

**SWCS Empire Chapter
September 10, 2002
Council Meeting
Minutes**

Present: Dan Dostie, Julie Burger, Bill Keating, Elaine Dalrymple, Ellen Luchsinger, Dick Dale, Karl Czymmek, Jeff Carmichael, Rich Wildman

President, Jeff Carmichael called the meeting to order at 10:20 a.m. and handed out a revised agenda. Ellen corrected the minutes re: her making the motion on the minutes. Julie made motion to approve the corrected minutes. Seconded by Dan and all in favor.

Dick handed out the Treasurer's Report. Our inventory has grown since February. There was discussion on what the Cost of Goods Sold line item means and how accrual accounting (debit/credit system) differs from the cash system of accounting which we used before. Our liquid assets are about the same and the inventory assets are \$18,416. Dan moved the Treasurer's Report, Karl seconded it. All in favor.

NE Regional Workshop: Jeff spoke with Jackie (our NE rep.) and Judy Dorner (Rhode Island SWCS President) who gave Jeff ideas on how to start planning this event. We need to choose a date. Jeff was thinking of March 6th and 7th. We'll go with this. Purpose is leadership development and professional development. We need an issue to get behind. Air quality (greenhouse gases, particulates, ammonia combines with sulfates – acid rain and can become a particulate, denitrification) is perhaps one. Lee Telega would be a good speaker. TMDL's a possible topic. Maybe talk about the dues issue ie. Each state pooling their chapter dues with other NE states. Lake Placid might be too expensive. Hunter Mountain. Ellen, Bill and Jim Calhoun are going to work on finding a location. Bill suggested a motivational speaker that could talk about membership. Ray Lederwood, from NYACD is a possible speaker. Karl said he has heard good speakers from the Land Trust Alliance organization. Karl also said to try to have a follow up to our visioning session. Maybe a sociologist to come to our Chapter meeting to do this follow-up and Rich Wildman has some ideas on this. Probably too early to set a budget.

Report from Indianapolis: SWCS Annual Meeting – House of Delegates Meeting – membership is still a concern. Jeff handed out a report that Craig Cox gave out at the session. 30% drop in membership since 1993. Dues will go up to \$75 from \$60. House of Delegates voted on what the Chapter dues would be. Went up to \$6 per chapter. This is what national gives back to us. Perhaps SWCS should combine with Agronomy, Crop, Soil Science Societies. Dick mentioned that we need to remind people at the Annual Meeting of the impact SWCS had on the Farm Bill. Karl commented that the national office needs to sing its praises to everyone. Accomplishments from Ankeny needs to be said at the Annual Meeting. Content of the sessions was good. A lot of talk on the Farm Bill, how is it going to get implemented, no answers on 3rd party vendors. Bruce Knight is the new chief of NRCS. Jeff handed out copies of a publication, Seeing Common Ground. Can be downloaded from the website. We should make copies for everyone at

the Annual Meeting. Karl suggested that Lee Telega be one of our speakers at our Annual Meeting to talk about his Washington experience.

Committee Reports:

Publications: Should we increase our prices or add handling costs? Jeff handed out an updated inventory worksheet. Jeff feels we should keep the prices the same but say the buyer would have to pay the shipping. Maybe set a couple prices. Karl made the motion and Julie seconded for the following prices to charge for shipping: \$2 for the fieldbooks and \$1 for the CD and \$7 for the bigger manuals. All in favor. The prices for the manuals will stay the same. Lisa will contact DEC and she will update the order form. Dan suggested putting a date on the order form. Effective immediately except for orders in the pipeline. We will incur some transaction costs because we pay Lisa for her time now.

Scholarships: Ellen handed out an updated form. We have now gone to two scholarships at \$1,000 each. We decided to use Dan's format for the mission and logos on the form announcement.

Awards: Due Oct. 1st but Dan hasn't received any nominations. Dan would like to send it to all our members via e-mail. Barb Silvestri has e-mail addresses for all the Districts. We may need to extend the deadline. Dick suggested that Dan contact the other Regional Reps.

Newsletter: Karl is looking for ideas for nominations. Summary of nominations will be put in the newsletter. Secretary, Vice President, Region 2 and 4 Reps, and President – Elect and At-Large are up for Re-Election. Other newsletter articles include mini-grant, our website, Jeff's article on National Meeting, scholarship article, Henry has an article already done and Bill will write about the Adirondack Fest.

Mini-Grant Changes: Second draft of mini-grant proposal was handed out, previously sent out by e-mail. On the form we should say that there is a limited amount of money for projects of merit. Bill was commended for his work on developing this. How do we promote this: through regional reps, through the District offices, try to have regional reps get it out to members in their region, Karl can get it to Cooperative Extension. We'll put both logos on the top of the form.

Website: We need to think of an address. Karl suggested empireswcs.org but the question is whether the swcs is too hidden for searches. Other ideas included swcsempire.org or swcsny.org or swcsnewyork.org Jeff will take the swcsnewyork.org to the web designer. Jeff has link ideas. Jeff will be meeting with her next week. We really don't want to use the National's website as an example.

Chapter Annual Meeting: Objective is to stimulate membership and growth. Subcommittee tried to develop a meeting that would draw interest and everyone would leave enthused. Possible speaker: Peter Nowak, Extension Rural Sociologist from

Wisconsin. He talks about the motivating factors for implementing conservation planning on the land; interface of public and private sector; impact of changes in agribusiness. Mike Boelje, Ag. Economist and farmer from Purdue. Very engaging speaker. He studies agriculture from a world macroeconomic view. Tells the story of how agriculture is moving into the industrial model. We may need to find outside sponsorship money to help bring Boelje here. Noone seemed to have any problems with this. Rich does not want to bring in these speakers and have only 40 people. We need institutional support ie. will State Committee and NRCS encourage employees to come. In this economic climate, how will we trigger decision making on the farm to address environmental concerns, how do you get implementation? Put it together as a training or professional development opportunity. Ellen suggested that we have NRCS, State Committee and Employees Assoc. help sponsor this. To sell NRCS we probably need to tie it to Farm Bill implementation. Jeff and Rich will talk to Joe Delvecchio. Rich will talk to the speakers. Possible dates are Dec.3rd and 5th. Dan wondered if we wanted to have outsiders sit through our Annual Meeting. It could help sell ourselves if we make it interesting. Julie will help the Subcommittee.

Conservation Skills Workshop: Empire Chapter is helping to sponsor it for \$750. In the future, we should be at the table when they start planning it. Jeff will meet with Amanda about getting on the planning committee.

NYACD Meeting: Rich moved that we sponsor this meeting for \$300. Dan seconded it. All were in favor.

Next meeting will be the Annual Meeting.
Meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.