

**RI State Conservation Committee  
17 Smith Avenue, Greenville, RI 02828**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, December 14, 2006**

**USDA/NRCS Conference Room**

**9:15 AM**

**Eric called the meeting to order at 9:20 am.**

**In attendance were:**

**Members – Eric Offenbergs-Governor’s Appointee, Gregg Cassidy-DEM Designee, Paul Dolan-NRICD Appointee and Harriet Powell-SRICD Appointee.**

**Advisors – Roylene Rides at the Door-NRCS and Kevin Nelson-Statewide Planning.**

**Alicia Lehrer-SRICD, Tom Sandham-ERICD, Gina DeMarco and Wendy Hoyle-NRICD.**

### **I. Minutes**

**Motion was made to accept the October 26th meeting minutes.**

**Harriet/Gregg. Vote was unanimous.**

## **II. Financial Report**

**Financial report for expenditures through December 13th were distributed. Motion was made to accept the financial report.**

**Paul/Harriet. Vote was unanimous.**

**An invoice has been sent to the Southern District requesting \$1,500 of legislative funds. The committee decided a**

**letter should be sent to the Southern District regarding this matter.**

**The Southern District will no longer pay rent; but instead will provide NRCS with administrative assistance and RC&D will move into one of the offices. The committee discussed splitting the excess rental payment from legislative funding between the 3 districts. It was decided that each district will provide the State Committee with a list of office expenses that they incur. This will be reviewed at the next State Committee meeting.**

## **III. Reports**

### **a. Chair**

**Eric would like to see how the State Committee could assist DEM. The**

**Committee would like to be kept apprised of any new legislation that is**

**being considered that concerns environmental issues.**

**Southern has been asked**

**by the water resource board to assist them with Phase II. The districts have the**

**opportunity to attend the environment round table meetings DEM puts on.**

**Gregg will check on how we can receive the minutes of these meetings. Scott**

**and Gregg will follow up on how the State Committee can serve DEM.**

**Eric would like a meeting set up with Mike Flynn and is inviting board**

**members to join him.**

## **b. Districts**

### **SRICD**

**Alicia reported on the projects that they are working s Growing a Future with 3 sisters-Many Tribes, One People. This concerns**

**food issues/cultural issues and marketing of food.**

**s Duck Cove-they have been monitory for 5 yrs and have 1 more year of**

**monitoring. There has been an increase in salt marsh species. They will be**

**looking into where the results can be published when monitoring is complete.**

s Phase II-Working with the Town of Narragansett on implementing stormwater management plan for next year. A site plan review workshop is also planned.

s The district is close to signing a contract with DOT and URI/CE for stormwater management.

s Saw Mill Pond-North Kingstown has received their report and the district is working on meeting with residents to see what they would like done there.

s Livestock Inventory-The district is canvassing the Saugatuck/Pawcatuck watersheds to gather data on how many livestock farms are in the area and

distributing information to the farmers on programs that are available to

them. NRCS is providing funding for this project and information is given

to Gene Pepper for Div of Ag's data base.

s Mettatumet Project-The stormwater system has been inserted; final planting will be done in April.

## **ERICD**

Tom reported on the following projects the district is involved in:

s Beef Industry-The district is continuing working with DEM and

**Rhody**

**Fresh Milk on marketing strategies. There was about 10 individuals coming**

**to meetings in when first started, now 80 farms are involved.**

**There will be**

**a steering comm. meeting tonight. Farmers are ready to sell their beef, but**

**are in need of a processing plant. Since this is taking off there is need for**

**pasture lands to be improved. Tom is looking for a no till seeder. s GLCI-this initiative has more support since the beef industry project has begun.**

**s Town of Jamestown-The town has supported local farmers by purchasing drill seeders.**

**s Sakonett Vineyards-Land abutting Sakonett Vineyards has been purchase**

**with plans for 4 house lots to be sold. The vineyard is working with**

**Newport Water to own common land with the landowners and grow**

**grapes on this land. Sakonett Vineyards will fund the clearing of invasive**

**species in this area.**

**s Justine will be leaving the end of the year to further her education at UMass**

**Amherst. The district has someone in mind to replace Justine that has already been working with them.**

**s RIACD Workshop-Tom and Ted Comerford are working on holding a workshop on legislative outreach. Staff and board members are invited and they would like to invite other states in the northeast. This will be a one-day workshop in the beginning of March.**

**s Innovative Pest Management-The district, NRCS and RI Nursery held a workshop on the best ways to manage bests. This was calculated on a GPS system.**

**s Land Trust Conference-Tom will speak at the conference March 11th on how to manage municipal property where the develop rights have been sold.**

**Motion was made to write Justine a letter thanking her for her service to the State Committee. Harriet/Paul, vote was unanimous.**

**NRICD**

**Paul reported on what is going on in the Northern District:  
s The Annual Dinner will be Friday, November 4th at the Pines**

**Restaurant.**

**Eric will be receiving an award for his support to the district.**

**s Gina will be attending the Gloucester Business Expo.**

**s Scituate Watershed Projects:**

**-Drinking Water Week is the 2nd week of May.**

**Celebration Ceremony**

**of drinking water day will be held at Providence**

**Water Treatment**

**Plant on Tuesday, May 9th. Packages have gone out**

**to the teachers**

**inviting them.**

**-There will be a meeting for the stormwater project on routes 116 and 6**

**on December 19th.**

**-The district is continuing to go into elementary classrooms.**

**s Rain Garden Project-The district is hoping to work with NRCS on implementing rain gardens at schools throughout the state.**

**s Envirothon-a new coordinator has been hired that has an extensive**

**background in fundraising. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of**

**each month at 3:00 in the Chopmist office.**

**c. Advisors**

## **NRCS**

**Roylene reported for NRCS**

**s NRCS received budget allocations. The deadline for applications for farm**

**bill programs is February 10th.**

**s CSP -The sign up period will be for 30 days starting mid-January.**

**s GRP-there will probably be no additional funding for this program.**

**s EQIP-RI has been allocated over \$4 million for this program alone.**

**NRCS will broaden funding to include deer fencing; which they have set aside \$600,000 for this. Forestry and aquaculture is also included in the EQIP program.**

**s They would like to work with diesel motor issues as CA has done.**

**s They have been working with nurseries and greenhouses on title 10 energy issues.**

**s They will be working on encouraging landowners to complete their conservation practices this year.**

**s Peter has gone to Puerto Rico for the winter, leaving Eastern District**

**without a DC. An advertisement for a new DC will be published.**

**s Bill Wilson, president of NACD toured projects in RI.**

**s NRCS is asking to districts to assist them in getting farmers into the farm bill program.**

## **Statewide Planning**

**Comments are still being accepted for the State Use Plan. A public hearing**

is planned for February.

## **DEM**

Gregg reported that they will be restoring riparian buffers along streams in early spring.

The Land and Water Conference winter workshop will promote riparian restoration.

## **RC&D**

Harriet distributed a written report to the Committee, highlighting a few of their projects.

## **IV. Old Business**

### **a. Ag Land Preservation Project**

The ag land subcommittee is asking Ken Ayar's boss for assistance in moving the legal process along. Comments still need to be reviewed. A public hearing

is planned for either February or March. The Committee will contact Ken about the need for a letter of support from the committee.

They are working on how to score soils, finding soils for

**livestock is difficult.**

**b. 2006 Calendar**

**There is a conflict with the dates the Committee set up the 2006 calendar.**

**It was decided to meet the 2nd Wednesday on every other month, starting in February.**

**c. Marketing Strategy**

**Southern District reported that 10 students presented their results to them;**

**some of the ideas were good. The district plan on hiring 2 students as interns**

**to work on their web site.**

**Motion was made to adjourn at 11:10 am. Harriet/Gregg Unanimous**