

**Southern Rhode Island Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting**

Minutes of June 12, 2006

Present: Board Members: Pat Lenihan, Chair; Harriet Powell, Secretary; Steve DelPozzo, Treasurer; Rudi Hempe; Clarke Collins. Associate Members: Marjorie Weeden, Kelly Fox, Harvey Buford, Ross Adrain. Staff: Alicia Lehrer, District Manager; Patty Tanalski, Kris Stuart, Patty Gambarini, Susan Letendre. NRCS Conservationists: Mike Kenyon, Mike Merrill.

The meeting was called to order at 6:05.

Pat asked for any additions to the agenda. Harriet asked that SRICD consider appointing another permanent member (the District is allowed 2) to RC&D. Also added, update on possible NRCS move from 60 Quaker Lane and update on Saw Mill Pond project.

Minutes: Minutes for April, under the heading *Growing a Future* amended to read, DOT transported at no charge. Steve made the motion and Harriet seconded.

Financial Reports: (see financial drafts accompanying these minutes passed out to members by Alicia and accompanying these minutes)

Cash flow: Books indicate that the District has sufficient funds to avoid laying off Alicia. Line of credit amount is subject to change. Future forecast and current spending looks stable. No rent to pay and the raising of our rates are suggested as reasons for rosier outlook, but no absolute answers. Re: Challenge grant from State Committee, do we go ahead with Mitch Turner of Blue Wave Consulting and apply for a capacity building grant from the RI Foundation and hold off asking State Committee to consider the expense of financial consulting for all three Districts since Eric Offenberg, Chair of the State Committee, appears wary of the consultant. Alicia feels that situation urgent and suggests that Board vote to go ahead with Blue Wave and invite other Districts to participate and ante up their share. Grant is for maximum of \$5000. Harriet made a motion that the Southern District undertake to hire Mitch Turner of Blue Wave Consulting to provide the District with financial advice and strategy for success and that if other Districts wish to participate they will be invited to do so. Steve added that cost should not exceed \$2,900 to work with District and other Districts are free to piggy back and pay a share. Rudi seconded and the motion carried,

Possible NRCS move to another location: Roylene not happy with current location. If moved, District would not be able to afford new quarters. Rudi has talked with Rich Schartner about moving into his new facility in NK/Exeter (the wedding barn), which would have office space on the second floor and could be partitioned off for various groups/entities. There is no information on possible price or when such quarters might be available to the District. Plusses include being more central in the Southern District,

convenient and easy to find. Lease on current building runs out on October 1st, but no decision on moving has been made as yet.

Reports:

Conservationist Report: Mike Kenyon reported on current NRCS activity. He also submitted a Southern RI Conservation District Quarterly Report, a NRCS Conservationist Report May Update, a NRCS Conservationist Report Summary Activity Log and a CIG FY 2006 Grants Selected for Funding document (accompanying these minutes). Mike reported lots of activity; 25 EQIP and 12 WHIP grants approved with over \$1.7 mil in funding. Other activity also increased and early completion of applications allowed branching into other programs. Follow up continued on previous years contracts, and significant new activities include working with the Narragansett Tribe, URI and the Land Conservancy of North Kingstown. Mike also submitted a map (attached) that shows how he and Mike Merrill would divide up the state between them and be responsible for the territory in RI, if a proposal they made to Roylene is accepted. They have proposed to Roylene that together, they take on and divide the duties of a job advertised by NRCS while continuing to do their original jobs. The newly advertised job was mainly administrative and by having Mike and Mike do, more field time will be the benefit. The proposal still needs regional approval. Alicia feels that it would be a benefit to the Southern District.

RIACD: No meeting since the last report

RC&D: As stated in last month's RC&D report: work continues on Dry Hydrant program and Rhody Warm (with RDC). Soil and Sediment Handbook has tristate status, the Coverts program is continuing, and a new initiative, a Forest Stewardship Pilot Program for forest owners in northern part of State is in initial stages. Reforesting of Black Ash and Walnut for Narragansett Tribe is also continuing. Chris is going to attend the RC&D conference in Savannah starting on June 19, and RC&D continues to work on 100th anniversary of RI Forestry event in the fall. Vote on new member for RC&D. Patty Tanalski does minutes and Board would like to know if she would qualify as a member under by-laws of RC&D.

RI Ag Council: Meets quarterly, Steve submitted report last month

RIRDC: Work continues on RI meat products and Narragansett Bay mussel study. RDC's South County Tourism Initiative resulted in a South County newspaper insert that was published in RI Central papers in South County the week of June 19. RC&D has 45,000 copies for distribution and would like additional ideas as to where they might place them for distribution during the summer season. If you have any suggestions, please call Gerry Bertrand, Exec. Dir. of RDC at 667-0071. Upcoming, Washington County State Fair in August. June 22 Exec meeting cancelled and next meeting is in July.

RI State Committee: Meeting is on June 14th.

RI State Technical Team: No report.

Other:

- **Coventry Financial Meeting.** Ross attended and reported that funding for SRICD is planned.
- **Power of Place Summit.** Attendees felt that conference was less valuable than previous conferences, that issues were more local than global, that the Governor was absent and that coverage by municipalities was incomplete. Pat summed up by saying that she noticed that builders, developers, etc., did not have a stake in the process and without them on board, no state planning would probably work.
- **Meeting on Emergency Preparedness, re: hurricanes.** Alicia reported that Barrington would be hard hit as so close to sea level. Also, if you have a boat, take lots of pictures.

Program Updates where needed:

Growing a Future/Three Sisters Moving along. Filling of beds put off, and planting is scheduled for next week.

North Kingstown Workshops On June 21st, for town employees re watersheds and on June 28th the Town is hosting a workshop with agencies to get input on upland Stormwater management.

Storm Water Center, Phase II Implementation Narragansett Patty G. Narr. Park and Recreation enthusiastic about upcoming training program on Parks and Rec. Dept works only on Town land, but school athletic fields fall under School Transportation budget, not Parks and Recreation, and pesticide/herbicide use is heavy at these locations. Patty will discuss with Town and explore workshops and consulting to come to consensus.

Livestock Inventory 17 farms surveyed in Saugatucket Watershed. Issue: Is manure located or stored within 200 feet from sensitive soils? Could be contamination problem.

NK Saw Mill Dam Project Getting cost estimates. Using borrowed NRCS radar equipment to determine depth and sediments in pond.

New Business:

Livestock Expansion To complete Pawcatuck and do rapid watershed assessment (Patty will work on). A new contract between SRICD and NRCS for \$42,000.

RICAPE Goal: a garden at every school. SRICD put in a proposal to do a pilot program with 7 schools for \$65,000. Ways will be examined, consistent with goal, for SRICD to help water users become educated on the best-practices use of water.

Sprinkler Man Film Possibility of Ross starring in Water Resources Board film and workshop for automatic sprinkler owners/users on how to reset their sprinkler systems for optimum water savings.

Environmental Review Team Harvey has arranging a pilot program in Hopkinton for shake-down of ERT team. According to Harvey, \$600 will be available to offset costs.

Old Business:

Seedling Sale Update \$3,800 taken in, which does not include staff time. Rain highlighted need for waterproof ink and other materials. A more efficient method of handling plants should be investigated.

Sustainability Festival Workshop Sold 13 copies of Future of Food in 5 minutes after a showing at Festival.

Ag Day Don Minto was featured speaker and was very interesting.

Legislative Booth Day Peter Ginaitt announced that Conservation Districts were there and their importance. It was satisfying to have the legislators reminded of our presence and our areas of expertise.

River Fest June 24th. Kelly will be staffing a booth at River Point Park, West Warwick on Pawtuxet River.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Harriet Powell, Secretary of SRICD, with much appreciated help from Susan Letendre.