

SWCS – Empire Chapter
May 21, 2003
Meeting Minutes

Present: Rich Wildman, Dan Dostie, Elaine Dalrymple, Bill Keating, Dana Chapman, Lee Telega, Mike Dennis, Dick Dale.

President Rich Wildman called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Elaine reviewed the minutes and asked for clarification on some points but no additions or corrections were made. Dick moved minutes and Lee seconded. All in favor. Lee will follow-up with Barb on the issue of how difficult it would be to have a pop up window that allows people to immediately download Acrobat reader so they can get the order form for publications. People have reported difficulty in downloading the form. **Lee will ask Barb if she can resolve this difficulty and if it will be a major project then she should quote us a price.**

Treasurer's Report: Dick handed out a printed report. He commented that we continue to have a net income. Dick contacted Dermigny, Dirk, and Brown re: doing tax returns. We have filed for an extension. Dick is trying to understand the accounting for 'cost of goods sold.' There is a question of whether our account in this area is set up properly hence one reason for getting the professional advice. Dana said the stormwater manual should be out in 3 months according to Don Lake. This may be optimistic. For now we have to send orders back. The publication is going through DEC and outside peer review. Rich suggested that we don't send the checks back and tell them that it will be on backorder. Right now it is a lot of bookkeeping. Another idea was to give them a choice as to whether they wanted us to keep their funds for now or send them back. We should be able to set a price now. Price is on DEC website at \$32. We should ask DEC to change their website if need be. We did order 300 of the Field Notebooks. Rich asked about the price for these. Dana suggested we need more structure to our publications. Usually DEC does the first printing and gives the manuals to us. Theoretically, DEC has the rights to the books, but they let us sell them. We need to formalize our relationship with DEC. Lee wondered if the DEC has the mechanism to distribute their educational materials. Dan commented that before there was no way to download them but now there is that option. Rich thought we might be able to sell the CD for \$20. Lee reiterated that we need an MOU with DEC or maybe a contract and asked if anyone has the knowledge of Don Lake or the relationship with DEC that he does. **Rich will talk to Jeff and set up a meeting with Don Lake.** Dan said we should make sure that DEC will be printing this book. We change the website yet, keep the price as is. Dick asked whether we should send the present orders back. Elaine moved, Dan seconded. All in favor. But at this point it was decided to have Lisa come in and give her opinion.

Lisa stated that she has been very busy. Most people are using DEC web page to order publications. Dick bought Lisa a calling card so she is calling people who ordered the new 'Guidelines for Erosion and Sediment Control' and some are upset that the new book isn't ready but some are ordering the old one. Lisa is telling them that it is beyond our control. Our web page says the book is not out yet but the DEC one doesn't. She has sent out about 22 old blue books in last couple months. DEC says they cannot change

their web page. \$32 is the cost and includes postage and handling; \$20 to Districts for 10 or more. Lisa looked into UPS and it was more expensive to use for shipping than CASES and seemed that it was not the way to go. It is easier for Lisa to keep postage and handling included in the price. Rich suggested that Lisa keep a list of those that ordered the old versus waiting for the new. Lisa said Quickbooks keeps a database of everyone who has ordered things. She can print out a list of those that got refunds. Lisa will send out an announcement when the new book comes out. Initially DEC gave us the stormwater design manual CD but now they not making them anymore. Paula Smith placed an order with a company. \$3.00 cost included set up fee. Will be cheaper in the future. Now selling them for \$6.00. Lisa asked if the new book will be coming out on CD and Dana said he thought so. Don Lake takes the stormwater design manual to Office Max. Cost to reproduce 100 is \$12.53 each. Lisa is not sure if this includes the binder cost but thinks so. **We need to ask Don if we get the first printing of the 'NYS Guidelines for Erosion and Sediment Control' manual for free (assuming we got the other ones the same way but noone at the meeting knew this history.)** *Jeff Carmichael probably knows.*

National Issues: Discussion on NE Regional meeting. Rich reported that we had a very low registration so it was cancelled. Rich feels the non-response is a response. Dana said we did put a deposit down of \$900, which is non-refundable if not used by December. Dana feels that there is not the leadership in the region to make the meeting happen. We have not heard anything from Jackie since Dana rescheduled for June. We could possibly have our annual meeting there. Jackie would have let the meeting happen in March but we didn't want to have a meeting for mostly ourselves. The chapters have money but it may be that they don't have the diversity of membership i.e. mostly NRCS staff. Lee said the location is off the beaten path - 22 miles off the Thruway. One long-range idea was that the Empire Chapter could fold in the other chapters and evolve into the Northeast Chapter. If our Chapter Annual meeting is held at Rensselaerville, we might attract more members from the eastern states. Let's look at some ways to pull it together.

