

New Jersey Conservation District Employees Association
January 20, 2011
Meeting Minutes
Cracker Barrel, Hamilton Twp. @ 11:30 am

Michael Kent, President, called the NJCDEA meeting to order at 11:50 am.

Attendance:

Mike Kent, Courtney Davidson, Angelo Caruso, Karen Rowe, Tim Thomas, Bill Brash, Steve Grosch, Stacy Brady, Donna Cramer, Holly Reynolds, Mike Hill, Linda Sandusky

Minutes: Minutes of the September 21, 2010 meeting were reviewed. One correction was noted to change the number of members to 54 (from 55).

Motion: Angelo Caruso made the motion, seconded by Courtney Davidson, and passed to approve the 9/21/10 minutes with the one correction noted above.

Treasurer's Report:

Courtney Davidson reported that 25 members are signed up for 2011. Form 990-N was filed with the IRS on 10/13/10 to ensure our continued tax-exempt status. The e-postcard was accepted.

Beginning Balance as of 1/20/2011: **\$4,861.45**

Income:

Deposits (Sept. 2010-Jan. 2011)

Annual Conference & NRCS Joint Training	\$ 890.00
Membership Dues	\$ 240.00

Total Income **\$1,130.00**

Expenses:

Wetlands Institute Tour Donation	\$200.00
2 Vans Annual Conference Tour	\$243.98
Food/drink joint DEP/EPA meeting	\$ 68.18
2011 NCDEA Dues	\$200.00
USPS Stamps	\$ 8.80

Total Expenses **\$720.96**

Ending Balance: **\$5270.49**

Motion: Bill Brash made the motion, seconded by Mike Hill, and passed to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented.

President's Report:

Mike Kent reported that on December 17, 2010, there was a meeting with Districts and SSCC to iron out several issues including having all Districts follow the same protocol and being more uniform. He felt the meeting was productive and made some headway but there was not enough time to resolve everything.

Angelo Caruso stated that one of the main points made at the meeting was the need for better cooperation and communication between the districts and the SSCC.

As a result of this meeting, a "White Paper" draft highlighting the SSCC's mission and purpose and the role of Districts was created by Bill Brash and Frank Minch and was sent to all Districts for review and comment. Mike Kent thanked Bill for work on this.

Bill Brash reported that the SSCC is under review by the Governor and that Secretary of Agriculture Douglas Fisher had to be educated on the role of the Districts. Bill, Frank Minch, Joe Lomax and Louise Davis all met with Secretary Fisher and Monique Purcell to review and clarify several issues. The SSCC may have to inform/educate the Government Review Panel about the SSCC's duties. The Governor has stated that laws and statutes can be eliminated and offers no protection to state boards and committees. The Governor has the authority to change/eliminate the Chapter 251 statute which could possibly shift District duties over to NJDEP if the SSCC was eliminated in any review process.

Bill and Frank Minch took Secretary Fisher into the field to help him further understand the Chapter 251 program.

Mike Kent stated that the role of the Employees Association should be to:

1. Support the State Committee
2. Get all Districts to work together and have the same goals
3. Keep our program in the most "positive light"

Correspondence:

1. Tom Drewes sent a thank you for the Employee Choice Award he received in 2010.
2. National Employees Association sent a thank you for our dues payment.

Old Business:

Mike Kent set up an account for Survey Monkey and asked for feedback from the executive board on survey questions. Angelo has already responded.

New Business:

Bill reported that the new NJ NRCS State Conservationist is Donald Pettit who took over after Tom Drewes retired.

Several new bills have passed and were signed into NJ law.

1. Soil Health Bill (S1410/A2501): Develops standards for restoration of soil impacted during construction activities which will be incorporated into Chapter 251 as the SSCC, NRCS and NJDEP have been charged with creating a Soil Restoration Standard within 13 months.
2. Fertilizer Bill (S1411/A2290): Geared toward professional applicators. Districts may be called upon for enforcement. A key provision requires that at least 20 percent of nitrogen in fertilizer sold in New Jersey be the slow-release type to prevent it from easily washing into waterways.
3. Barnegat Bay Bill (S2275/A3606): Directs the Department of Transportation to conduct studies on state-owned storm water basins in the watershed and repair those that are malfunctioning.

Mike Hill reported he will be attending a grant seminar, at Ocean County College in February, and will provide an update at the next meeting.

Mike Kent reported that Ernie Thurlow is retiring March 1st which will leave a void for our elections and Employee Choice Awards. Tim Thomas and Karen Rowe will co-chair the Employee Choice Award Committee and Tim Thomas and Mike Kent will co-chair the Elections Committee. Discussion ensued on Ernie's commitment to NJCDEA for over 27 years, serving as President and Vice-President, providing training and chairing several committees.

Motion: Bill Brash made the motion, seconded by Angelo Caruso, and passed to present Ernie Thurlow with a \$100 VISA gift card for his years of service to the NJCDEA.

Courtney will purchase the gift card. Karen will forward information to Bill Brash and he will create a resolution to be presented to Ernie on his accomplishments.

Tim reported that he is now the Vice-President, Ines Grimm is the Treasurer and Angelo is the Representative on the Northeast Employees Association.

Tim is now the chair of the State Training Committee and a representative on the NRCS Training Committee. District employees may have the skills to provide assistance for NRCS trainings. He is currently reviewing the most recent training survey results. Future trainings may include expert testimony, rain gardens, organizational skills, soil health, retirement, defensive driving. (The defensive driving class should be scheduled before the end of March, 2012.)

Mike Kent wants to attend a training committee meeting, so Tim will reach out to him.

NACD's Legislative Priorities (national issues & funding) and NACD's Stewardship Theme Contest entry form were circulated.

Mike Kent would like our website updated, listing the executive board members, current members, accomplishments, training opportunities, etc. Please forward all updates to Mike who will review and then get to Victor DeVasto for posting online.

Angelo reported the Annual Conference Committee was working on review of the 2010 conference.

Discussion ensued on the 2011 NJ Envirothon.

Motion: Bill Brash made the motion, seconded by Courtney Davidson, and passed to donate \$500 to the 2011 NJ Envirothon.

NEXT MEETING Date: Thursday, April 28, 2011 at 11:30 am at Cracker Barrel in Hamilton Twp.

Motion to Adjourn: Mike Hill made the motion, seconded by Steve Grosch, and approved to adjourn at 1:20 pm.

Minutes submitted by Karen Rowe, Secretary