

FREEHOLD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Regular Meeting
September 10, 2025

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

Robert Dreyer

x

Roger Gravatt

x

Wayne Van Hise

x via phone

Staff Present: Timothy Thomas, District Manager, Paul Califano, Assistant District Manager and Andrea Farparan, Board Secretary

Others Present: Thomas Taylor

IV. Compliance Statement

Secretary Farparan confirmed that pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6, et seq., adequate notice of this meeting was provided at least 48 hours in advance by publishing in the Asbury Park Press and the Home News Tribune, mailing the Monmouth and Middlesex County Clerks and posting at the entrance to the District office, a notice giving the time, date, location and, to the extent known, the agenda of this meeting, and stating whether formal action may or may not be taken.

V. Reports from other Agencies – read by District Manager Tim Thomas for Morgan Devine, District Conservationist, NJ Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

A Conservation Plan for a certified organic, preserved farm located on Plainsboro Road in Cranbury was presented for signature. Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to sign the plan. Supervisor Van Hise seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Notification was provided that the application deadline for the NRCS financial assistance program is October 17, 2025. A flyer for the Conservation Open House scheduled for October 1st, 2025 at the Freehold Field Office was provided. NRCS has a new Air Quality Initiative that will focus on air quality improvements in the upcoming fiscal year.

VI. Approval of Minutes

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the July 9, 2025, regular meeting. Supervisor Gravatt made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting as presented. Supervisor Dreyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Treasurer's Report

The Board reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Supervisor Van Hise seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to move \$2,500.00 from the Professional Development and Public information Category to the Insurance Category. Supervisor Gravatt seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Gravatt - yes, Supervisor Van Hise - yes, Supervisor Dreyer - yes, and Supervisor Buscaglia - yes.

VIII. Bills for Payment

The Board reviewed the bills for payment for August as approved by the Committee of Purchase (in the amount of \$230,497.24, list attached). Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to approve the action of the Committee of Purchase. Supervisor Gravatt seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Gravatt – yes, Supervisor Van Hise – yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes, and Supervisor Buscaglia – yes.

The Board reviewed the bills for payment for September (in the amount of \$202,869.62, list attached). Supervisor Van Hise made a motion to pay the bills as presented. Supervisor Gravatt seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Gravatt - yes, Supervisor Van Hise - yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes, and Supervisor Buscaglia – yes.

IX. Correspondence

The District, on behalf of Supervisor Buscaglia, received correspondence from Frank Minch, Executive Secretary, State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC). The SSCC provided a five-year financial overview and analysis of the District and requested the analysis be reviewed and feedback provided. District Manager Thomas and Supervisor Buscaglia composed and submitted a response.

X. Committee Report

None to be discussed

XI. District Manager's Report

1. Nominating Committee

- The Nominating Committee met on August 27, 2025. The roles and responsibilities of a Conservation District Supervisor were explained. Due to a Board member not seeking re-nomination, the District Board of Supervisors has a vacancy. A deadline of September 5, 2025 was decided for an application to be considered for the vacant supervisor position. A second Nominating Committee meeting was held on September 9, 2025 to review the nominations. There were two nominations. A vote was cast and the result in order of preference is as follows: 1) Thomas Taylor 2) John Dyott. A motion to accept the Nominating Committee's vote result was entertained. Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to accept the Nominating Committee's vote. Supervisor Gravatt seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Gravatt - yes, Supervisor Van Hise - yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes, and Supervisor Buscaglia – yes.

2. State Soil Conservation Committee Letter

- As stated in item IX. *Correspondence*, a letter was received from the SSCC and a response was provided.

3. Soil & Water Conservation Society (SWCS) Emerging Leaders Program

- Four Freehold District employees have been accepted into the Emerging Leaders Program. This online program focuses on topics such as, leadership, communication, time management, public speaking and community building.

4. National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Northeast Conference.
 - The NACD Northeast Annual Conference is September 20 – 24, 2025 in Syracuse, NY. The conference has a variety of breakout sessions scheduled. Supervisor Gravatt made a motion for District Manager Thomas and Secretary Farparan attend the NACD Northeast Conference. Supervisor Dreyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Board directed that expenses be paid in accordance with the District's travel policy, Section 714, Travel and Meeting Expenses, of the Policy and Procedures Manual and as allocated in the Professional Development and Public Information category of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.
5. Shade Tree Conference / Forestry Plans
 - Discussions for developing Community Forest Management Plans are taking place with West Long Branch, Ewing, Lawrenceville, Interlaken and Fair Haven.
 - The New Jersey Shade Tree Federation is holding their annual conference October 16 and 17, 2025 in Atlantic City. Supervisor Gravatt made a motion for District Manager Thomas and Urban Forester Technician Jacob Black to attend the conference. Supervisor Dreyer seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The Board directed that expenses be paid in accordance with the District's travel policy, Section 714, Travel and Meeting Expenses, of the Policy and Procedures Manual and allocated from the Forestry Program line of the Professional Development and Public Information category of the Fiscal Year 2026 Budget.
6. Certificate of Deposit
 - Columbia Bank provided notice that a Certificate of Deposit (CD) is maturing on September 23, 2025. Supervisor Gravatt made a motion that terms/rates be compared among various financial institutions. CDs are to be renewed at the best available term/rate option. Supervisor Dreyer seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Dreyer – yes, Supervisor Van Hise – yes, Supervisor Gravatt – yes and Supervisor Buscaglia – yes
7. Scholarship *provided by Assistant District Manager Paul Califano*
 - The District received two scholarship applications. Unfortunately one applicant was disqualified because the applicant did not meet the requirements. The recipient of the scholarship has a 4.0 GPA and is majoring in Environmental Sustainability at Cornell University.
8. State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC)
 - Discussions are ongoing with SADC for an engineer to be hired under a 3 - 5 year cost share agreement. Updates will be provided accordingly.

XII: Old Business

- None to be discussed

XIII: New Business

1. Supervisor Gravatt made a motion to approve the attached list of certified Soil Erosion and Sediment Control plans. Supervisor Dreyer seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.
2. There were no denied plans this month.
3. The Board has acknowledged the list of Authorizations to Discharge permits granted by the NJ DEP.

XIV: Adjournment

Supervisor Gravatt made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Supervisor Van Hise seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, October 8th at 1:30 pm.

Charles Buscaglia
Chairman

Andrea Farparan
Secretary