

17 Smith Avenue, Greenville, RI 02828

401-949-1480

MEETING MINUTES

April 28, 2010

9:15 AM

USDA/NRCS Conference Room

The meeting was called to order at 9:20

Present: Eric Offenberg, Chair; Ken Ayars, DEM; Richard Hart, Emerson Wildes, ERICD; Paul Dolan, Gina DeMarco, NRICD; Harriet Powell, Clarkson Collins, SRICD; Eric Scherer, NRCS; Dick Went, RIACD; Kristen Castrataro, URI Coop Extension; Ramona LeBlanc SCC.

I. Minutes

A motion was made to accept the January 22 minutes: Paul/Harriet: unanimous.

II. Financial Reports

A motion was made to acknowledge receipt of the financial reports: Paul/Harriet: no discussion.

III. Reports

A. Chair: Eric would like to see the composition of the SCC changed to broaden its perspective. He will pursue having two ad hoc seats added to the existing five seats. He plans to resign at the end of this Governor's term and asked the committee to think about a replacement.

B. NRICD: The Seedling Sale raised about \$2700.00. Lt. Governor Roberts will make a presentation at this year's Water Festival. Livestock workshops are underway as part of the Ag Inventory/Bio-security agreement. A flyer for a community event at Scituate High School was distributed. Students have been working on a forestry management plans as well as participating in GET WET, a program that educates them about well water testing/quality.

C. ERICD: Walter Elwell was elected Chair at the March Board meeting. Workshops for CIG, Livestock owners and a listening session for the Ag partnership were held in the District.

D. SRICD: Nomination papers for three appointed Board members were presented. Motion made to appoint Clarkson Collins, Harriet Powell and Rudi Hempe as Directors of the SRICD: Paul/Emerson, unanimous.

The District has been offered a pro-bono office at East Farm. District is waiting for final agreements with NOAA and NRCS to make repairs to a fish run at

The Village at Indian Lake (VAIL).

District is finishing Narragansett Stormwater project and is

beginning work on a wetlands survey at Canochet Farm in Narragansett. The District is also considering a 2011 Seedling Sale which would feature native seedlings.

E. NRCS: Working on EWP projects on non-agricultural lands and flood plain easements. 100% funding for repair of Equip projects damaged during recent flooding available. Approximately 90% of Equip applications have been processed and RI will be able to tap into regional equity funding. The number of TSP in the field is increasing. Energy audit training is available for 8 individuals. Will include a one day webinar, three days on farms and one day developing energy plan.

F. URI: Plant Science is developing a sustainable agriculture track for agriculture majors.

IV. Old Business

A. Reorganization: 3 month report will be developed and distributed to Boards for review. The Chair of each Board is asked to join a discussion at 9:00 am on June 16, prior to the next SCC meeting.

B. FFOS:

1. 2010 Values: Values remain the same for 2010. A funding source for a new rent value survey is being sought.

2. Farm Conservation Plans: Prototype distributed for review. Revisions will be made as needed as it is being used in field. NRCS and DEM both have reviewed and find acceptable. Each will print copies for internal and District use. Protocol of application process discussed. Motion made to accept it as presented: Paul/Harriet, unanimous. Farm associations will be contacted regarding fees and a press release will explain new process and why it is necessary. Letters that will include the resource guide and new citizen's guide to FFOS will be sent to tax assessors. SARE funding may be available to develop and present a training session for assessors.

3. FFOS Subcommittee Appointments: The three tax assessors have been reappointed and two other nominees have been submitted by Governor for Senate approval.

C. Agricultural Technical Assistance Position: Four candidates were interviewed and recommended to the SCC. Two are former State employees. The question of the propriety of channeling funds through the RIACD to pay them was raised. Opinion of auditor will be sought. Until question resolved, SCC will proceed with the one candidate still available and will pursue interviews with two other individuals.

D. Open Seats on SCC: Each District submitted a name to be considered for open seats on the SCC. The candidates are: Clarkson Collins, Paul Dolan and Emerson Wildes. A motion was made to submit these names to the Governor: Harriet/Emerson, unanimous.

E. CIG: Work completed and billed. Awaiting payment which will be split between the Districts after expenses paid.

F. Status of Grants: Both RI Foundation and Innovative Solutions grants are pending. Dick Went is also pursuing another grant for Board training with 3rd Sector New England.

IV. New Business

A: Strategic Planning: Discussion postponed until results of grant proposals are known.

B. EWP: Districts role is doubtful due to issues of eminent domain, the 25% in kind contribution required of sponsors and the operation and maintenance component of contracts.

C. Proposed Budget 2010-2011: Proposed budget, which is not final, distributed. Receipt of grants may result in lower District contributions. Motion made that SCC is in receipt of proposed budget: Harriet/Emerson, unanimous.

D. Energy audits: Previously discussed.

E. Liability Insurance for Districts: Ramona reported that insurance agent recommends that SCC members require that each District have a liability policy. Discussion of insurance issues will be placed on next agenda.

F. NACD Dues: Motion made for the SCC to pay NACD dues for all three districts and the Association in the amount of \$750.00: Harriet/Emerson, unanimous.

VI. Other

Annual Dinner: Each District is asked to discuss a combined annual dinner and be ready to present response at next RIACD meeting.

NE NACD Meeting in Portland, ME on 8/8-11.

NACD Legislative Meeting on 7/16-21.

A motion to adjourn was made at 11:20: Harriet/Paul, unanimous.