

SOMERSET-UNION S.C.D.
DISTRICT MEETING
February 26, 2014

PRESENT: Mark Kirby, Jim Laine, Matt Loper, Henry Dreyer, Chad Cherefko, Frank Calo

ABSENT: Steve Needle

The meeting was called to order at 12:14 p.m.

The meeting was conducted in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act, Chapter 231, P.L. 1975.

The minutes of the January meeting were unanimously approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The report for January was unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- The District received an email from Joe Dunn, District Manager from the Morris Soil District concerning the status of UCAP.
- The District received an email from the State Agriculture Development Committee concerning the upcoming leasing networking meetings on March 7th and 14th.
- The District received the SADC's February 2014 newsletter.
- The District received an email concerning National Agriculture Day which will be held on Tuesday, March 25th at the Somerset County Votech School. NRCS and the District will be participating in the event.
- The District received an email from the HEP District of a letter directed to the State Committee requesting that the topic of "Statewide Importance" as it relates to legal assistance rendered by the State to Soil Conservation Districts, be addressed at the next State Soil Conservation Committee Meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Amendments to the NJ SE&SC Standards – Frank Calo reminded the Board that the newly adopted 2014 Standards had gone into effect on February 20th. A link for the Standards can be found on the District's webpage on the Somerset County website.

County and State Budget Updates – Frank Calo reported there was no news as to the Union County Budget. It appears the Somerset County budget will remain flat with anticipated salary increases of 1.5 to 2 %.

NEW BUSINESS:

Stormwater Reimbursements FY 2014 2nd Quarter. – Frank Calo informed the Board that the District had received 2nd quarter reimbursement breakdown for the Stormwater 5G3 e-permits. The State was due a total of \$1,170.00 for this quarter. The Board voted to pay the invoice. Mark Kirby and Matt Loper voted yes, Henry Dreyer voted no and Jim Laine abstained.

Insurance – The Board was notified that the Auto and Liability Insurance invoice had been received by the District. The premium for the Auto Insurance showed an increase from last year while the Liability Insurance was slightly lower. The Board unanimously approved paying the invoice.

2014 Farm Bill – The Board discussed the passing of the 2014 farm Bill on Tuesday February 4th. Various aspects of the bill were discussed especially how local farmers would be affected. Chad Cherefko informed the Board of how the bill would impact NRCS programs.

Supervisor Regional Meetings – Frank Calo informed the Board that the Supervisor regional Meetings would be held in March. The central meeting, the meeting the Board usually attends, is being held the same day as the March District Meeting. The Board decided, with a unanimous vote, that the District Meeting would be moved to the 10th of March at 6p.m.

Bernards High School Lower Field Project – Frank Calo informed the Board that he had received a request for an appeal meeting, as per Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Rule 2:90-1.16, for the "Remains Certified" issued for this project by the District on 12/16/2013. Frank had contacted Mr. Daniel E. Somers, Esq., the attorney for the appellant, the ACRES Group, and informed him that the Board would be meeting on the 26th of March. Mr. Somers notified the District that they would not be able to attend this meeting and requested an alternate date. The Board reviewed the file concerning this project and decided to hold a special meeting on March 10th at 7pm at the District office to make a determination on the appeal request. The Board requested that Frank Calo notify all the parties involved in this matter to determine if this meeting date would be agreeable.

40 Hour Work Week – The Board discussed the options of a hiring a new inspector or going back to a 40 hour work week for the current staff. Frank Calo reminded the Board that in 2010 the District had cut back to a 35 hour work week due to the dire economic conditions. This resulted in a 12.5% cut in the staff's salary along with an increase in workload. Frank informed the Board that the application numbers for the past few years had increased and 2013 the District received 400 new applications. Not only are application numbers rising but, the District was also seeing an increase in total fees received. Financially, for the District, it would result in a smaller total salary increase by switching back to a 40 hour work week than hiring a new employee. Frank Calo informed the Board that the staff was willing to make the change back to 40 hours if approved. Also, that he had contacted Paul McCall, the Director of Public Works, to discuss the hourly change and was informed that there would not be a problem making the adjustment. Frank recommended that the District continue to monitor the financial situation and revisit the proposal at the May District meeting. The Board agreed to reexamine the issue at the May Meeting.

District Action on Chapter 251 – (a) The Board unanimously approved the plans on the attached completed list. (b) The Board approved the certified plans on the attached list. Matt Loper recused himself from voting on application: 2013-1109.

REPORTS:

NRCS – Chad Cherefko reported on various NRCS programs and on the Soil Health Forum held on February 18th at the Snyder Farm in Hunterdon County.

SCD – Frank Calo reported on his chapter 251 activities.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held on Monday, March 10th, 2014, at 6 p.m. at the District office.

The meeting adjourned at 1:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Calo
District Manager