



SOMERSET - UNION SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Somerset County 4-H Center
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SOMERSET-UNION S.C.D. DISTRICT MEETING September 29, 2015

PRESENT: Mark Kirby, Steve Needle, Matt Loper, Bob Amberg, Chad Cherefko, Frank Calo

ABSENT: Jim Laine

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m.

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

The minutes of the July meeting were unanimously approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The reports for July and August were unanimously approved.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- The District received from the State Soil Conservation Committee the 2015-2016 NJ Natural Resources Conservation Program Directory. The Directory was distributed to the Board Members.
- The District received the SWCS Firman E. Bear Chapter newsletter. This year's annual spring meeting's first stop was at District Supervisor, Jim Laine's farm. Jim has been working with the Audubon Society through a Conservation Innovation Grant. The program involves the growing of a specialty commodity crop which will also aid and maximize habitat values for grassland birds.

- The District received a thank you card from Grace Messinger, former director of the NJRC&D, for the gift card given to her by the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

North Jersey RC&D Council Update – Frank Calo reported that the NJ RC&D council met in September and were introduced to the new Director Marcus Grey. Marcus previously was the Director of an RC&D in West Virginia. Due to Marcus's background it appears the transition from the former Director is going smoothly. At the meeting, Marcus's highlighted some of the future goals he has set for the council and also gave an update on the future partnership with the Musconetcong Watershed Association.

2016 NJ Envirothon – Frank Calo reported to the Board that Rich Belcher, the NJ Envirothon Coordinator, had informed the District that Dukes Farm would not allow the Envirothon to be held at their facility because they did not allow overnight camping. Mr. Belcher suggested, as an alternative, the North Branch Park. Frank explained to Mr. Belcher that the Board would need to approve the District's hosting of the event. After some discussion, the Board decided that if all the logistics could be worked out, the District would be willing to host the 2016 NJ Envirothon.

FY 2015 District Annual Audit – The District Manager updated the Board on the status of the FY2015 Audit. Frank Calo had met with the auditor, John Brewer, to commence the audit on August 10th. Mr. Brewer will return to complete the audit on October 6th. As soon as the draft audit is complete it will be forwarded to the entire Board for their review, so that hopefully it can be approved at the District's October meeting.

2015 4-H Fair – Frank Calo reported that this year's 4-H Fair had been very successful. The District, as well as NRCS, had received many favorable comments on the display. On behalf of the District, Frank thanked Chad Cherefko and the NRCS staff for all their help and support at this year's fair.

NEW BUSINESS:

NJ SCD Financial Accounting Manual – The District has received the newly approved SCD Financial Accounting Manual. The Board reviewed the new manual especially section 5 Audit Requirements. Frank Calo informed the Board that a copy of the manual had been forwarded to the Auditor. The new manual will be implemented in the FY2016 audit.

2015 NJ Conservation Conference – Frank Calo informed the Board that the District had received the flyer for this year's Annual Conservation Partnership Meeting. The Meeting will be held on Tuesday

October the 27th at the Rutgers Eco-Complex in Bordentown. The Board was reminded that the supervisors were required to attend at least one meeting during their term. It appeared from the Board members present that all would be attending the meeting.

District Solicitor – The Board was informed that Scott Rodgers, the attorney that the District had used in the past, was no longer with the firm Cooper & Rodgers. The Board decided to continue to use the Cooper firm as the District's legal representative.

20169 NJ Community Tree Recovery Program – The District has been asked by the NJ Tree Recovery Program to act as a distribution center in 2016. This past April the District helped to distribute over 12,000 trees to various communities in NJ. The Board decided that the District could act as a distribution center in 2016 as long as the 4-H association permitted the short term storage of the trees. Frank Calo informed the Board that he would apply for the necessary permission from the 4-H Association.

4th Qtr. Ch. 251 Surcharge Fee Reimbursement – Frank Calo reported that the District had received an invoice from the Department of Agriculture for the fourth quarter Surcharge Fee reimbursement for FY 2015. The invoice was for the amount of \$3,300.00. The Board unanimously voted in favor of paying the invoice.

FY 2015 SE&SC Program Statistics – The Board reviewed and discussed the FY 2015 4th Qtr. and summary program statistics. The District's numbers appear to be in line with other comparative Districts throughout the state.

District Action on Chapter 251 – (a) The Board unanimously approved the plans on the attached completed list. Matt Loper recused himself from voting on applications 2013-1109, 2014-1266, 2013-0946, 2014-1296, and 2014-1183. (b) The Board unanimously approved the certified plans on the attached list. Matt Loper recused himself from voting on application 2015-1604.

REPORTS:

NRCS – Chad Cherefko, NRCS, reported that the Somerset program total was \$229,180.00 in 9 contracts on 451 acres. Rosalynd Orr will be the new soil conservationist in the Frenchtown office. There is an engineering position open at the Frenchtown office. They are also looking for a conservation planner, which will be a joint position between NRCS and the NJ water Supply Authority. EQIP round one applications are due October 16th. The aerial seeding which took place in August was successful and covered almost 1,200 acres. Chad will be taking a position as the Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations in the State office starting October the 19th. An acting DC will be selected until the position can be filled. The District Manager and the entire Board congratulated Chad and wished him all the best in the future.

SCD – Frank Calo reported on his chapter 251 activities. The District is also working on getting the audit completed. He will be starting to work on the annual Union County report. He will now also be serving on the River Friendly Certification Committee.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 21, 2015, at 7:30 PM at the District office.

The meeting adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank Calo
District Manager

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