2003 National meeting: Rich is going to Spokane. We are getting an award. Dana is receiving the fellow award, which is a very high award. Dana will be going. Cal Perkins was the only other fellow from NY. Dick asked if we were going to offer scholarships. We need to encourage those who will be helping with the 2005 meeting to attend this year's meeting. **Lee will put our 2005 Annual Meeting on the website.** Elaine moved we pay up to \$4,000 for 3 scholarships. Lee seconded. All in favor. To receive a scholarship you will be expected to stay involved and help with 2005 meeting. **We will send a hard copy and an e-mail version of the announcement. Elaine will e-mail the announcement to Dana and he will e-mail it to the membership. Later it was decided that the hardcopy will be included in the newsletter instead of a separate mailing.** Intent is to cover their costs, travel, registration and hotel. Nancy Hersilius is our national contact. Registration cost is increased on June 27th.

2005 Annual Meeting: We don't have to do anything but there is a memorandum of understanding (handed out) that has us check what we want to do. They want the Memorandum back in July. Usually there are 5 to 6 technical tours. Dana suggested that

whoever goes to Spokane should meet with Craig Cox and Nancy to discuss our role. Ideas: Finger Lakes wine tour, urban stormwater tour, large dairy farm, go see robotic milking machine at Monroe County facility, sustainable ag. Let the Greater Rochester visitor bureau handle the site-seeing tours and family tours. We should probably do the social night activity. Paula Smith, District Manager in Monroe County SWCD is willing to help. DEC regional office is willing to help. It was decided to say that we have a willingness to be involved with a-e (on the memorandum) to some extent depending on outside support. **Minnesota NRCS is getting \$35,000 to help with their 2004 meeting. We need to ask Joe Delvecchio about this possibility for New York. National SWCS assumes liability for AV equipment but we need to check on other liability issues. Dana suggested that we talk to Ron Kaplewicz about sending someone to Spokane and someone from employee's assoc. (Kevin Lewis) also Dennis Hill from State Committee. Dana will do this.**

Council Activities:

- a. **Member activities:** We attempted to go to NRCS to see if they would support a summer meeting and they said they would. NRCS said to poll members and Dana sent a survey out to 100 members and he got 20 back with a wide range of suggested topics - EQIP, CAFO, TSP. The sense was that there wasn't a ground swell of support for this. There is an opportunity is for us to be seen as the ones providing this training. Lee said so far AEM Steering Committee is in charge of a lot of CAFO training but maybe they would want us to take this over. No meetings planned for summer yet.
- b. **Membership:** Regional reps were supposed to contact people that did not renew. We don't know if terminated members have rejoined. Dana has the mailing list and will send it to all of us. **Dan may have another list of non-renewing members, which he will send to Lee. Lee will work with the regional reps and they will converse with terminated members and report back to us.**
- c. **Newsletter:** Lee wants ideas for newsletter and wants an old copy and more info about how the newsletter has been done. Rich will do a write up about the national meeting and we will put something in about the 2005 national meeting being in NYS. Address stickers can come from Ankeny. **Dan will ask Tompkins SWCD if they can do the newsletter layout. Elaine will send insert to Dana right away about Annual Meeting scholarship. Possible articles:** President message: restructuring of the committees and Dana's award (Rich), 2005 Annual meeting (Dana), scholarship insert (Elaine), our Annual meeting in December, article on mini-grants (Bill). Next newsletter needs to go out in October for awards, scholarships.

