

**DRAFT MINUTES FOR
Eastern RI Conservation District
PO Box 158 – Tiverton, RI 02878 – (401)-816-5667
ERICD Board Meeting
June 9, 2015 7:00 pm Sandywoods
73 Muse Way (Yellow Building), Tiverton, RI 02878**

I. Call to Order, Introductions: The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm. Present were: Directors: Russ Smith (Chair), Emerson Wildes, Nancy Parker-Wilson, and Ron Mucci; ERICD District Manager: Jessica Blackledge; NRCS DC: Melissa Hayden; NRICD: Molly Allard; and RIACD: Jean Lynch.

II. Changes/ Additions to Agenda: Items VI. A. Statewide Service Opportunity and VI. C. 2015 Annual Dinner were moved up in meeting order to just after item III to accommodate the schedules of meeting guests M. Allard and J. Lynch.

III. Minutes from May 12, 2015 Meeting: Minutes were presented via email in advance of the meeting and in hard copy during the meeting to those that required it. The only correction requested was to remove the word “organic” from Russ Smith’s Director’s Report on the Weaver Public Library’s Farmers Market. Emerson moved to accept the minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Ron and passed unanimously.

VI. New Business (Moved up in agenda as previously noted)

A. Statewide Service Opportunity (Presented to ERICD Board by Molly Allard, NRICD) – Molly Allard of the NRICD attended the ERICD Board meeting to present to the ERICD on a Statewide Service Opportunity related to Classroom Education opportunities through partnership with Gems-Net. Gems-Net is a partnership among University of Rhode Island’s School of Education, Scientists & Engineers, and public school districts that supports STEM teaching and learning for Kindergarten through grade 8. Gems-Net creates curriculum packages of in-classroom programs and lists the organizations that can present those programs to students. The educators/schools can use this list to hire organizations on a fee-for-service basis to present education programs in the classroom. Currently, NRICD is interested in listing for their water quality education program.

The NRICD is asking the ERICD if they would like done in the event that schools in Eastern District contact NRICD wanting to hire their services in presenting their education programs to students:

- ~ should NRICD take the lead in presenting this program to classrooms in Eastern District or
- ~ should NRICD train ERICD staff in presenting this program for Eastern district schools or
- ~ should NRICD do nothing in the Eastern District?

Emerson made a motion that the ERICD pursue this opportunity by asking that the ERICD be notified of the costs associated with presenting the program and that NRICD take the lead on presenting this program in the Eastern District unless and until the demand for this program requires ERICD involvement. Ron seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

B. 2015 Annual Dinner – Jean Lynch, RIACD attended this month’s ERICD meeting to discuss with the Board their interest in participating in one statewide Annual Dinner. Emerson moved that the ERICD would be interested in participating in on Statewide Annual Dinner in 2015. Nancy seconded the motion. A short discussion was held in which a few members cited their concern related to people from Eastern attending should the event be held too far from Eastern District. Suggestions such as Mt. Hope Farm were mentioned. Russ has volunteered to be the ERICD Representative for the Annual Dinner subcommittee. A vote was held and passed with Nancy, Russ and Emerson in support and Ron abstaining.

IV. Reports:

A. NRCS – Melissa provided a written NRCS activity report and provided training and information on NRCS’s Critical Area Planting practice. Melissa also informed ERICD that the Northern Long-eared bat has been listed and will result in changed to operation schedules for farmers cutting trees with restrictions between June 1 & August 1 each year.

B. Financials –Michelle Place provided a written Financial Report via mail for use in the ERICD meeting. Copies were provided to all Board Members during the meeting. Russ reported that Ramona has left her employment with the RI SCC and that Eric Scherer is acting interim replacement. Emerson reported that the RI SCC has sent out invitations for interviews. Emerson will reach out to the RI SCC and Eric to discuss the new staff person’s job description and the various tasks the SCC staff has provided for us in the past. Nancy made a motion that the ERICD is in receipt of the financial reports. Motion was seconded by Ron and passed unanimously.

C. RISCC – No report.

D. RIACD – Jean Lynch briefly reported on the Annual Dinner and RIACD activities.

E. District Manager – DM provided a written report in hard copy during the meeting and provided highlights orally to the board. DM notified Board of receiving bill from Farm Family Life for Director’s Liability Insurance. Nancy moved that the ERICD pay this bill. Motion was seconded by Emerson and passed unanimously.

