

FREEHOLD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Regular Meeting
February 11, 2026

4000 Kozloski Road
Freehold, NJ

I. Call to Order

Chairman Charles Buscaglia called the meeting to order at 1:35 pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Buscaglia led the salute to the flag of the United States of America.

III. Roll Call

Present

Absent

Charles Buscaglia

x

Robert Dreyer

x

Roger Gravatt

x

Wayne Van Hise

x *(via phone)*

Thomas Taylor

x

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

Others Present: Matt Ward, 2nd Vice President, NJ Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD), Morgan Devine, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) -Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) District Conservationist

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

Morgan Devine, USDA-NRCS District Conservationist reported on the following:

- 51 applications have been received for various programs (soil health, forest management and wildlife, livestock, erosion, high tunnels)
- Information and eligibility criteria was provided for the Regenerative Pilot Program (RPP)
- USDA-NRCS Chief Aubrey J.D. Bettencourt Priorities are as follows:
 - Preserve and Protect Farmland
 - Modernize NRCS Infrastructure and Technology
 - Re center Field Engagement and Technical Assistance
 - Strengthen Partnerships by Streamline Process and Accountability
 - Shift to Outcome-Based Conservation and Farmer Empowerment
- The Mid-Atlantic Monarch and Pollinator Habitat Kit Program opened on January 16th and closes February 17th. Kits are not for residential use or private homes.
- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is soliciting proposals that will contribute to the overall health of the Delaware River watershed through the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund. The grant range is \$100,000 to \$500,000 with a duration of 3 years. The deadline to submit is 3/26/2026.

VI. Approval of Minutes

The Board members reviewed the minutes of the January 14, 2026, regular meeting. Supervisor Gravatt made a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting with amendment to include “to approve the action of the committee of purchase for payment of the bills as presented” in Section VIII, Bills for Payment. Supervisor Van Hise 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 Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Gravatt - yes, Supervisor Van Hise – yes, Supervisor Taylor – yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes and Supervisor Buscaglia – yes.

VIII. Bills for Payment

The Board reviewed the bills for payment for February (in the amount of \$ 226,750.28 list attached). Supervisor Van Hise made a motion to approve the action of the committee of purchase for payment of 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 Taylor – yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes and Supervisor Buscaglia – yes.

IX. Correspondence

None to report

X. Committee Report

None to be discussed

XI. District Manager’s Report

1. FY2025 Audit Correction

- The total revenues was incorrectly reported on the Fiscal Year 2025 Report of Audit due to a mistype. The error did not affect the outcome of the audit. Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to approve the corrected Fiscal Year 2025 Report of Audit. Supervisor Gravatt seconded the motion. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Gravatt - yes, Supervisor Van Hise – yes, Supervisor Taylor – yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes and Supervisor Buscaglia – yes.

2. Staff Update

- A new site inspector was hired and will be starting at the District on February 17, 2026.

3. Local Working Group

- Together with USDA, the District will be hosting a Local Working Group on February 25, 2026 in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between NJACD and NRCS.

4. 2026 Middlesex County Farmland Preservation Agreement

- The District agrees to inspect farm easements owned by Middlesex County. Any violations found upon inspection will be documented and reported to the county. All enforcement will be conducted by Middlesex County. Supervisor Van Hise made a motion to approve the agreement with Middlesex County. Supervisor Taylor seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Shared Services Agreement

- Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to approve The Shared Services Agreement for the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) Contract Number 20251201-1. Supervisor Gravatt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

XII: Old Business

None to be discussed

XIII: New Business

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

XIV: Adjournment

Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Supervisor Gravatt seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, March 11th at 1:30 pm.

Charles Buscaglia
Chairman

Andrea Farparan
Secretary