

Cape-Atlantic Conservation District Minutes

February 20, 2025

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AND PUBLIC NOTICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Chairman, Robert Fenton called the meeting to order at 8:05 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, and Cormac Morrissey

Staff: Michael Kent, Lauren Tigue, Renee Capetola, Connor Smilon, John Hooven, Tyler Savage, and Marie Rogowski

USDA-NRCS: Michelle Pedano, Chris Miller

MINUTES

A. Minutes of January 16, 2025 Meeting

After Board review, a motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to approve minutes from the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Executive Session Minutes of January 16, 2025 Meeting

After Board review, a motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to approve executive session minutes from the January 16, 2025 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCES

A. Treasurers Reports

1. District Financials – January 2025

After Board review and discussion, a motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to approve the District's January 2025 treasurer's report, balance sheet and expenses in the amount of \$122,305.66. The motion passed unanimously.

2. **PMC Financials – January 2025**

After review of the PMC monthly expense report for January 2025, a motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to approve treasurer's report, balance sheet and account balance of \$27,131.84. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Transfer of Funds

Michael Kent informed the board that funds were transferred from Morgan Stanley account to Ocean First checking account.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plans

1. January 2025 Certifications

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey approving all Plan Certifications listed on the January 2025 Application Report except for 18-25, 19-25 and 20-25. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Robert Fenton approving applications 18-25 and 20-25 . Joseph Lomax recused. The motion passed.

A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to table approval of application 19-25 until next meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

2. January 2025 Re-Certification

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey approving all applications listed on the January 2025 Re-Certification Application Report except for 303-14. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Robert Fenton approving application 303-14. Joseph Lomax recused. The motion passed.

3. 251 Updates

Lauren Tigue

-Distributed and commented on 2024 Year End Report.

Renee Capetola

-Update on site visit with interns to the Higbee Beach restoration project.

B. Farmland Program

1. Conservation Agreement

a. Michelle Mauroff, Mullica Township, 24 acres

2. Conservation Plan

a. Buena Vista Township, 22 acres, Forest Stewardship Plan

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

CORRESPONDENCE

1. Timothy J. Huber, Counselor of Law

Looking to donate land in Middle Twp., that a foundation in Pennsylvania currently owns. After Board discussion, Michael Kent will reach out to Mr. Huber for additional information and conduct research on property.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Education

Michael Kent commented on Sharon McKenna's monthly activity report outlining work that is being completed.

B. Grants/Agreements

John Hooven

-Discussed applying for a \$5,000 Society of American Foresters (SAF) education/outreach grant. A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to authorize applying for grant.

All other grant discussions were tabled until executive session.

C. Meetings

Local Working Group Meeting (LWG)

-Board and staff commented on the Cape May and Atlantic Counties LWG meetings held in January. Michael Kent stated that final reports are being finalized.

NACD Annual Meeting

-Board and staff who attended gave updates on sessions and field trips attended.

-Joseph Lomax thanked the Board for their support in attending.

-Michael Kent commented on upcoming scheduled conferences.

-Joseph Lomax commented on March 26, 2025 NACD Fly-In. A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to authorize expenses for up to three board members to attend. The motion passed unanimously.

-Lauren Tighe thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary Science and Environmental Summit. Distributed and commented on summary report from the multi-day event.

D. Forestry Update

John Hooven

-Distributed and commented on various work being conducted.

-Commented on training activities with Tyler Savage.

-Thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend Allegheny SAF winter meeting at State College, PA.

Tyler Savage

-Commented on work being completed since starting with the District.

E. Agriculture Update

Michael Kent

-Update from Ag. Convention attended in Atlantic City.

-Update on projects that Riley Blankenship has been working on.

F. Coastal Zone Soil Survey

Joseph Lomax

-Discussed status of soil survey. Researching funding opportunities.

G. District Employee Handbook

Michael Kent

-Final draft has been sent to Mr. Botcheos for review. A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to adopt employee handbook subject to minor edits as discussed. The motion passed unanimously.

H. District Merger

Cormac Morrissey

-Discussed needing to open legislation to allow for seven supervisors on the District Board. In contact with a legislator to assist with process.

Michael Kent

-Stated that a name for merged districts must be decided. After discussion, the Board supports Del-Atlantic Soil Conservation District name. A letter will be sent on behalf of the Cape Atlantic Conservation District Board approving the Del-Atlantic name.

COMMENTS

A. Staff

Michael Kent

-Thanked staff for all their hard work.

Connor Smilon

-Update on work being conducted with Stockton interns.

John Hooven

-Update on Pinelands Short Course presentation at Stockton University on March 8, 2025.

-Commented on possible candidate for a NJ Champion Tree found in Mays Landing.

-Tree nursey update. Commented on the possible shortages in the future.

B. Supervisors

Joseph Lomax

-Discussed information gathered from the NACD conference. Will be forwarding to District staff.

Robert Fenton

-Attended NACD annual conference. Commented on sessions he and his wife attended.

C. USDA-NRCS

Michelle Pedano

-Distributed and commented on NRCS monthly activity report.

-Discussed grant funding concerns.

-Update on status of field office staffing.

Chris Miller

-Commented on staffing concerns at all PMC offices throughout the country.

-Update on the sales of beachgrass along with other material available.

-Commented on the handout created by Sharon McKenna to promote seed release.

-Don Hammer being awarded lifetime achievement award through Cape May County Chapter of the NAACP.

D. Public

Opened meeting to public comment.

No comments from the public.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey to go into executive session at 9:40 a.m. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to end the executive session at 11:25 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 Joseph Lomax to authorize Michael Kent to attend the 2025 National RC&D/NCPP conference on May 18-21, 2025 in Hershey, PA. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

Robert Fenton adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m. The next meeting will be held Thursday March 27, 2025, at 8:00 a.m. at the District Office, Mays Landing, NJ. The motion passed unanimously.

Marie Rogowski
Office Administrator

Executive Session Meeting Minutes
Cape Atlantic Conservation District
February 20, 2025

Motion to go into executive session was made by Joseph Lomax and seconded by Cormac Morrissey at 9:40 am. The motion passed unanimously.

Attendees:

District Supervisors: Robert Fenton, Joseph Lomax, and Cormac Morrissey

District Staff: Michael Kent

Grants:

Discussion was had about the current pause of Federal funding associated with District grants and agreements.

Merger:

Discussion was had about the progress and process of the proposed merger between the Cape Atlantic and Camden districts.

Meetings:

Discussion was had about upcoming meetings that the District may be interested in attending.

A motion was made by Cormac Morrissey and seconded by Joseph Lomax to end the executive session at 11:25 p.m. and return to the regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Submitted by Michael Kent