start full-time in June.

**Haley Jackson**

-Sorting through education material that the District has in the office.  
-Seeking suggestions for programs and education outreach.  
-Attended and commented on Pineland Short Course seminar held at Stockton University on March 11, 2023.

**Lauren Tigue**

-Excited to be working for the District. Looking forward to learning about the 251 program.

**Marie Rogowski**

-Update on daily office activities.

**Riley Blankenship**

-Attended and commented on soils training held at the Freehold District on March 24<sup>th</sup>.

**B. Supervisors**

**Joseph Lomax**

-Commented on final reports produced for Local Working Group meetings. District is being used as a national pilot for natural resource conservation programs.  
-Update on sub-committees discontinued by NACD. Working on having them reinstated.  
-Commented on Kimbles Beach reef restoration project.  
-Reported on Avalon Environmental Commission's native plant list booklet. District is referenced in handout.  
-Update on congressional visits.

**Richard Dovey**

-Reported on Atlantic County Utilities Authority (ACUA) staffing issues.  
-ACUA gearing up for Earth Day event schedule for April 23<sup>rd</sup>.  
-Commented on Local Working Groups meetings. The District did a great job.  
-Participating in Reclaim program. ACUA will be providing logistical assistance.

**Cormac Morrissey**

-Commented on educational opportunities associated with horseshoe crab breeding.  
-Reported on developer buying up property in the area. District should remain busy.  
-Thanked staff for their work. Looking forward to seeing the District growing.

**Allen Carter, Jr.**

-Reported on Governor's budget and line item for Ag. Experiment Station.  
-Secretary Fisher retiring July 1<sup>st</sup>.  
-Update on Soil Protection Standards  
-Update on letters sent out by DEP on wells and septic.

- Commented on State Legislation and tax credits on food donations.
- Reported on farmland preservation appraisal rates.
- Commented on Ag. Tourism bill.
- Commented on over-the-counter antibiotics for livestock.
- Commented on spring legislative meetings.
- Reported on final Local Working Group reports. Thanked the staff for quick completion of reports.

***Robert Fenton***

- Preparing for the upcoming fishing and farming season.
- Busy attending many meetings.

**C. *Rutgers Cooperative Extension***

***Claudia Gilarroyo***

- Commented on research study being conducted by Rutgers on farm viability.
- Busy preparing for upcoming workshops. Turnout has been good, and classes have been full.

**D. *USDA-NRCS***

***Michelle Pedano***

- Distributed and commented on NRCS Monthly Activity report.
- Update on shifting staffing position throughout NRCS.
- Update on various NRCS programs, their sign-up and cut-off dates.
- Commented on C.O.A.S.T.A.L. project informational session schedule for May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the District office.
- Volunteers needed May 20<sup>th</sup> for NJ Envirothon.

***Michael Kent***

-NRCS asked if the District would like to share a booth at the League of Municipalities conference in November at a cost of \$300.00. After discussion, a motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Richard Dovey to authorize up to \$500.00 for the District's participation. The motion passed unanimously.

**E. *Public***

Opened meeting to public comment.  
No comments from the public.

***EXECUTIVE SESSION***

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Richard Dovey to go into executive session at 9:36 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Richard Dovey to end executive session at 10:20 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 Richard Dovey to hire Lauren Tigue as a Level 1 Resource Conservationist. The motion passed unanimously.

Board created a Grants Committee made up of Joseph Lomax, Robert Fenton, Michael Kent, and Haley Jackson.

***ADJOURNMENT***

Chairman Robert Fenton adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m. The next meeting will be April 26, 2023 at 8:30 a.m. at Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cape May, Cape May Court House, NJ.

Unless otherwise indicated, all actions were taken by unanimous vote of all members present.

Marie Rogowski,  
Administrative Assistant

Executive Session Meeting Minutes  
Cape Atlantic Conservation District  
March 29, 2023

Motion to go into executive session was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Richard Dovey at 9:36 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

**Attendees:**

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

District Staff: Michael Kent

**Hiring of Level 1 Resource Conservationist:**

Michael Kent informed the Board that interviews were conducted for the position of Level 1 Resource Conservationist. Michael recommended that the board consider hiring Lauren Tigue as he felt she was the best candidate for the position.

**Grants:**

Discussion was had about how best to evaluate grant opportunities that may become available for the District.

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Richard Dovey to end executive session at 10:20 a.m. and return to the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Michael Kent