



SOMERSET - UNION SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Somerset County 4-H Center
308 Milltown Road • Bridgewater, NJ 08807
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SOMERSET-UNION S.C.D. DISTRICT MEETING September 27, 2023

PRESENT: Mark Kirby, Bob Amberg, Ed Dec, Matthew Loper, Jim Laine

ABSENT: NRCS

CALL to ORDER:

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE of ALLEGIANCE

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

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

APPROVAL of MINUTES

A motion was made by Ed Dec to approve the July 2023 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Bob Amberg and unanimously passed. A motion was made by Bob Amberg to approve the July 2023 Executive Session minutes. The motion was seconded by Ed Dec and unanimously passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer's Report for the months of July & August 2023 were reviewed by the Board. Jim Laine made a motion to approve the reports. The motion was seconded by Matthew Loper and unanimously passed.

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

Staffing-Matthew D'Alessandro updated the Board on new and existing staffing. He informed the SUSCD Board that William Laskowski retired effective 9/1/23. Jennifer Saunders was permanently transferred as of 9/21/23. A new ad will be placed for an additional erosion control inspector and an administrative assistant. Lisa Bernard was promoted to Executive Assistant.

NEW BUSINESS:

District Action on Ch. 251- The SUSCD Board reviewed the certified and completed projects for the dates from 7/27/23 to 9/27/23. Matthew Loper recused himself from SUSCD File#2023-6105 and SUSCD File#2023-6068 from the certified list and SUSCD File#2021-4340 from the completed list. Mark Kirby recused himself from SUSCD File#2021-5102 from the certified list. Ed Dec recused himself from SUSCD File# 2023-6104 and SUSCD File#2023-6128 of the certified list and SUSCD File# 2023-6078 and SUSCD File#2022-5580 from the completed list. Ed Dec made a motion to approve the plans on the certified and completed list for the time period of 7/27/23 to 9/27/23. The motion was seconded by Bob Amberg and unanimously passed.

Stop Work Order-Matthew D'Alessandro informed the SUSCD Board that a Stop Work Order was issued for a project holding a SESC certification and NJDEP 5G3 Authorization in Warren, NJ after several complaints received resulting in deficiency notices with no response or action onsite by the applicant.

Chapter 251 Invoice-Matthew D'Alessandro presented the 4th Quarter FY 2023 Ch. 251 Surcharge invoice from the NJ Department of Agriculture in the amount of \$3,975.00. A motion was made by Matthew Loper to pay the invoice as presented. The motion was seconded by Ed Dec and unanimously passed.

Somerset County 4H Fair/Soil Tunnel- Matthew D'Alessandro presented an invoice from the Somerset County Board of Agriculture for \$750.00 as part of the cost for the Board of Agriculture tent at the Somerset County 4H Fair. The SUSCD secured the (shared) soil tunnel for the event and it was held in the tent. A motion was made by Jim Laine to pay the invoice as presented. The motion was seconded by Matthew Loper and unanimously passed.

Stop Work Order follow-up (Bridgewater, NJ)-Matthew D'Alessandro informed the SUSCD Board that he has been informed Garden Homes bought the property on Frontier Road in Bridgewater that has a current Stop Work Order issued. Garden Homes has been working onsite to temporarily grade and stabilize the site and will be submitting a new SESC application package. Nathan Charron of SUSCD has continued to monitor the progress onsite and is working with the new owner on all issues.

Audit Extension Request-Matthew D'Alessandro informed the SUSCD Board that he requested an extension for the annual audit due to transition in staff and an overwhelming amount of SESC applications being received. The extension was granted, and the new deadline is 12/11/23.

Influencing Agriculture event (Duke Farms)-Matthew D'Alessandro informed the SUSCD Board that he and Mark Kirby, Chairman (amongst many others) attended the event held by Somerset County on 9/14/23 at Duke Farms in Hillsborough, NJ. The event was well attended and featured panel discussions with local farmers about the difficulties and needs of a farmer in this region.

Bank signature removal/addition-Matthew D'Alessandro presented a Resolution to remove Jennifer Saunders as a signer on the bank accounts and to add Lisa Bernard, Executive Assistant. A motion was made by Jim Laine to approve the Resolution as presented. The motion was seconded by Bob Amberg and unanimously passed.

Executive Session-Christian Bench of the NRCS provided 1 Conservation Plan and 1 Cost Share Agreement (in advance) for discussion. A motion was made by Ed Dec to enter into closed session. The motion was seconded by Jim Laine and unanimously passed. The Board entered into closed session at 8:15 pm and discussed the requests. A motion was made by Jim Laine to exit closed session. The motion was seconded by Bob Amberg and unanimously passed. The regular meeting resumed at 8:21 pm. A motion was made by Matthew Loper to approve the 1 Conservation Plans and 1 Cost Share Agreement. The motion was seconded by Ed Dec and unanimously passed.

REPORTS:

NRCS – none

SCD – Matthew D'Alessandro informed the Board that the annual Partnership Conference will take place on 11/20/23 and it will be held at the Rutgers Eco Complex in Bordentown, NJ. Matthew reported he was thanked by the OAG office for the SUSCD involvement in the illegal dumping of soil on a preserved farm in Montgomery, NJ as part of a larger investigation throughout the State of NJ. Matthew reported that he requested to speak in January 2024 at a NJBOA event to various Construction Officials and Building Inspectors about the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Act of NJ as it relates to their departments and responsibilities. Matthew also reported that the Somerset County Park Commission expressed a desire to have SUSCD involved in a few projects involving interns from Raritan Valley Community College. Matthew will reach out to the NRCS to see if a soil scientist can visit two sites to look into the soil health and viability of those areas.

ADJOURNMENT:

Matthew Loper made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ed Dec and unanimously passed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at 12:00 noon at the district office.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew D'Alessandro
District Manager