FREEHOLD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Regular Meeting
September 9, 2026

4000 Kozloski Road
Freehold, NJ

I. *Call to Order*
Chairman Taylor called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm.

II. *Pledge of Allegiance*

III. *Roll Call*

	Present	*Absent*
Thomas Taylor	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: None present

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 Conservation (not in attendance) informed District Manager Thomas that the Open Space Forest Management Plan application is deferred and will be resubmitted. Also that the deadline for new applications is September 18, 2026.

VI. *Approval of Minutes*
The Board reviewed the minutes of the July 1, 2026, regular meeting. Supervisor Van Hise moved to approve the minutes of the regular meeting. The motion was second by Supervisor Dreyer. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. *Treasurer's Report* *(read by District Manger Thomas)*
The Board reviewed the Treasurer's Report. Supervisor Dreyer moved to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Van Hise. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Van Hise – yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes, Supervisor Taylor – yes.

VIII. *Bills for Payment*

The Board reviewed the bills for payment for August (in the amount of $ 261,258.32). Supervisor Van Hise moved to approve the action of the committee of purchase for payment of the bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Dreyer. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Van Hise – yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes, Supervisor Taylor – yes.

The Board reviewed the bills for payment for September (in the amount of $ 206,089.67). Supervisor Dreyer moved to approve the action of the committee of purchase for payment of the bills as presented. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Van Hise. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Van Hise – yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes, Supervisor Taylor – yes.

IX. *Correspondence*

The District received an email from Ray Cywinski, NJ NACD Board Member, providing the latest updates (see attached) from the National Association of Conservation District (NACD) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Jeremy Peters. Jeremy Peters has announced that he is stepping down as CEO and interim CEO, Laura Wood, has been appointed.

The District received a card from James Young, Vice Chairman of the Cayuga County, New York Soil and Water Conservation District and his wife, Lorraine, thanking District Manager Thomas and Secretary Farparan for taking time to give them a tour of the District office and explanation of the District workings.

X. *Committee Report*

None to be discussed

XI. *District Manager's Report*

1. Northeast Regional Conference
    - The annual Northeast Regional Conference was held August 24 – 27, 2026 in Wilmington Delaware. District Manager Thomas attended a variety of the breakout sessions with subject matters ranging from Engaging the Community to Smart Conservation Implementation and a panel discussion on The District's Role in Legislative Change. Secretary Farparan attended the Management Excellence Training tract throughout the conference.
2. Handbook
    - The update of the Employee Handbook continues. In addition to revising outdated information, the recent changes to the Health Benefits Policy will be incorporated. Once completed, a draft of the Handbook with the recommended updates and revisions will be provided to the Board and the District attorney for review and comment.
3. Personnel
    - A new site inspector was hired and started with the District on September 1, 2026.
    - The District's Urban Forester Technician resigned. The District will advertise to fill the position.

4. Farm Conservation Update
    - Training continues for two (2) District employees to become certified conservation planners
    - Testing to be certified in Nutrient Management will be retaken in February 2027

5. Forestry Update
    - The District is currently working with ten (10) municipalities on development and implementation of forestry management plans. Discussions regarding providing forestry management plans are ongoing with additional municipalities.

6. National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA)
    - Supervisor Dreyer moved for District Manager Thomas attend the 2026 NASCA annual meeting in Pittsburg, October 4 – 7, 2026. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Van Hise. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Van Hise – yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes, Supervisor Taylor – yes.

7. Fiscal Year 2027 Budget
    - The bid package will be prepared for the FY27 vehicle and presented for approval from the Board at the October meeting.
    - Supervisor Dreyer made a motion to move $2,500.00 from the Professional Development and Public Information Category to the Insurance Category. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Van Hise. The motion passed by the following roll call vote: Supervisor Van Hise - yes, Supervisor Dreyer – yes, Supervisor Taylor – yes

8. Financial Planning
    - The District's financial outlook was discussed. Financial planning options will be researched and presented to the Board for review and consideration in the coming months.

XII: *Old Business*

None to discuss

XIII: *New Business*

1. Supervisor Dreyer moved to approve the attached list of certified Soil Erosion and Sediment Control plans. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Van Hise. 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.

Special Comment

The District and fellow Board Supervisors would like to extend their sincere congratulations to Chairman Taylor, who is being honored by the Monmouth County Historical Society at the Farm to Fork Dinner on October 3, 2026. The District recognizes and appreciates Chairman Taylor's contributions and dedication.

XIV: *Public Comment*
None

XV*:* *Adjournment*
Supervisor Van Hise moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:10pm. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Dreyer. The motion passed unanimously. The next scheduled meeting is Wednesday, October 14th at 1:30 pm.

Submitted by: Andrea Farparan