

**NACDE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
NOVEMBER 19, 2009
CONFERENCE CALL
MINUTES OF MEETING**

The meeting was called to order by President Ed Hoxsie at 9:08 a.m. via conference call.

Joining the meeting were:

Officers and Executive Committee:

Ed Hoxsie, President and NCDEA Delegate

Tim Thomas, Vice-President

Ines Grimm, Treasurer

Doug Kierst, Secretary

Rick Mickowski, Immediate Past President

NACDE State Delegates(*) and/or Others:

Connecticut – N/A

Delaware – (Rick Mickowski), (Dale was excused, unavailable)

District of Columbia – N/A

Maine Representative - Sharon Foss*, Megan Facciolo

Maryland Representative – N/A

Massachusetts Representative – N/A

New Hampshire Representative – N/A

New Jersey Representatives –Ines Grimm, Tim Thomas

New York Representatives – Ed Hoxsie, Doug Kierst

Pennsylvania Representative - Sandy Thompson*

Rhode Island Representative – N/A

Vermont Representative – Dayna Cole*

West Virginia Representative – N/A

Agenda Item #1 – Meet and greet Officers and State Reps with brief State Updates

- **Maine** – The biggest issue is the funding cuts at the State level. The State is looking to cut funding wherever it can and that includes the District stipends. Since most districts have 1 employee, cuts could lead to layoffs. Most districts receive a mixture of State, County and Town funding that is used to fund technical staff positions and leverage grant funding. County funding is not guaranteed and when cut along with State funding, it hits the districts hard. District staff are cross training each other based on each person's specialties.

- **New Jersey** - The NJ Employees Association is active, Mike Kent is the President. Tim can no longer be the NJ Representative to the NACDE as he is now an officer, NJ has yet to delegate a new Representative. Districts have enforcement authority in NJ. Funding comes from the developers in the communities that they regulate. Funding is suffering for them since construction industry is down. Some districts have suffered layoffs, others tightening their budgets. NJ has a new Governor and their position towards the Dept of Agriculture and Districts is unknown.
- **Delaware** – Delaware has budget cutbacks in current budget and are looking into what will happen in 2011 budgets. Layoffs have not occurred yet, as a result of cutbacks. Overall districts are not in too bad of shape. The funding cuts stopped short of causing too much damage to programs, some money was shifted towards other programs. Urban drainage and watershed planning receive money. The Employees Association meets twice a year, typically in the Spring and Fall. A golf tournament was held this year with money raised going towards a scholarship fund. They are working towards a 2010 goal to develop an employee orientation handbook with references pertaining to the history of districts, partners, conservation terminology, decoding the “alphabet soup”, etc. It is not currently online, however, Rick hopes that it will be at some point. Ines mentioned it would be a nice link to the employee’s association websites.
- **New York** – The State allocates \$3 million per yr. towards districts. Each district receives \$30,000 to be used towards providing technical assistance. Districts are also eligible to receive additional funding of nearly \$15,000 for meeting performance measures, and apply for \$6,000 of implementation money to be used on conservation related project(s). NYS also has an Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program is a State sponsored, competitive grants program where districts can apply for and receive funding for the implementation of BMPs geared towards reducing nonpoint source pollution. The program is taking a slight decrease from \$12.2 million to \$11.6 million. Districts are also eligible to receive \$40,000 - \$75,000 from the State to promote the Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) Program. The Employees Association, in conjunction with the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee, will be holding the Annual Water Quality Symposium March 9-12, 2010 in Binghamton, NY and it is open to everyone. The Employees Association held the annual Conservation Skills Workshop in the Fall 2009 (held in Cortland, NY every Fall). Various training topics were covered. Districts can earn money by conducting erosion and sediment control training for contractors. Contractors are required by NYS to attend the 4 hour training course (endorsed by NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation) every three years. Code enforcement officer training is also offered. Many districts reviewed the state laws and were able to persuade the State to switch the source of funding to a more stable program. . Changing and tweaking language in the District Law has been beneficial. Districts visit their local legislative representatives in the State capital in January, to discuss important issues. Three districts received Federal Stimulus money to complete projects. Although the funding is beneficial, there is a lot of paperwork associated with it.

NACDE committee members also sit on NACD National Committees. Rich Kirschner (DE) is on the Natural Resource Policy Group while Ed Hoxie sits on the NACD Urban and Community Resources Committee. Currently, the Urban and Community Resources Committee is looking at certified training of district employees and making that certification currently available to other States, possibly through MOU's. NACD supported CPESC training is available to districts and the certification gives employees credibility. Sharon (ME) mentioned that she would like to get on the mailing list; Ed mentioned that each state delegate is responsible for getting info to the officers throughout their State.

