

**SOUTHERN RHODE ISLAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT (SRICD)  
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD JUNE 27, 2016  
LITTLE RIVER FARM, WILLIAM REYNOLDS ROAD, EXETER, RI**

Present: Clark Collins, Harvey Buford, Rudi Hempe, Antonia Bryson, Jake Peterson (SRICD), John Richard (NRCS)

Absent: Kate Bousquet, Carl Sawyer

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Collins called the meeting to order at 4 pm. All concurred that the operation at Little River Farm deserved an award at the annual meeting.

**II. Acceptance of May 23, 2016 Minutes**

H. Buford moved the acceptance of the minutes as presented. A. Bryson seconded and approval of the motion was unanimous.

**III. Reports**

The monthly statement was reviewed and seen to be in balance. H. Buford moved to accept and R. Hempe seconded. The motion was approved.

J. Richard reported that NRCS was still obligating contracts, as deadlines moved closer. All contracts will be signed by the end of July. He has received \$370,000 more than previously allotted for the Southern District. This will be distributed to three more oyster projects. NRCS is promoting the Conservation Stewardship Program, which provides good land stewards with payments to bring their properties to the next level of conservation. They did a lot of outreach and allocated 400 acres for contract.

C. Collins reported on the meeting of the RISCC, which focused on the recent cuts by the State of all funding for the districts. S. Churgin of the Eastern District is working on a letter to legislators to support funding for the districts in the next budget. Southern has received \$18,000 annually for the last two years, of which we provided \$6,000 to RISCC. There was a discussion of other steps we could take to restore State funding, including advocating with DEM and working with the media to raise awareness of the District's activities and their importance. Jake will put together a list of legislators in our District and their contact information.

The District Manager's Report was accepted as submitted.

**IV. Old Business**

The 2016-17 budget put together by K. Bousquet was reviewed. It reflected the State cuts. R. Hempe suggested applying to foundations for grants to cover the shortfall. H. Buford suggested we determine whether some cuts were manageable, then apply for grants as we had tightened our operations. We could ask the land trusts on whose properties we provide services to include us in their grant

applications. We could also try to increase business with the towns in our district. Another idea is to review the overhead expenses we submit for NRCS grants and determine if they are too low.

H. Buford moved to accept the FY 2017 budget as submitted, R. Hempe seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

**V. New Business**

C. Collins undertook to talk to D. Went of the National Association of Conservation Districts, to look into contacting foundations, and to complete talking points for legislative outreach.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm.