
Northern Rhode Island Conservation District

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MEETING MINUTES

April 2, 2008

7:00 PM

Paul called the meeting to order at 7:00.

In attendance were:

**Directors: Paul Dolan, Marc Tremblay, Norm Hammond, Dick Went,
Eugene Pepper; Staff: Gina DeMarco and Ramona LeBlanc. NRCS:
Kate Giorgi.**

Absent were:

Associate Directors: Ed Baker, Jean Lynch.

I. Minutes

The March 5, 2008 meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made: Dick/Gene, unanimous.

II. Treasurer's Reports

Treasurer's Report and Expense Report for March were presented. A decision was made to buy several extra rolls of "forever" stamps for PWSB, but that it was not worthwhile to tie up funds to do so for the District given the low volume of stamped mail. Motion made to accept reports: Dick/Gene, unanimous.

III. Old Business

a. Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program

A rain garden will be installed in the village of North Scituate in spring of 2008 at a site to be determined.

Most of the elementary schools have responded to book classroom presentations.

The stormwater BMP for the intersection of Rtes. 101 and 116 has been authorized by Department of Administration and the district is waiting for plans from NRCS and will also need help with writing the RFP.

A Woodscape Workshop was conducted on March 29th by Paul Boisvert.

At that event, Gina spoke to a few people who would like the advice of the District. The Board indicated that a homeowner in Gloucester should address her concerns about the flooding of her land caused by the diversion of a stream after the renovation of a small bridge by the Town in a letter to the Gloucester Town Council. Another landowner in Gloucester is interested in selling the development rights to her property. The Board outlined a plan of action for her that would include applying for the State Agricultural Land Preservation Fund, documenting the wildlife and plants on her property through a Forestry Stewardship program, informing the Gloucester Land Trust that she is interested in selling the rights.

A meeting to discuss the criteria by which a landscaper would be rated to see if eligible to be considered a partner and the 3rd quarter business bulletin will be held on April 4. A workshop has been planned to educate landscapers in environmentally safe practices will be offered. Frank Crandall has been recommended to conduct the workshop. Gene suggested that those participants who are committed to adopting “green” practices be offered credit for continuing education. The agenda and curriculum would have to be submitted to DEM to determine the number of credits that could be offered. Further interest could be stimulated by publicizing additional workshops with the offer of credits attached.

b. Wetlands Outreach and Education

Kate is developing two brochures and one is ready in draft form. Gina has sent of drafts of contracts to Burrville and North Smithfield along with various samples of poster and calendar

program and is waiting for a chance to meet with officials. The Board indicated that I might be more fruitful to go directly to school principals and have them facilitate approval from school superintendents. Time is of the essence to get a calendar printed this year. Liz is working to develop the poster program.

c. Seedling program/rain barrels

Final orders have been placed for seedlings and awaiting return email from rain barrel supplier about the number of barrels sold to date and when the sample will be delivered to site.

d. Legislative Outreach

To date, the following actions have been taken to meet the SCC's request for district to contact legislators directly to solicit their help with the upcoming budget: Paul has contacted Carol Mumford, Gene has spoke to Sue Sosnowski, a letter has been sent from Paul to Ray Church, Gina has left information for Thomas Winfield and Marc will try to contact Edwin Pacheco, Gina has asked Ed Baker to contact Paul Fogarty.

IV. Reports

a. Chair

Paul reported that he and several other representatives from the State Conservation Committee met with Mike Sullivan/DEM to discuss the upcoming budget. He has been forced to cut all pass through funding by 50 %. This amount can be adjusted by the legislature during the committee hearings. Weight will be given to the Director's

recommendations and he is supportive of the Districts. There may be the opportunity to testify, but likely with very short notice. Contacts made with legislators now increase the likelihood of their support and advocacy.

b. NRCS

Kate Giorgi attended for NRCS. The BMP stormwater design is underway and

flagging is already completed. The design is expected to be complete by the end of May.

Partners in the Pocasset project have been working with Senator Reed.

Equip ranking is completed with 11 projects getting approved with funding of

about \$1 million. Aqua culture projects ranked higher because of water quality

issues. There is a backlog of projects that were not approved that will be

Paperwork is good for three years.

CSP will run nationwide mid-April to May 18th. It will available to traditional agricultural projects only.

Funding has been restored for CIG and Mike Moorman will be reconnecting with the Districts.

Ag Management Assistance funding is available (\$35000.00)

for production loss

issues. Limited funding will mean a lot of competition for funding.

Mike wants to proceed with the livestock count because there is a better chance

now for NRCS funding. Gina will get back in touch with Scott.

A wetlands area is being created at Deerfield Park in Smithfield. Designed for educational purposes, it connects two existing wetlands.

c. Envirothon

The site for this year's Envirothon has been chosen but not yet disclosed. The date is May 15.

d. RC&D

An Open House will be held to plug various grants. DEM is funding a grant for an urban forester.

e. RDC

Nothing to report.

f. RIFCO

A chain saw safety workshop (rescheduled from earlier date) is being held on April 5. The Spring Program will be held on May 2nd at the Hope Barn (pending approval).

g. District Manager

Home*A*Syst water quality workshop was held in Burriville.

The topic of the Sand Dam Reservoir Association (Steve Hopkins) was raised again and Kate indicated that WHIP may now be open to the removal of invasive

aquatic species. NRCS has been put off by the permitting process. Gene Pepper will give her the procedure to follow. NRCS may be able could then maintain it.

V. New Business

a. Rain Garden/RI Convention

Gina will make a presentation to the RI Flood Mitigation Association on April 29th on Rain Gardens. She will look into getting a stipend for doing so.

b. NACD Request

Gina has been asked to submit a stewardship guide for church leaders. This year's topic is soil. The Board gave approval for her to work on it, if she has time and inclination.

VI: Other

a. Ag Day

Date will be ascertained and staffing issues will be addressed.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15.