

FREEHOLD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Regular Meeting
January 10, 2024

4000 Kozloski Road
Freehold, NJ

I. Call to Order

Chairman Charles Buscaglia called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Roll Call

Present

Absent

Charles Buscaglia

x

Bob Dreyer

x (medical)

Don Patterson

x

Roger Gravatt

x

Wayne VanHise

x

Staff Present: Timothy Thomas, Paul Califano and Christina LaBianca

Others Present: Claire Flanagan, NRCS

IV. Compliance Statement

Christina F. LaBianca confirmed that the Open Public Meetings Act has been satisfied by notifying the Asbury Park Press, the Home News, and Monmouth and Middlesex County Clerks.

V. Approval of Minutes

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the November 15, 2023, regular meeting. Roger Gravatt made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting as presented. Donald Patterson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Treasurer's Report

The Board members reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Roger Gravatt made a motion to approve the Treasurer Report with the one correction to the District totals. Donald Patterson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Bills for Payment

The Board reviewed the bills for payment as approved by the Committee of Purchase for December in the amount of \$182,009.98, (list attached). Roger Gravatt made a motion to pay the bills as presented for December. Donald Patterson seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Mr. Gravatt – yes, Mr. Patterson – yes, and Mr. Buscaglia – yes.

The Board reviewed the bills for payment for January in the amount of \$184,512.29, (list attached). Roger Gravatt made a motion to pay the bills as presented for January. Donald Patterson seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Mr. Gravatt – yes, Mr. Patterson – yes, and Mr. Buscaglia – yes.

VIII. Correspondence

The New Jersey Agricultural Convention is February 6-8 in Atlantic City with the presentation dinner on Wednesday evening. If anyone plans to go, let Christina know for registration.

IX. Committee Report

No reports this month

X. District Manager's Report

1. Staffing

- Joseph Serio (RCII) has resigned. His last day will be 1/19/24. He is moving to the Ocean SCD since it is much closer to his home.
- We would like to extend our new inspector search to two. Donald Patterson made a motion to hire two new inspectors. Roger Gravatt seconded the motion and the motion was unanimously passed.
- The "Handshake" app has not had a lot of resumes, so going to try "Indeed" for up to a month. Would like to raise the starting salary to \$51,000 annually as well to attract more applicants. Donald Patterson made a motion to make the starting salary for the new inspectors \$51,000 annually. Roger Gravatt seconded the motion and the motion was passed by the following roll call vote: Mr. Patterson – yes, Mr. Gravatt – yes, and Mr. Buscaglia – yes.

2. Destruction

- All projects completed in 2016 or before are ready for destruction. This included about 1,000 files.
- "Destruction Day" for the staff to clean out the files is set for 1/29/2024 and the paperwork will be picked up for destruction on 1/31/2024.

3. Application Review / Comparison

- The total number of applications for 2023 was up eleven from 2022 and exemption requests were up by 2.

4. District Review Manual

- The State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) has requested that each district complete a self-evaluation form supplied by them. They requested the results by 12/22/2023 so the any questions could be addressed at the 1/8/2024 SSCC meeting.
- Plan to have the comparison/review tabulated by the February SSCC meeting for discussion.

5. Certified Public Manager Course

- The three new supervisors are working on their applications for this class.
- Questions have been sent in and awaiting reply at this time.

6. Community Forest Management Plans

- There is a program trying to be implemented where every town will be required to have a Forest Management Plan. The plan requirements changed 1/1/2024.
- Bill Brash spoke about this at the NJACD Annual Conference.
- The plans need to be written by the town or a forest representative. These plans may be a possible non-chapter 251 activity to generate funds for the District.

7. Project Update

- There is a project in East Brunswick that began as a complaint when the owner cleared an area behind a warehouse without an application or any DEP permits in a wetland area.
- The DEP and the Township were/are also involved when the Owner/renter brought in “dirty” fill in the area.
- Dynamic Engineering was hired to create a plan of action, regrade and restore the area.
- The District has also received a Chapter 251 application and will continue to inspect until the project is completed.

XI: Reports from other Agencies

Claire Flanagan, NRCS

- The Burlington SCD is having a “Local Work Group” meeting later this month. Did the Freehold SCD want to be part of this group? Tim plans to attend the Burlington meeting see what is involved and then discuss with the Board at the next meeting.

XII: Old Business

There was no old business to discuss at this time.

XIII: New Business

1. Roger Gravatt made a motion to approve the attached list of certified Soil Erosion and Sediment Control plans. Donald Patterson seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.
2. Roger Gravatt made a motion to approve the attached list of denied Soil Erosion and Sediment Control plans. Donald Patterson seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.
3. The Board has acknowledged the list of Authorizations to Discharge permits granted by the NJ DEP.

XIV: Adjournment

Roger Gravatt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Donald Patterson seconded the motion, and the motion unanimously carried. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, March 13th at 1:30 pm.

Charles Buscaglia
Chairman

Christina F. LaBianca
Secretary