

**SOUTHERN RHODE ISLAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD JANUARY 25, 2016
AT THE URI MASTER GARDENER FIELD HOUSE**

Present: Clark Collins, Chair; Rudi Hempe, Dir.; Harvey Buford, Treasurer; Carl Sawyer, Secretary; Antonia Bryson, Dir.; Peter Stetson, Assoc. Dir.; Kate Bousquet, District Manager; Jake Peterson, SRICD staff; Naomi Andrews, SRICD staff.

I. Clark called the meeting to order at 4:08PM.

II. Acceptance of December 28, 2015 meeting minutes. Minutes amended to read '40 applicants' in Old Business part A. Motion to approve minutes as amended passed (Rudi, Harvey, unanimous).

III. Reports

A. Financial Statement: Kate provided a written statement and went over the new format which showed the current month as well as the previous two months. Motion to approve as written passed (Rudi, Harvey, unanimous). Report on file.

B. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report: John Richard, NRCS, was unable to attend. Kate went over a written report submitted by John. Of note: application deadline for new projects has been extended to Feb. 12. New initiatives will include funding for Monarch butterfly and native bee habitat, scrub/shrub habitat, and urban farming.

C. Envirothon Report: Peter reported that workshops on GIS/online mapping and wildlife would be held in Feb. and March. A fundraising breakfast (\$10/person) will be held at Dave's Bar and Grill in Warwick on Sunday, April 3rd. A gift of \$1427 was received from Trout Unlimited for purchase of stream water test kits. The 2016 competition is currently scheduled for May 20th at the Kent County YMCA.

D. District Manager's Report: Kate introduced Jake Peterson and Naomi Andrews, recently hired Ag Tech support staff. Jake and Naomi will also be doing part time work with NRCS and other RI Districts. Kate noted that the Southern District will be purchasing a much-needed laptop under the Ag Tech agreement. Kate submitted a detailed progress report which is on file. Of Note: NRCS would like the Districts to be involved in planning and establishment of the *RI Farmer Training School and Demonstration Farm Program*. Kate has been asked to develop a farm plan for land to be purchased for the project. Kate's time spent on the project would qualify for Ag Tech funding. There was discussion of the RI DOT storm water treatment initiative being considered as a fee-for-service project. Peter suggested that this might be an opportunity to get high school students involved in GIS training to locate storm drains and identify watersheds with SRICD overseeing training.

IV. Old Business

A. Potential Project: Denitrification Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems(OWTS) testing. Carl and Kate reported on their meeting with Jose Amador and George Loomis at URI regarding OWTS sampling and sample analysis. After discussion, it was decided that the project would entail more oversight, training and regulatory issues than the District felt it could handle at this time. Kate will reply to Peter Ogle, Quonochontaug East Beach Water Association, regarding our decision.

B. Office Lease Update: Kate reported that Rick Rhodes, URI/CELS, was in the process of presenting lease agreement to the Board of Governors for approval and did not foresee any problems.

C. Story Map. Peter has been working on the story map and encouraged Board members to provide him with photographs.

D. Website: Kate noted that the SRICD website need revamping and asked Board members to provide input before the February meeting.

V. New Business

A. 2016 Annual Dinner Planning: There will be a dinner planning meeting Feb. 8th at 9:15AM at Brewed Awakenings in Warwick. Carl and Kate will attend.

B. 2016 Land and Water Summit: Kate reported that the Summit will be held March 19 and that the District would have a table. Board members were encouraged to attend and assistance with the display would be appreciated.

C. District Directorships: There was, once again, discussion of procedures for District director appointment/election. Antonia volunteered to research the issue.

D. East Farm Spring Festival: The District will have a table at the May 14th Festival this year. Board member assistance manning the table would be appreciated.

Motion to adjourn at 5:45 PM. Harvey, Antonia.

The next Board meeting will be held on February 22th, 2016 at 4:00PM at the Master Gardener Field House.

Minutes submitted by Carl Sawyer, Secretary, SRICD