- **Pennsylvania** – Districts made out better than some other state agencies, but there were some cuts and some districts may have to lay people off or make changes. Districts receive funding for program implementation from Dept. of Agriculture and Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP). There was a huge cut to DEP (27%), resulting in job losses and it is unsure how that will affect the stormwater permit program. Districts typically receive the permits prior to DEP. Other issues are the Marcellus Shale and the oil and gas industry. Technology has allowed for the extraction of natural gas from the shale layers. The NW portion of the state is impacted by gas and oil industry. EPA initially didn't require a stormwater permit; the State DEP came up with requirement to enforce a permit based on acreage disturbance. Permits were issued by districts in Nov/Dec 2008. More than ½ of the districts were impacted by the industry. Permit delegation was taken away from the DEP. Districts would like to be more involved in the permitting and review process, because of the big impacts to the counties. In PA, the employees are more of a committee than an Employees Association. Sandy is the chair of the committee and believes that her contact may change in the future. They have been considering training and have completed policy training on erosion and sediment control and stormwater. District employees prefer more hands on, field training. She circulated the letter from CDEA and received no response. Ed mentioned that the NY's Employees Association, State Association and State Committee staff are trying to set up their own technician training modeled after Ohio's Certification Program. NY had to purchase the rights to provide the training from Ohio, but it will be beneficial to districts in the long run. Training will come down to funding availability and costs to implement the training program.
- **Vermont** – Vermont has similar funding issues. They receive an annual amount of money from the Department of Agriculture. They also do a lot of grant writing. Unfortunately, the districts compete against one another for the money. They promote practices such as rain gardens, rain barrels, local grower guides, and lake/stream buffers. Districts hold tree and fish sales for additional income. Some training funding comes from the NRCC.

Action Item: *E. Hoxsie will ensure that the NY Water Quality Symposium information is sent out to State Reps.*

Agenda Item #2 – Hydro Cad Training Sites

An agreement between the NACDE and CDG (private group) has been signed to allow CDG to provide Hydro Cad Training. Since Hydro Cad does not conduct trainings anymore, the NACDE is having CDG provide training to those interested, across the Northeast. Any district that has access to facilities can promote the trainings. Districts would be eligible for reimbursement for the costs associated with the training (meals, advertising, etc.). CDG reimburses the NACDE \$35 per person per day, for the three day training. This is the primary source of income for the NACDE treasury. Dutchess County SWCD (NY) recently hosted training and had 21 people attend. Western PA, near Pittsburgh, was mentioned as a good location to promote the trainings, as well as Philadelphia and NJ. Suggestions for potential sites are encouraged. Delaware held one in the past; NJ had one scheduled but had to cancel it. Sandy mentioned that Westmoreland may have a facility available and offered contacting them; however she would like additional information in advance regarding the workshops (written material would be most helpful). Ed has some info available to send out and is working on a sample agreement that can be used between Districts and NACDE/CDG describing each agencies role and will circulate it to Board Members once it is completed. Some districts have employees that are proficient in HydroCad already. Rick mentioned his office recently purchased it and are in need of training. Ed will follow-up with CDG regarding hosting training in the identified locations. A session will be held in Orlando, Fla. around the time of the national meeting in February. Sandy will forward a link describing the training to Westmoreland for informational purposes. Any questions regarding the training can be directed to Ed Hoxsie.

Action Item: E. Hoxsie will send out information about HydroCad trainings to Sandy. He will also circulate a District and NACDE/CDG sample agreement to State Reps for comment, when one is completed. He will also be contacting CDG regarding possible training locations in PA and NJ.

Agenda Item #3 – State Reps Travel Expenses to NACDE Meetings

Question was asked if each State has travel expenses available to the Reps for attending out of State meetings. Some districts have limited travel funds to use, but when they run out, they do not travel. Others do not have funding available, but their representatives are granted the time to attend meetings. State reps' attending a meeting has importance, and probably should be considered a couple times per year instead of at the annual meeting only. An approximate idea of what travel costs may be, would be helpful, so districts can plan and/or set money aside to cover them. Subject to funding availability, travel distances and hotels require additional costs. Conference calls are very useful because costs are not incurred and more reps can attend. Discussion ensued pertaining to the possible creation of a stipend or reimbursement for some meeting expenses of representatives that have to travel to the meetings. Millbrook, NY has

been utilized as a meeting location in the past because it was considered centrally located, but other site location suggestions are encouraged.

Motion by R. Mickowski, seconded by T. Thomas to approve the following resolution for the establishment of a stipend, to assist NACDE Board Members attend one meeting per year, with the dollar amount of the stipend based upon local costs as to where the meeting is held. CARRIED.

Agenda Item #4 – NACDE Travel Expenses to National Meeting

Input was sought on covering travel or registration expenses for NACDE representatives attending the National meeting. Attendance at the national meeting is essential to bring beneficial information back to the Northeast States. Since many districts already send a representative to the national meeting, and there is no specific business that the NACDE has to be present for, it is believed that greater attendance by local districts at the Regional meeting is a more appropriate use of the money. The Regional meeting is held in one of the NACDE states every year. Discussion ensued regarding the creation of a stipend to help cover the costs associated with attending the national meeting. However, if funding is made available, it should not be an automatic allotment. An application process was recommended as a means of selecting possible representatives that would be eligible for reimbursement. Ines will work on developing paperwork for the selection process and send it out for review by others.

