

ONTARIO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Board of Directors Meeting
January 17, 2024
Minutes

Meeting held at the Cornell Cooperative Extension (District Office)

PRESENT

DIRECTORS: Chairman Sam Casella, Vice Chairman Jim Malyj, Ken Livermore, Mark Venuti, Amanda Amadon, Dale Stell

ABSENT: Ed Jackson

STAFF: Megan Webster, Diana Thorn

USDA

FSA: Joann Rogers

NRCS: None

CALL TO ORDER ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Mark Venuti nominated Ken Livermore temporary Chair of the organizational meeting. Amanda Amadon seconded and all were in favor.

Temporary Chair Livermore called the Organizational Meeting to order at 4:30pm.

- **Election of Officers (Chair and Vice Chair)**

Ken Livermore nominated Sam Casella. No other nominations were made.

Motion to approve Sam Casella as Chairman.

Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117ORG-01

Ken Livermore nominated Jim Malyj for Vice Chairman. No other nominations were made.

Motion to approve Jim Malyj as Vice Chairman.

Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117ORG-02

- **Appointment Secretary-Treasurer – Diana Thorn**

Motion to approve the appointment of Diana Thorn to the Secretary-Treasurer position.

Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117ORG-03

- **Policy Review**
- **Committee Assignments**
 - Discussion was had and Directors had an opportunity to join standing committees. An updated committee list is attached to these minutes.
- **Official Depository**
- **Official Newspaper**
- **Operating Expenses Approval Prior to Board Audit**
- **Number of Meetings, Dates and Times**
 - 2024 schedule attached

Motion made as a block: Motion to approve polices as they are; approve committee membership per attached sheet; name Canandaigua National Bank as depository; name Finger Lakes Times newspaper of record; approve payment of certain operating expenses (employee benefits, employee cell phones, insurance, payroll and payroll processing) per budget prior to board audit as has been done in the past; approve the meeting schedule of 12 meetings, the third Wednesday of the month at 4:30pm.

Made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117ORG-04

ADJOURNMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Motion to adjourn organizational meeting at 4:42pm.

Made by Jim Malyj, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117ORG-05

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Casella called the regular meeting to order at 4:42pm and led the pledge to the flag.

Chairman Casella thanked the Directors for their support and the privilege of being Chairman. He expressed that it is a pleasure to be a part of this organization and he welcomed Dale Stell, Supervisor, Town of Gorham, and new Ontario County Board of Supervisors representative.

MINUTES

Chairman Casella asked for any comments, changes, or corrections to the minutes from December 20, 2023. The following motion was offered:

Motion that the minutes of December 20, 2023 be accepted as submitted.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-01

BILLS

A spreadsheet was provided that shows the bills that appear in the Abstract listed with more detail and in their current status.

Motion to approve the bills as submitted and Abstract #1 in the amount of \$514,176.46.

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.
Ken Livermore reviewed and signed the bills earlier today.
All in favor, motion approved.
Resolution #20240117-02**

TREASURER'S REPORT

Diana reviewed her Treasurer's Report with the Board, which includes the financial statements for December 31, 2023. Megan has reviewed and signed payrolls #26 and #1; the December bank statements; and the reconciliation reports from QuickBooks. All bank accounts are reconciled successfully through December 31st.

The updated 2024 budget was presented including the official updates to the Federal Pay Scale.

**Motion to approve the updated 2024 Budget presented as the County Budget.
Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.
All in favor, motion approved
Resolution #20240117-03**

**Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and the December financial statements.
Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.
All in favor, motion approved.
Resolution #20240117-04**

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Vice Chair Jim Malyj

1. Jim suggested that the group introduce themselves to the new Ontario County Board of Supervisors Representative, Dale Stell. Introductions were made and the group welcomed Dale.

