

**RI State Conservation District
17 Smith Avenue, Greenville, RI 02828
(401) 949-1480**

MEETING MINUTES

February 16, 2005

9:45 AM

USDA/NRCS Conference Room

Ed called the meeting to order at 9:50am.

In attendance were:

Members – Ted Comerford-ERICD Representative, Paul Dolan-NRICD Representative, Gregg Cassidy-DEM Representative, Eric Offenbergs-Governor’s Appointee.

Advisors – Kevin Nelson-Statewide Planning, Judy Doerner-NRCS Rupert Friday-RI Land Trust Council, Tom Sandham, Gina DeMarco and Wendy Hoyle-NRICD

I. Minutes

**Motion to accept the January 20th meeting minutes. Gregg/Eric
Unanimous**

II. Financial Report

**The year to date financial report was distributed including the
proposed budget for FY 04-05. We discussed what the
association**

**needed for meetings and conferences. The State Committee
feels that in-state training for all the directors and partners would
be more beneficial than out-of-state conferences.**

**Motion was made to put \$2,000 for meeting and conferences in
the State Committee budget and The Association can submit a
request for each trip with funds distributed if approved. The
meeting and conference budget is not limited to the Association.
Ted/Eric Unanimous**

**Motion was made to reimburse The Association for travel to the
NACD Annual Meeting and Legislative Conference when expense
reports have been submitted. Ted/Paul Unanimous**

**The Committee also discussed the value of sending district staff
to grant writing seminars.**

III. Old Business

a. Recommendations for 2 vacant seats

A list of candidates were recommended for the 2 vacant positions on the State

Committee. Names that were recommended: Mike Flynn, Tony Donatelli, Jane

Sherman, Scott Rabideau, Meg Kerr, Dick Donnelly and Sue Albert. These

candidates will be contacted to see if they are interested in being on the State

Committee. It was decided to get the information to Wendy by February 25th via email.

Motion was made for a letter of recommendation be sent to Fred Vincent, acting

DEM Director to forward to the Governor. Ted/Eric Unanimous

IV. New Business

a. Ag Land Preservation Project

Rupert Friday, of the RI Land Trust Council, attended the meeting to present

information on a proposed study for ag land accounting. The Land Trust

Council led the open space bond in the general assembly. There are no figures

on the number of priority ag land areas and the council would like to

obtain a

real strong account of ag land for prioritization. Aquidneck Island Land

Trust has developed mapping that area for ag land. Most cities and towns are set

up with GIS maps and the information would need to be gathered.

Most of the

farms are registered, but there are still some small farms that have not. The

prioritizing of land would protect ag land long term and maximize potential for

sustainable farmland in RI. The Council is asking the State Committee to

oversee and coordinate this effort. We discussed the possibility of using an

intern to gather this information. NRCS might be able to assist with this project.

We would need the assistance of other partners to gather the information. The

American Farmland Trust has knowledge of this type of project.

Motion was made to form a subcommittee to see if we want to pursue this

further. Ted/Eric Unanimous

Those offering to be on the subcommittee are: Eric, Kevin, Tom and Rupert.

Alicia also suggested Sue Letendre.

b. Northern District Election

According to State Committee Law, the State Committee is required to publish

the districts election results. The Northern District held an election February

2nd for the seat Ed Baker vacated. Marc Tremblay was elected to the board.

We decided to pay for an ad in the local paper and also put out a press release

regarding the election.

V. Other

-Eric suggested looking into hiring an intern for the summer to create a market

campaign to promote the districts. This would need ongoing supervision. It was

mentioned that Donna Baugh-Parker, the previous NRCS Public Affairs Specialist

developed a public outreach strategy and maybe Jeanne Comerford, current Public

Affairs Specialist would be able to assist with this. No further comment was made.

The Committee will contact RI universities to inquire about marketing strategy or

marketing production students.

-Our next meeting will be April 6th in the Southern District Office.

Motion was made to adjourn at 11:20 am. Ted/Eric Unanimous