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**Northern Rhode Island Conservation District**

**17 Smith Avenue - Greenville, RI 02828 - Phone (401) 949-1480 - Fax  
(401) 949-4436**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**October 8, 2008**

**7:00 PM**

**Paul called the meeting to order at 7:00.**

**In attendance were:**

**Directors: Paul Dolan, Norm Hammond, Eugene Pepper, Dick Went;  
Associate Directors: Marc Tremblay, Ed Baker. NRICD Staff: Gina  
DeMarco, Ramona, LeBlanc. NRCS: Mike Merrill.**

**Absent were: Associate Directors Jean Lynch.**

**I. Minutes**

**A motion was made to accept the minutes from the 9/5/08 meeting:  
Norm/Dick, unanimous;**

## **II. Financial Reports**

**A motion was made to acknowledge receipt the September financial statements with correction of State allocation from \$17818.00 to \$18818.00: Dick/Marc, unanimous.**

## **III. Old Business**

### **A) Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program:**

**Stormwater BMP will be started within 1- 11/2 weeks. the contract was awarded to Josh Angell.**

**Clearance has been received from DEM Wetlands and a pre-construction meeting has been held.**

**A Walk and Talk Tour was held in Scituate village to highlight various projects.**

**A draft of the 2009 calendar was distributed for review.**

### **B) Wetlands in you Backyard:**

**Poster contest underway and winners will be selected for 2009 Wetlands calendar which will be distributed in Burrillville and Smithfield. Deadline for posters is October 14. Draft of calendar distributed for review. Town Halls have been contacted for potential mailing lists which will target property owners near wetlands. Conservation commissions will also be contacted.**

**Invasives brochure almost complete.**

### **C) Ag Inventory:**

**Drive-bys in Foster have been completed and 123 livestock owners**

were found. 12 interviews were conducted, 4 mail in surveys have been received; 2-3 calls to NRCS as a result of the visits. Scituate has been started and is expected to proceed faster as fewer animals are being found.

GPS support from NRCS is needed.

#### **D) Upcoming Board Elections:**

Legal notices have been posted and elections will be held at November meeting.

### **IV. Reports**

#### **A) Chair:**

Paul thanked Gina and Ramona for their work on the Annual Dinner and noted that the rain barrel

raffle held in conjunction with the Scituate Walk and Talk was well received by those in

attendance. He is planning to attend the RC & D meeting in Connecticut.

#### **B) NRCS:**

Updates distributed. 9/30 was the end of the fiscal year and RI successfully allocated funds

available. Continuing resolution in place through 3/9/09 for Farm Bill Programs. Current version

funds agricultural producers (including forestry) through WHIP but fish passage project is no

longer funded. Meeting scheduled with Senator Reed to discuss

**Pocasset.**

**NRCS Chief to visit RI in October.**

**Lake invasives grant to be coordinated by NRICD and work will involve developing a steering committee and plans to treat two lakes. Additional funding for implementation not available through NRCS at this point. DEM approached to see if they can fund implementation.**

**C) RDC:**

**Will participate in Home Show at Ryan Center. Gerry Bertrand has cut his hours in half. Trying to obtain a grant for \$200,000.00 through Senator Reed's office.**

**D) RC&D:**

**Rhody Warm is using waste wool to manufacture garden weave fabric. Interviews for the urban forester position will be held on October 15 & 16. Stream continuity/ clear river program is underway in cooperation with Trout Unlimited. Beef cooperative is looking at a processing facility in Johnston and a packing facility in Westerly. New England meeting is to be held in Connecticut.**

**E) RIFCO:**

**Newsletters distributed. A Tree Farm tour will be held in conjunction with a Covert event on 10/25. The Annual Dinner/Silent Auction will be held in November.**

**Work underway on a**

**biodiesel/biomass conference during the winter.**

**F) District Manager:**

**RI DEM Forestry will distribute biomass pamphlets to PMS.**

## **V. New Business**

**A) Credit Card:**

**As more products are being ordered online, the need for a District credit card was discussed.**

**Gina will investigate getting a debit card for the Dexter Credit Union checking account.**

**B) SCC Meeting:**

**A brainstorming meeting will be held on 10/29 to discuss the future of the districts and strategies**

**for dealing with financial constraints. The idea behind meeting is to be proactive rather than**

**reactive to worsening conditions. There will be two areas of discussion. First the idea of**

**consolidating the 3 districts in some way will be explored to weigh the possible benefits. As Southern**

**currently does not have an office and Eastern is in danger of closing its doors, this may be necessary**

**and the best way to manage will be discussed. Additionally, ideas for new sources of work will be**

**discussed. Among ideas under consideration: look at the**

**new Farm Bill with the districts in mind to**

**see if there is funding available for projects similar to those undertake by the districts in the past, send**

**a letter to State department chiefs and deputy chiefs reminding them that the districts are available to**

**do work that they have funding for but not enough staff to complete (a draft letter was circulated), ex-**

**plore the possibility of a state retiree volunteering to steer Eastern and Southern towards contract**

**(conflict of interest requires a waiting period after retirement).**

**NRCS would like to enter contracts with RIACD. They will no longer pay districts for use of offices in case of emergencies but, instead, will pay a 15% administrative fee on all contracts that will be used to help cover RIACD's overhead. Board expressed some concerns about the role of RIACD and**

**the point was raised that it was formed with the intent of being a pass through for grants (especially those requiring a 501c3 organization).**

**If the Board is to be comfortable with RIACD's emerging stronger role, the by-laws will need to be reviewed and possibly changed to ensure equal representation by all the districts. There needs to be clarification about representation, who votes and when elections can be held.**

**Although the consolidation of the 3 districts into one would require legislation, the Board acknowledged that in a state so small it might be more efficient to do so. The idea of 3 boards with satellite offices operating from a shared space on a daily basis was discussed. There**

**was concern expressed over moving to NRCS in case offer was ever rescinded. Unless other space was donated, NRICD's current rent makes it a good choice for a central office.**

## **VI. Other**

**Bill Colburn, a former longtime Board member died and a memorial service will be held 10/9; Gina and Norm will represent the District.**

**A motion to adjourn was made at 8:45: Norm/Dick, unanimous.**