

**New Jersey Conservation District Employees Association
3/19/2008
Meeting Minutes
Mastoris, Bordentown @ 11:00 am**

Angelo Caruso, President, called the NJCDEA meeting to order at 11:10 am.

Attendance: Lori Hartzell, Mike Kent , Angelo Caruso, Karen Rowe, Tim Thomas, Courtney Davidson, Steve Grosch, Mike Hill, Stacy Brady, Ben Shotland, Holly Posna, Vic DeVasto, Sydele Chamoff

Minutes: Minutes of the December 10, 2007 meeting were reviewed.

Motion: It was moved by Tim Thomas, seconded by Courtney Davidson, and passed to approve the 12/10/07 minutes as presented.

Treasurer's Report:

Lori Hartzell reported that to date there are 55 members for '08.

Beginning Balance as of 3/19/08: **\$2,483.06**

Income:

Deposits (Dec. '07 – March '08)	\$5010.00
Interest (March '07 – Nov. '07)	<u>\$ 2.63</u>

Total Income \$ 5012.63

Expenses:

Freehold SCD (NE Regional reimburse)	\$ 100.00
A. Caruso (Employee Choice Award lunches)	\$ 31.00
NJACD ('08 donation memorial scholarships)	\$ 100.00
NJACD ('08 Envirothon donation)	\$ 250.00
L. Hartzell (reimburse cards 2)	\$ 6.04

Total Expenses \$ 487.04

Ending Balance: **\$7,008.65**

Motion: It was moved by Mike Kent, seconded by Ben Shotland, and passed to accept the Treasurer's Report.

President's Report:

Angelo submitted information to National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA) for their directory. He thanked Victor DeVasto for compiling information. We should receive a \$200 reimbursement for this data.

NCDEA annual dues of \$200 are due.

Motion: It was moved by Vic DeVasto to pay the NCDEA dues, seconded by Mike Kent and passed.

Recap on the revision of bylaws:

1. Executive Board positions will now be for two year terms.
2. The positions of President and Vice President are limited to no longer than two consecutive terms.
3. Membership drive will start in the fall with elections to be held by December 16th.
[Membership will continue as a calendar year]
4. Duties of newly elected officers will commence 15 days after being elected.

Thank you to Ernie Thurlow and Bill Brash for working on the revisions.

Discussion ensued on ascension of officers if a vacancy occurs. The bylaws now read that the President will select a replacement upon a vacancy, but there is not a contingency if the position of President is vacated. Angelo will contact Ernie about this.

Correspondence:

Joe Dunn forwarded the following:

- Bill Brash, Mercer SCD, was elevated to the rank of "Fellow" by the Society of American Foresters. Fellows are SAF professional members who have been identified by their peers as having rendered outstanding service to forestry and the society.
- Sheila Hall, Morris SCD, has been selected to receive an award for Excellence in Professional Service from the Pequannock River Organization

Angelo will contact Bill and Sheila to offer congratulations and Victor will post on the EA website.

Old Business:

Tim Thomas reported that one result of the Skills Assessment data is that an OSHA Safety Training has been scheduled for April 24 and 25 at the Freehold SCD office and is being hosted by the EA. To date 37 are registered and we need 40 to break even. Bill Brash has contacted NRCS to open the class up to them. All District Managers should realize that this class will not be held again for several years and encourages participation if at all possible.

A reminder to let Lori Hartzell know if any board members or district personnel pass away during '08 so that their name will be included in our annual donation to the NJACD Scholarship Fund.

Mike Kent reported on the newly formed Membership Committee [Mike Kent, Courtney Davidson, Tim Thomas, Angelo Caruso & Karen Rowe] meeting and brainstormed about ways to engage our membership. Ideas discussed included: Recruit 1 person in each District as a main contact; OSHA Training; Meerwald Training; Update our website on a regular basis (send to Victor in a timely manner); Improve communications overall; Sponsor tour at NJACD Annual Conference; Hold an EA meeting during NJACD Annual Conference; and get the Employee Choice Awards presentation on the program for the Annual Conference.

Angelo contacted Barb Rosko about our addition to the Annual Conference program and she will speak to Jim Sadley.

Victor requested that if he is forwarded anything to be posted to the website that it should specifically request that posting is required.

New Business:

Victor suggested contacting districts to see if there is interest in attending another defensive driving class, as it has been 3 years since the last. The Freehold District recently had a defensive driving class and they highly recommend their instructor.

A discussion ensued on offering training to administrative staff members and issues about getting them to attend.

Karen reported that the AJ Meerwald is available to sail out of Burlington on September 9th. We will book this and send out save-the-date info ASAP.

Elections will be completed by Friday, March 21. Mike Kent (President) and Lori Hartzell (Treasurer) are already in position, as they ran unopposed.

Mike Kent will contact Ernie Thurlow about chairing the Employee Choice Awards. Six weeks minimum is needed to order the plaques and the Annual Conference is October 20th.

Victor summarized potential repercussions of the Governor's proposal to eliminate the NJ Dept. of Ag.

- The EA recommends that District personnel [as an individual constituent] contact their legislators, and members of the Senate Budget and Agricultural Committees, with a letter, fax or email with opposition to the proposal to eliminate.
- Karen will contact each District and include information on a letter template
- Victor recommended writing letters to local newspapers
- Save the Department rally scheduled for April 1st at the State House, Trenton. Attendance is encouraged.
- Victor DeVasto, Mike Hill, Mike Kent, Angelo Caruso, Tim Thomas and Ben Shotland will serve on a committee to follow up on Save the Department action items.
- Victor will forward an employee email database to committee members and to Karen.

Motion to Adjourn: It was moved by Ben Shotland, seconded by Tim Thomas, and approved to adjourn at 1:40 PM.

NEXT MEETING: JUNE 18TH @ 11 AM @ MASTORIS

Minutes submitted by Karen Rowe, Secretary