

Eastern Rhode Island Conservation District
2490 Main Road – Tiverton, RI 02878 – Phone (401) 816-5667

ERICD Board Meeting
July 9, 2013
7:00 PM

Chairman Emerson Wildes called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

Present were: ERICD: Directors: Emerson Wildes, Dick Hart, Suzanne Hourihan, Ron Mucci; District Manager: Jessica Blackledge; RISCC: Ramona LeBlanc.

- I. Minutes: A motion was made to accept the minutes of the June 11, 2013 meeting as presented by Ron and seconded by Suzanne. Motion passed unanimously.
- II. Financial Report: Financial Report was presented. Board agreed that they like the format of the Financial Report. Account balances, income and invoicing process was discussed. Written checks will be submitted to pay bills from this point forward to prevent the recent issues observed with the online banking process. Suzanne made a motion to accept the Financial Report as presented. Dick seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.
- III. NRCS Report: A written report was presented to the Board. NRCS was not in attendance. Jessica stated that any questions or comments on the NRCS Report should be directed to Matt Richardson or Melissa Hayden.
- IV. RI SCC Report: A written report was submitted.
 - A. Ramona reported that the State Committee will supplement the District for the next few months to cover rental costs of the ERICD office to total \$3600. This supplement will be provided in monthly installments to cover rental costs contingent upon development of a District Operational Strategy Plan and monthly Progress Reports which the District will provide to the RI SCC at monthly meetings.
 - B. Ramona also informed the Board that a final discussion on the SCC/District Memorandum of Understanding will be held at the next RI SCC meeting. Any questions, suggestions or edits that Board Members may have may be directed to Ramona or presented by attending the next RI SCC meeting.
- V. Reports:
 - A. District Manager: A written Report was provided. Jessica reported that she will be utilizing a new format for the District Manager Report, Agenda and Notes to make meeting facilitation more clear and informative. Highlights of the DM Report and Board activity on same are as follows:
 1. Project Updates:
 - a. Geese: Jessica reported that work has begun on this agreement and she has started scheduling the first round of educational workshops associated with this project. The workshop dates and locations will be finalized this month and publicity will begin once this is completed. Jessica also reported that the first Quarterly Report for this agreement was submitted to DEM on July 1 and has been accepted.
 - b. Outreach: ERICD's next "NRCS Open House" workshop associated with this agreement will be scheduled within the next week. The workshop is projected to be held in August. Any suggestions for locations/ venues are appreciated. Board suggested looking into tabling at the Portsmouth 4H Country Fair and the Norman Bird Sanctuary Harvest Fair.
 - c. FFOS: DM Three FFOS Farm Conservation Plans were completed this month. DM will continue writing FFOS plan as work as available and necessary

2. Other Announcements:
 - a. DM attended and represented ERICD at both the RI SCC Policy & Budget Meeting on June 21, 2013 and the RWP Pond Restoration Steering Committee Meeting on June 25, 2013.
 - b. DM is working with RIACD and the other Districts on developing a charitable donations procedure for those that would like to donate money, goods, etc. to the Conservation Districts. Any Board Member interested in assisting with this is welcome and encouraged to participate.
 - c. DM is working with the other Districts and the SCC to finalize the Fee for Services menu which, once available to municipalities and the general public, may provide some much needed income for the Eastern District.
 - d. DM has begun discussion with our partners at NRCS regarding the need and potential for an Ag Tech agreement similar to the agreement Northern District currently has.
 - e. Ken Ayers has requested that the Board discuss and reply as to whether the Eastern District would like to continue to be involved with the Conservation Plan for 8 Rod. The ERICD Board asked Jessica to ask Ken what role he suggests the District play and if there is a current Conservation Plan for 8 Rod
 - f. Dick Went has requested ERICD participation on a steering committee for planning the NACD Northeast Regional Meeting that is scheduled to be held in RI in August 2014. All District Board Members and staff are encouraged to assist and participate in this planning process. Suzanne stated her interest in serving on this steering committee

3. Office Updates

- a. The ERICD Office Phone Service Agreement was updated per the Board's direction to include unlimited local and long distance, adding \$15.00/mo to our current phone plan. This was completed on June 13, 2013.
- b. Petty Cash Account: Previous balance in account: \$149.39; deposit of \$780.00 was made to allow DM to write a check for the same amount for May and June rent; Remaining balance in account is \$149.39

B. Chair: Emerson reported on attending the RI SCC/District Policy & MOU meeting. He also reported that Eric Offenburg is still looking to step down from his position as Chair of the RI SCC. Any suggestions that the Board may have on individuals whom they would like to see considered for the position of SCC Chair should be directed to the State Committee as soon as possible. Emerson also asked the ERICD Board if another ERICD Board Member would be interested in relieving him as ERICD representative on the RI SCC Board. No Board Member stated interest. Finally, Emerson suggested that the ERICD Board approach Eric Offenburg regarding his level of interest in becoming an ERICD Board Member and/or acting as the ERICD Board representative in the event that a replacement is found for his position as Chair of the RI SCC.

C. Directors:

1. Dick reported on activities on his farm, the death of 90% of his oysters due to low salinity in Almy Creek and helping to resolve questions related to the sale of a local piece of property.
2. Suzanne reported completion of conservation practices on her farm and the work she has done this month networking with other landowners and farmers on NRCS programs.
3. Ron had nothing to report.

VI. Old Business:

- A. Rain Barrel: Nothing to report
- B. Board Recruitments: Jessica reported that she has provided the Board with two draft versions of the letters she intends to send to those interested and those recommended to be approached regarding serving on the ERICD Board. Jessica asked for feedback from the Board and stated that she intends to mail these letters as soon as the Board responds with comments.

- C. Tiverton Harbor Committee Request: Jessica reported that Chip Lawrence of the Tiverton Harbor Commission is currently working on a Letter of Request for District Assistance that she expects to receive in the near future.
 - D. Geese Abatement Agreement: Jessica reported that work has begun on this agreement and she has started scheduling the first round of educational workshops associated with this project. The workshop dates and locations will be finalized this month and publicity will begin once this is completed. Jessica also reported that the first Quarterly Report for this agreement was submitted to DEM on July 1 and has been accepted.
 - E. Lease: Jessica asked the Board if they are ready to sign the lease as requested by the new Property Managers. The Board requested that Jessica resend the lease for the Board to review.
- VII. New Business
- A. Operational Strategy Development to Reduce/Eliminate Expected 2014 Budget Deficit: The Board decided to hold a special meeting on Wednesday, July 17, 2013 at 7 pm to begin development of a plan to address the expected budget deficit.
 - B. Board Recruitments:
 - 1. RI Foundation's Initiative for Nonprofit Excellence – Emerging Leaders Mentoring Program: Jessica reported to the Board on this opportunity and stated that if any are interested in pursuing this opportunity the RIF will be holding a free informational session on July 11, 2013.
 - 2. RI Foundation's Initiative for Nonprofit Excellence – Board Referral Program: Jessica reported to the Board on this opportunity and the information ERICD will need to develop/compile to pursue this opportunity. The Board expressed interest in pursuing this opportunity and asked Jessica to assist the Board with development of the necessary information.
 - C. Fundraising Opportunities: Jessica reported on an opportunity to raise funds for the district through Alex & Ani's Charmed by Charity events. The Board stated their interest in pursuing this opportunity and asked that Jessica look into what it will take to develop this opportunity and report back.
 - D. Other: Ron made the suggestion that NRCS staff might provide presentations on NRCS Programs during the Board meetings in place or in addition to their report on the month's activities. This will be added as an item under Old Business on next month's agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2013 at 7:00pm.