F. Directors

- ~ Emerson reported attending the RI SCC meeting and Ag Council meeting this past month.
- ~ Nancy reported on her involvement in establishing/ determining zoning laws in Middletown related to accessory uses on farms. A Town Hearing was held on Monday, June 8th with standing room only. Nancy reported that the Farmers showed in large numbers. The Town Council voted 7-0 to

approve new Zoning Regulations related to Accessory Uses on farms. Nancy also reported that she has planted 560 new Albarino vines on her farm.

- ~ Russ reported that he has started a home-based dog sitting service.
- ~ Ron stated that he had nothing to report.

V. Old Business

A. Board Recruitment – The Board discussed other people that may be interested in Board Service. DM asked Ron to follow-up with Jay Miller, who had shown interest in Board Service in the past, given their acquaintance. Ron agreed to contact Jay.

B. Cooperative Projects - Sandywoods Farm & RWU Sustainability Student Projects – Last month the ERICD Board was curious if there would be a follow-up meeting with the RWU Professor (Steve Esons) to discuss accomplishments, setbacks and possibility for continued partnership in the coming semesters. DM stated she had lodged a request for such a meeting with Maria Mack of the RI SCC during the last SCC meeting. Maria indicated that she would try to set up a meeting with Professor Esons, but the DM has heard nothing in the way of progress as yet.

C. FFOS Planning – One enrollee has submitted a plan written by a consultant and the associated Review and Administrative Fee. This fee has been deposited and the review was performed this month with a recommendation to send back for revision provided to the Board for decision at this Board meeting. A discussion was held related to Plan Requirements and contents of plan under review.

Last month Suzanne made a motion that the District respond to the enrollee in writing with a request that a condensed summary including all items detailed are required in the RI Resource Management Guide be developed and submitted to be included as an Abstract/ Executive Summary for ease of review while also addressing items detailed as needing clarification or edit. The motion was seconded by Nancy and passed unanimously.

This month the ERICD Board directed the DM to draft said letter for review at the July Board Meeting and subsequent edits and Board signature. The Board also instructed DM that if the Landowner calls to inquire about status to inform him that it is still currently in the process of being reviewed by the Board.

D. NOFA/RI MOU – The NOFA/RI MOU currently under consideration by the SCC and the Districts was presented to the ERICD Board via email in advance of the meeting and hard copies were provided at the meeting for those that required it. The ERICD Board held some discussion and is in support of this agreement but prefers to wait and hear of the outcome of discussions at the RI SCC level before taking any action in this regard. Emerson has agreed to reach out to the SCC to get minutes from their last meeting and clarification on what is expected under this MOU.

E. RI SCC Strategic Planning –

VI. New Business

- A. Statewide Service Opportunity** – addressed earlier in minutes as previously noted.
- B. FY 2015-2016 Budget** – Eric Scherer provided a Draft FY 2015-2016 Budget. Upon review, the Board has many questions. Russ declared that the ERICD will schedule a time with Maria Mack, Chair RI SCC to discuss the contents of this budget.
- C. 2015 Annual Dinner** – Addressed earlier in minutes as previously noted.
- D. District Procedures & Policies**
 - 1. Monthly Reimbursement Form and Procedure** – Ron made a motion that staff monthly reimbursements be processed without requiring a signed reimbursement form for any amount up to \$400 per month. Nancy seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.
 - 2. Where To Send Checks for ERICD Signatures** – A motion was made by Nancy that in the future all checks requiring ERICD signature be sent to ERICD's P.O. Box address (P.O. Box 158 Tiverton, RI 02878). The motion was seconded by Emerson and passed unanimously.
- E. Post Office Box** – DM reported that the P.O. Box ERICD has been renting is due for renewal. The fee is \$36 for a 6 month rental. A motion was made by Emerson and seconded by Nancy to pay the P.O. Box rental fees for another 6 months out of the Petty Cash account.
- F. Director Fundraising Assignments** – Russ declared this item tabled until the July 2015 meeting.
- G. Geese Agreement and Reporting** – Board Members Emerson Wildes, Nancy Parker-Wilson and Russ Smith will meet with DM at Moose Café on Monday, June 15, 2015 at 12PM to discuss project progress and obstacles in completing this project and develop a completion plan.

VIII. Adjourn – Russ declared the meeting adjourned at **10 pm.**

Next Meeting: July 14, 2015 at 7PM at Sandywoods.