

SWCS Empire State Chapter Council Meeting
February 14, 2006
by Teleconference

MINUTES

Present: Dan Dostie; Sarah Kron; Lisa Miller representing Jim Hotaling; Mark Burger; Ellen Luchsinger; Josh Hornesky; William Keating; Brian Boerman; Bub Barra; Vicki Hendrix; Tibor Horvath

The meeting was called to order by Tibor Horvath president at 8:00 am by teleconference. It was noted that a quorum was present.

- **Accepting minutes from October 20, 2005 council meeting**
Dan Dostie past president made the motion to accept the minutes from the last council Meeting with the amendment of changing Brian Boerman's office to president-elect. Sarah Kron seconded, motion carried.

- **SWCS Annual Meeting in Keystone Colorado July 22–26**
The council discussed the need for financial support to chapter members to attend the SWCS National Annual Conference. Dan recommended notify members prior to the registration due date that the chapter would reimburse their expenses up to an amount to be determined based on the number of requests received. Sarah Kron will ask the NRCS Field Advisory Committee for clarification on reimbursement for NRCS employees for the attendance of the SWCS Annual Conference.
Sarah Kron suggested an agenda item for the House of Delegates Meeting: Ankeny requires presenters to pay registration fee for the conference, even if they just present and leave – is this ethical?

- **Membership** - According to the last report the chapter has 141 members. Tibor will follow up with Lindsey Krug of the National SWCS Office for accuracy.

- **Treasurer's report and Book sales update – Lisa Miller**
Lisa Miller reported that the chapter has \$17,217.52 in the checking account and a bill of \$8,609.75 is coming in for the additionally ordered 500 Blue Book (Stormwater Manual). Lisa had difficulties with customers due to the inaccurate DEC web site order form that indicates \$32 for the manual instead of the \$50, and also states CDs with the manual. Ellen will check with DEC in Albany to get the wrong order form off the web site.
504 Blue Book left from the 1,000 ordered. Book sales are going 30 – 50 per week! Lisa announced that the overcharge from the Rochester Annual

Meeting Social Event is refunded to the chapter. \$900 check cleared from the restaurant back to our account thanks to Gary Sick and Katie Nash!

- **Envirothon support by Empire chapter**

The 2006 NY State Envirothon is asking the chapter for financial support. Envirothon donated \$1,000 for the SWCS Annual Conference in 2005. Mark Burger made a motion to sponsor NYS Envirothon with \$1,000, Sarah seconded, motion carried. Motion of \$1000 (with possibility to increase if we have additional funding available)

Bub Barra asked the Chapter to support the 2007 National Canon Envirothon that will take place in William and Hobart College, Geneva, NY. Sarah made a motion to ask Jim Hotaling Regional Representative of the Northeast to ask the chapters of the region to combine funds to reach the Station Sponsor level that is \$15,000. The SWCS could sponsor the Soil Station on this National event. The Empire Chapter should secure \$1,000 for the Canon Envirothon and even more if other chapters could not match the amount. Dan seconded the motion - all agreed.

Bub Barra asked the chapter to support his attendance to the National Envirothon Meeting in Manitoba, Canada. Bub is asking for \$400 support towards his traveling and lodging. The chapter will wait for the outcome of Sarah's inquiry from NRCS on the reimbursement policy. The next council meeting will decide on this request.

- **Scholarship Committee – new Chair - Mark Burger**

Mark Burger took the Scholarship Committee Chair position from Ellen Luchsinger. Bub Barra thanked Ellen for her long term input to this office. Josh Hornesky at large representative volunteered to the Scholarship Committee as a member. Thanks to Mark and Josh!

- **Mini Grants - William Keating**

Bill reported that the only grant awarded in 2006 was a success. Tibor presented the \$500 Mini Grant to the Tri-State Conservation Tillage Conference on January 24, 2006.

Bill indicated that he wanted to see more grant application related to putting conservation on the land, and less educational oriented purposes. Brian supported the idea of funding speakers for conferences, to obtain the best speakers for our audiences. Dan suggested to change the Mini Grant Program's name to Sponsorship Program. The council should decide over this at the next council meeting.

- **Awards - Sarah Kron**

Dan thanked Sarah for her outstanding job at the 2005 Chapter meeting presenting the chapter awards. The Chapter Newsletter will cover the details.

Dan also informed the council that Peter Wright was nominated for the Society Fellow award. Sarah asked whether the chapter was nominated for any chapter awards due yesterday. Dan completed the core activity report but felt it was more appropriate for the Regional Director or other people outside the chapter to nominate us for a chapter leadership award. No one present had heard whether the chapter was nominated for any award or not.

- **Annual Business Meeting - Brian Boerman and Tibor H.**
The council discussed the potential dates and locations for the 2006 Annual Business Meeting. Suggestions were made to piggy back our meeting with other events to cut down on travel/lodging costs. The CCA Annual Conference and the Conservation Skills Workshop were mentioned. Brian has some speakers in mind – focusing on conservation tillage and reduced tillage topics. Next council meeting will set the date and location. Sarah suggested filling the vacancies on the Chapter Board, and assign duties to offices. Board members will make effort to fill positions. Dan asked the council to clarify the roles and responsibilities of vice-president and regional representatives. Dan would like to see this issue on the agenda for the next council meeting.
- **Chapter Web site and Newsletter**
Dan agreed to continue maintaining the chapter's web site with help from the board members. Tibor will take care of the Newsletters with the same condition. The Newsletter will cover the 2005 annual conference.
- **Chapter's History**
Dan reported that the chapter's history book has been scanned into a pdf file and linked to the chapter's web site. The history is up to date until 1992 and data is available after 2000. There is an 8 year black hole that should be recovered by asking past presidents and council members.

Brian made a motion to adjourn at 10:15, Dan seconded.

Minutes written by Tibor Horvath