Minigrants: 14 applications have been received. No ranking sheet put together but Bill handed out a draft along with copies of the applications. Elaine looked back in the minutes and \$2,500 was suggested maximum for all the grants and \$500 max. Recently we have thought of \$1,000 as max for each grant. Criteria for ranking were discussed. Rich envisions funding those that wouldn't get funded elsewhere and will promote the society. Future criteria should include how they will promote society since this was not mentioned on this year's application. Rich is concerned about how

much money we have. Dick suggested we fund one per region because we want to encourage this program. Have the council members rank them by Monday, May 26th. We should state if we feel we have a conflict of interest. Dick suggested everyone say how many should be funded while we rank them. Lee said rank all sixteen. Dana commented that we need to think about how much we want to spend. It was decided that we will all review and quantify them, send to Bill, he will send the rankings back and then we will decide on the funding amount. Dick said we have made about \$6,000 so far this year. Dick asked about restrictions on the money market accounts. Rich's interpretation of our endowment account is that it allows us to take some risks we might not otherwise take. Someone asked what our mission is with these grants. We need to spend it on things that matter. Dan is concerned that it is a brand new program and we may be building the expectation that this program will always be there. Dick says that we are building the expectation. Rich posed the question of - would we choose an annual meeting or scholarships? No deadline so we may get more proposals. Bill asked if we wanted to have a minimum score below which they automatically don't get funded. Dan proposed that any new applications not get included. Each meeting we will look at new applications. Bill should respond when applications come in or the regional rep. should do this. We will rank each seven criteria on the ranking sheet on a scale of 1 to 10 and then the scores will be divided by the number of rankers. If you have a conflict of interest, don't put 0, rather just say this.

Conservation Skills Workshop: They have had two meetings. Rich attended the first. Dick attended the second. They will work out their funding request to us. Last year we gave \$750. It would be good to know their budget. Rich thinks it is a good use of our money. By knowing what the Employee's Assoc. regards as needs, we can cut out our niche. Dick said that they need to recognize that others are interested in these trainings besides District employees and NRCS. Some of the topics need more time. We have no request for money yet.

Stormwater management training request: Rich asked why they are asking us for money. Don't we exist to teach something relatively new? Lee commented that this certification has existed for a long time. Rich made a motion that we tell Jerry that this does not fall within our scope of funding and by the way we do have costs associated with the manuals. Dan seconded. **Rich will draft the letter.** Dana suggested that if the program happens we will put it on our website. All in favor.

Website: Lee thinks we should link to NRAES. Rich wonders if we link to any other sites at all. **Lee will check the website more closely and contact Barb. Lee will come through with recommendations for improving the website.**

More District membership: Dana suggested that Districts could be corporate members at \$95. We have six that are doing this now. Dana wants a Council policy related to this. Rich suggested that we consider creative ideas for attracting new members from soil and water districts and other public and private agencies. Rich posed the hypothetical example of: if District is a corporate member then for \$5 more

you can join the Empire Chapter. Then also get a \$20 discount on our Annual meeting. Dana said it might cost more to maintain our list than \$5 and we should consider this option for private companies. We want to increase our membership and involvement of the professional community. If we get our membership up, we will get more NRCS support. Ankeny has discouraged chapter memberships when they were done alone. There is a category in national called 'not for profit corporate membership' and Dan wondered if this fits Districts. Lee wants to know what has to be done to get this going. Rich said we need to reach out to Districts. Dana suggested we make a policy about this. Actual costs are separate from trying to get Districts as members. Rich suggested a subcommittee to deal with this and Dana said Paula Smith is willing to help. **Dan made a motion that Dana discuss with the District Employees Assoc. promoting Districts joining the chapter as corporate members and we would extend benefits of membership to all employees.** Dick seconded. All in favor. Lee suggested we target three other District managers with this idea. **Talk to Amanda, Kevin, other members that are District managers. Lee will check to see if we can get more Natural Resources Extension people as members. Paula can still send a letter too. Dan will mention it to Craig Schutt.**

Lee will contact Ag. and Markets about the 2005 annual meeting. Joe Gergela of New York Assoc. of Conservation District should also be contacted.

Annual Meeting: December 11, 2003 unless CCA training that week. Rich moved. Dick second. All in favor. **Rich will check with Jeff Ten Eyck re: date for CCA training.**

Rich suggested we could send newsletter to everyone that went to Annual meeting. Meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m. **Next meeting is Aug. 13th.**