FSA

Joann Rogers

County Committee (COC): The next COC meeting is on Tuesday, 02/20/2024 at 9AM

Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) & Price Loss Coverage (PLC): extended for 2024 with the 1 year extension of the 2018 Farm Bill; The ARC Program is an income support program that provides payments when actual crop revenue declines below a specified guaranteed level. The PLC Program provides income support payments when the effective price for a covered commodity falls below its effective reference price. [ARC/PLC Program \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/arc-plc-program)

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP): Continuous CRP reopened on 01/12/2024; inquires can be directed to Courtney Kautz or Joann Rogers; [Conservation Reserve Program \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/conservation-reserve-program)

Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC): did not have a payment for November milk and projections estimate a potential payment for December 2023 milk; pending announcement for 2024 enrollment; [Dairy Margin Coverage Program \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/dairy-margin-coverage-program)

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP): provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops to protect against natural disasters that result in lower yields or crop losses, or prevents crop planting;3

deadline for spring seeded crops is 03/15/2024; [noninsured crop disaster assistance program-nap-fact sheet.pdf \(usda.gov\)](#)

Farm Program Loans:

- **Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL):** interest rates range from 4.125% to 4.375% for terms from 3 years to 12 years; the FSFL program has a variety of loan options from bulk tanks, hay barns, grain bins/dryers, telehandlers and storage coolers just to name a few; [farm storage facility loan programs fact sheet july 2022.pdf \(usda.gov\)](#)
- **Market Assistance Loans (MAL's)** are short-term commodity loans with interest rate of 6.125% for grain stored in bins. [mal ldp fact sheet.pdf \(usda.gov\)](#)

Farm Loan: has a variety of loans available and funding is still available. Peter Stoep, Farm Loan Officer is retiring at the end of January; Abbey Combs, Farm Loan Officer; and Kim Weykman, Program Technician. Denise Buisch assists with new farm loan inquiries and can be reached by email at denise.buisch@usda.gov or by telephone at 315-946-9912 ext. 112.

Farm Record updates: please report any changes in shares of members, change in members of entities, land changes, such as purchases, new leased ground or ground no longer being leased and any banking changes.

Farm Bill: The 2018 Farm Bill that expired on 09/30/2023 has been extended for 1 year.

Reminder to complete the AD-1026 form PRIOR to any clearing or tiling projects.

Please feel free to refer any inquiries on any FSA programs or what programs we have to offer by contacting our office at 585-394-0525 ext. 2. In addition to myself there are Program Technicians: Courtney Kautz, Alexis McDougal and Sarah Potter. We encourage participation from all types and sizes of farm operations, whether you are an Urban or Rural producer/farmer.

NRCS

Report submitted via email from Dan Weykman

Please let me know what sorts of information you would like for NRCS to provide each month (or in other avenues, if applicable). Comments / Suggestions appreciated on how I can work more closely with SWCD to collaborate on our shared goals.

➤ **EQIP**

- Existing Contracts:
- Payments:
- FY24 so far: \$13,528 total
- Forestry work: \$12576
- Cover Crop: \$952

➤ Applications:

- FY24: Nov 1, 2023 batching deadline
 - 31 pending/eligible applications
 - High Tunnels, Forestry, Pollinator Habitat, Erosion Control, Waste Storage
 - IRA \$\$ will be used for eligible practices in these applications
 - 3 High Tunnels already pre-approved through ACT-NOW expedited process for higher ranking applications for ~\$73,500

➤ **CSP**

- Existing Contracts:
 - Payments

- **FY24: ~\$27,000**
 - Field Border
 - Filter strips
 - Stewardship Payments
- FY24 Applications
 - 2 Cropland/Pasture
 - New in FY24: \$4000 annual minimum payment
 - Round 2 signup deadline January 26, 2024.
- **Food Security Act Determinations**
 - All wetland determination requests are now being completed by 2 Area (15 counties) staff, 80%+ of their job duties
 - HEL determination requests: 350+ in the queue to be completed; Soil Survey staff assisting with older ones, approx.. 200
- **Staffing**
 - District Conservationist: Julie Miller, