



**Board of Director's Meeting
June 15, 2026**

MINUTES

Call to Order: President Rick Dovey called the meeting to order at 11 am.

Roll Call: Ines Zimmerman, NJACD Executive Director called the roll of the Board of Directors on behalf of Secretary Joe Lomax, who stepped away briefly.

	Present	Absent
Rick Dovey, President	X	
Michael Rigolizzo, Vice President		X
Matt Ward, 2 nd Vice President		X
Joseph Lomax, Secretary	X	
Cormac Morrissey, Treasurer	X	
Ray Cywinski, NE Rep	X	
Gina Berg, Alt. NE Rep.		X

There was a quorum for the meeting.

Also Participating:

In addition to the Board of Directors, several representatives from partner organizations and conservation districts participated in the meeting.

- Sara Mellor, New Jersey Department of Agriculture – State Soil Conservation Committee (NJDA-SSCC)
- Ines Zimmerman, New Jersey Association of Conservation Districts (NJACD)
- Julie Hawkins, United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA NRCS)
- Janet Rekesius, HEP SCD
- Fran Aguirre, HEP SCD
- Christine Raabe, Ocean SCD
- Mike Kent, DeAtlantic SCD
- Nick Lund, NJDA-SSCC
- Tim Thomas, Freehold SCD
- Matt D'Alessandro, Somerset-Union SCD
- Karol Blew, Cumberland-Salem SCD
- Mike Bonham, Cumberland-Salem SCD
- Andrea Farparan, Freehold SCD
- Ramon Mejia, Ocean SCD

Motion to Approve Minutes: Joseph Lomax, NJACD Board Secretary, presented the minutes of the May 11, 2026, meeting. Ray Cywinski, NE NACD Representative, moved to approve the minutes, and Cormac Morrissey, NJACD Treasurer, seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Treasurer's Report:

Cormac Morrissey, NJACD Treasurer presented the financial report. The account balances are as follows:

General Fund Balance: \$38,973.86; Envirothon Fund Balance: \$38,843.42; Scholarship Savings Fund: \$1,425.63.

The Board reviewed Envirothon income and expenses. Several donations were received through event sponsorship. Additional expenses and income are anticipated over the summer. Registration for the national competition is expected, as well as scholarship payments. Thank you Districts that supported the Envirothon this year.

President's Report: President Dovey offered the following:

Board Development-Officers 2026: The Nominating Committee will be activated in September to address the vacancies on the NJACD Board of Directors. President Dovey will select three members to activate the Committee. Supervisors from around the State are encouraged to serve on the Board.

Financial Support for NJACD: Communications have been sent to the District Boards regarding the Association's budget deficit and the need to review dues to meet its financial obligations. Several Districts have responded by providing additional dues to support the budget and contribute to the Envirothon. Strategic planning will also be essential in addressing the Association's future.

Strategic Planning: The Association is conducting outreach to the membership to determine priorities identified for NJACD. A survey will be conducted to gather District's needs, and how the Association can meet them.

The survey results will help guide the Association's future priorities and identify opportunities to better support the Districts. Feedback from the membership will be reviewed as part of the Association's broader planning efforts. A committee will then develop a strategic plan and present the recommendations at the Annual Conference.

Annual Partnership Meeting: The Annual Partnership Meeting has been scheduled for November 30, 2026. The Mercer County Community College Conference Center was identified as a venue. A Save the Date notification has been distributed to Districts. Agenda development will commence over the summer, with a proposed agenda and registration developed for the September meeting.

Executive Director's Report:

Tech Support Web Management: KR Creative Strategies was selected from three proposed vendors to merge and refresh the Envirothon and NJACD websites. The redesigned NJACD site will provide general program information and highlight New Jersey Districts while enabling more frequent updates on a stable platform. The intent is to be able to feature District accomplishments and initiatives, educational efforts and events. The Envirothon portion will be revamped in time for the 2027 school year this fall. Ray Cywinski made a motion to accept the proposal from KR Creative Strategies, and the motion was seconded by Joe Lomax, NJACD Secretary.

Strategic Planning, Finance, and Legislative Outreach Subcommittees: The formation of dedicated subcommittees will be vital for advancing the Association's mission and objectives in the coming years. Similar challenges have been addressed by other state associations. Ines consulted executive directors from other state conservation district associations to review their approaches to outreach with state legislatures, in addition to participating in the NACD Spring Fly-In program. Training will be provided at the NJACD annual conference.

NE NACD Board Member Report:

Ray Cywinski, NJ Northeast Representative offered he has identified certificates of deposit to be reinvested. As the CDs come due, he will manage the deposits.

Partner Reports:

NJ Department of Agriculture: No report.

USDA NRCS Report: Julie Hawkins, NJ State Conservationist for NRCS offered that the several NRCS state level positions have been converted to "at will" status. Employees were in contact with federal human resource departments to determine how this will move forward.

NJ District Employees' Association: NJDEA President Matt D'Alessandro discussed the June 3, 2026, training event at the Freehold SCD conference space, where district employees received training and joined a roundtable discussion.

Regional training for district staff and consulting engineering firms is planned for later this year. NJDA staff will cover plan certification and the New Jersey Standards for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control. A Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control (CPESC) program through Enviro Cert is also in development, with national-to-state proctoring arrangements underway.

Districts: Cormac Morrissey, DelAtlantic District, updated the Board on the process to approve legislation to expand district board member representation beyond the current five members.

Adjournment: President Dovey announced that the next meeting would be on September 14, 2026, after the SSCC meeting. With no further business, Secretary Lomax moved to adjourn, seconded by Ray Cywinski, and the meeting ended at 11:48 am.

Approved On: ____ September 14, 2026_____

Submitted by: Ines Zimmerman, for Secretary Lomax