Motion by I. Grimm, seconded by R. Mickowski to approve the following resolution to create an application process that allows for reimbursement of expenses associated with basic registration and NACDE related activities that are incurred at the national meeting. NACDE Board of Directors has final approval in the selection process. CARRIED.

Action Item: Ines will work on developing paperwork for the selection process and send it out for review by others.

Agenda Item #5 – Training Ideas for Northeast Meeting to be Held in Portland, ME August 8-11

NACDE is seeking possible training ideas for employees and directors. A tour is proposed for this event. A list of potential locations to visit, close to Portland, should be generated. Sites including, but not limited to, historic places, conservation oriented sites and other places of interest should be considered. Previous tours have included a bus tour in which registration fees were associated. Tours provide opportunities for NACDE to generate money for the treasury. Megan will be in contact with Tom Gordon (Executive Director of ME Conservation Districts), to get ideas. A State of the States program would be beneficial to have again. Different districts (3-4) can participate and discuss various programs that they are involved with.

There have been no planning preparations completed to this point as of yet. Ed feels that NACD should become more involved in Regional meetings, by assisting on the larger scale of the NE, not just the State level. Ed will be contacting Megan and also working with Tom on guidance of how the meeting is organized. Possible State of the State topics that were mentioned included "Surviving in a tough economic climate", "merging of districts – how has it worked out", "Districts, Stimulus money and other non-traditional funding sources and projects". Possible ideas are always welcome if you come up with any feel free to send them around. An example of a non-traditional partnership between District and Dept. of Forestry exists in NJ called "No Net Loss". Forestry Dept is understaffed with a large backlog of projects and the District is helping with inspections in return for a fee. Districts complete 2 day training and need to verify tree varieties, review plan implementation accuracy, program accounting, quality of nursery stock. Maybe other states can take advantage of a program similar to this one where funding is available by other agencies that are understaffed, in turn allowing the districts to fill that role.

Is there a committee to review and assist with the tour? There is currently no committee – but Tim Riley (DE) was mentioned, or someone with similar experience to him, that has assisted in the organization of one before. Rick will work with Megan and Dayna to organize the tour with Tom. Ed will send a letter to Tom describing the Employees Association's role in the meeting, including what is expected and what we have done in the past. Cumberland County District, where Portland is located, will be working on setting it up. Informational research about the Portland area can be done online to get some preliminary ideas. Examples include an education program on a lobster boat where water quality and how it affects lobstering were discussed, a whale watch, and other harbor group educational programs.

Action Items: Megan will be in contact with Tom Gordon (Executive Director of ME Conservation Districts), to gather tour ideas. Ed will be contacting Megan and also working with Tom on guidance of how the meeting is organized. Ed will send a letter to Tom describing the Employees Association's role in the meeting, including what is expected and what we have done in the past. A committee was formed consisting of Megan, Rick and Dayna to organize the meeting with Tom.

Additional Non-Agenda Related Discussion

Pre- Agenda discussion

Ines mentioned that she hadn't received any treasurer information yet, and she would like to set up a checking account, and Business registration is due by 11/30/09. Ed is awaiting the account balance check and treasury bookkeeping materials, from previous treasurer Mary Currier. Once he receives them, he will send them along with a new check to be deposited, from a recent training, to Ines. Presently, there is \$10,115.99 in the account. Ed will send out necessary info via priority mail 11/20 so Ines can get the account set up.

Discussion involved locating a bank that is may be common to a more regional area, to hold the NACDE finances and whether the NACDE should put any of the funds into a money market, or similar higher interest earning account, while keeping the annual budget funds readily available. Ines will look into various accounts and rates from different banks. Overall banking convenience is important.

Ines volunteered to facilitate the call, for the next Board tele-conference , through her office. An Executive Board Meeting was suggested for January; Ed will throw out some dates to Board Members. If any State Reps have any issues to discuss at the meeting – get info to the Executive Board Members. Ed will get Board member contact info to everyone. Look to have a face-to face near the end of March. NY will send out WQS information to all the States Reps if they are interested in attending.

Action Items: Ed will send bookkeeping materials to Ines when he receives them. Ines will look into various accounts and rates from different banks. Ed will send out potential dates for the next meeting to Executive Board Members. State Representatives should get any issues to discuss at the next meeting to Executive Board. NY will send out WQS information to all the States Reps.

Motion by I. Grimm, seconded by R. Mickowski to Adjourn. CARRIED.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:00 A.M

Respectfully Submitted by:
Doug Kierst, Secretary