

**SOUTHERN RHODE ISLAND CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING HELD April 24, 2017
AT THE URI MASTER GARDENER FIELD HOUSE**

Present: Antonia Bryson, Chair; Harvey Buford, Treasurer; Carl Sawyer, Secretary; Clark Collins, Director; Peter Stetson, Associate Director; Melissa Hayden, NRCS District Conservationist; Kate Bousquet, District Manager.

I. Antonia called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM.

II. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the March 27, 2017 meeting were approved with amendments. Revised minutes are on file.(Clark, Antonia, unanimous).

III. Reports

- A. Financial Statement:** Kate submitted a written Treasurer's Report/Financial Statement. There were no issues and the new format was well-received.
- B. NRCS Report:** Melissa went over her written report which is filed with these minutes.
- C. RI Envirothon:** Peter reported that the state competition would be held at URI's East Farm on May 19th. The organization is looking for another vendor for the lunches as the cost for the traditional hamburger meal has crept up. The national competition will be in Maryland, which is good in that it is within driving distance and will keep expenses down. Peter presented a GIS workshop for educators at RIC.
- D. RI Ag Council:** Carl noted that the next meeting would be held at the Richmond Grange on May 18th.
- E. District Manager's Report:** Kate provided a detailed written report. There was discussion regarding the NRCS RCPP Soil Health project, a state-wide initiative which is being administered by the Southern District through Kate's efforts. Applications for soil sampling are being received.

IV. Old Business

- A. Update on Funding from State Budget:** Kate reported that the three District Managers, Antonia and Dick Went (RIACD) attended a hearing before a sub-committee of the House Finance Committee regarding Conservation District and RI State Conservation Committee funding through DEM's budget. Kate thought the hearing went well and thought that the House would probably vote on the item in May. Kate said Sarah Churgin, ERICD District Manager, followed up on the hearing by contacting and thanking Rep. McEntee.
- B. Other: Follow-up on How to Better Serve Constituents:** Antonia asked if more thought had been given to last month's discussion of how the District might proceed in reaching out to constituents to let them know about services we can provide, and/or see if there were new ideas for providing assistance. It was decided that a PowerPoint presentation might be useful as one form of outreach. Antonia and Carl agreed to meet with Kate to begin to develop a presentation.

V. New Business

- A. Discussion of Newsletter:** Kate provided a copy of a newsletter published by another Conservation District. There was a discussion on content and methods of dissemination. It was decided to initially focus on improving service to constituents prior to undertaking the task of a newsletter.
- B. Consideration of Summer Meeting Schedule:** There was agreement that holding monthly meetings at locations of Southern District farm cooperators was enjoyable, informative and desirable. Locations will be considered at future meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 5:52PM

The next meeting will be held on May 22, 2017, at 4 PM at the URI East Farm Master Gardener Field House.

Minutes submitted by Carl Sawyer, Secretary, SRICD