

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

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

9:15 AM

Eric called the meeting to order at 9:25 am.

In attendance were:

Members – Eric Offenbergs-Governor’s Appointee, Ted Comerford-Eastern District appointee, Harriet Powell-Southern District appointee, Paul Dolan-Northern District appointee.

Advisors – Kevin Nelson-Statewide Planning, Roylene Rides-at-the-Door-NRCS

Jean Lynch, Gina DeMarco and Wendy Hoyle-NRICD

I. Minutes

Motion to accept the April 26th meeting minutes, Ted/Harriet.

Vote was unanimous

II. Financial Report

The expense report and a proposed budget for FY 06-07 were distributed.

A request of \$775 from NACD was presented to the committee. The committee chose not to contribute to NACD.

We will check with the FFOS subcommittee about needing additional funds for printing the Citizens Guide.

Motion was made to accept the expense report and the proposed budget as presented depending on funding for next fiscal year, Harriet/Paul. Vote was unanimous.

III. Reports

a. Chair

Eric is still planning on setting up a meeting with Kevin Flynn, Statewide Planning and asked district chairs to assist at this meeting.

b. Districts

Each district highlighted projects they are working on. These reports were

previously emailed to the Committee.

c. Advisors

Statewide Planning - Kevin Nelson reported that the State Land Use Plan has been approved and can be accessed through their website.

NRCS – Roylene reported that all funds have been obligated by the June 1st deadline. There are about 90 projects that are being designed.

NRCS has put in a proposal to National on restructuring the field staff based

on a watershed approach. This proposal includes having Mike Merrill and Mike

Kenyon oversee the field staff and would be beneficial in getting the work done

in a timely fashion. They are waiting to hear from National on whether they can

proceed with this set up.

Roylene emailed her full report to the Committee.

IV. Old Business

a. Ag Land Preservation Project

The subcommittee has not met recently as they were waiting for the Ag Land

Preservation Commission to complete the Rules and Procedures. A draft of the

Rules and Procedures have been approved and need to be adopted. EDC needs to review and then there can be a public hearing. The subcommittee asked that the rankings be adhered to was not included in the draft for fear that it was too restrictive. The subcommittee can speak at the public hearing regarding this issue.

b. Challenge Grants

At this time, Southern District was the only one to submit a proposal for the

Challenge grant. Southern District submitted a proposal to have Blue Wave

Consulting do a 'Financial Analysis and Costing Initiative'. This proposal would

include looking at monies spent on projects and see how they can come

up with a procedure on producing enough income to support their staff and

expenses incurred. There is concern that this may not be the best use of funds

and should be focusing on what the districts main priorities are. It may be better

use of funds to include data on expenses incurred for each

project and what is

the amount needed to cover each project. The committee asked the Association to

plan a strategic planning meeting that would include all three districts and see the

need to focus on what each districts' priorities are. Roylene was asked to contact

Jackie, NRCS, to assist in facilitating the meeting. The meeting would take place

in the fall.

The committee asked Southern district to revise the proposal to include all three

Districts and only include data on the costs of projects, including the value of

matching service provided by the districts. This would include how the districts

leverage funds. The committee asked each district to present the Blue Wave

proposal to their boards for approval.

Motion was made that after the Southern District submits a new proposal and

each district responds whether they want to be a part of this proposal; the

Committee would then vote by email by mid-July to proceed with this grant.

Ted/Harriet. Vote was unanimous.

c. Districts Responsibilities

The Northern District wrote a letter to Eric to address the issue of the districts

respecting one another when it comes to working in another's district. It was

mutually agreed upon that each district should communicate with the other

districts when planning projects out of their designated area and that policy

should be written that addresses this issue.

d. RC&D RI Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Handbook

The Committee reviewed the State Committee's actions for the handbook.

Motion was made to endorse the proposed project recommended in section

1 and 2 under 'Recommendation', Harriet/Ted. Vote was unanimous.

V. Other

-RI State Conservation Committee Statute

The amended State Committee statute was forwarded to the committee. This

was reviewed and the Committee will see how this proceeds and

**will address in a
year if needed.**

**-Roylene announced that the NRCS Chief will be in RI Thursday,
July 29th.**

**He will be visiting several locations in RI and will be meeting
with some of the
district managers and board members.**

**-Roylene will plan on attending the Regional NACD Meeting in PA
if any
district board members would like to join her.**

**Motion was made to adjourn at 10:15 am, Harriet/Ted. Vote was
unanimous.**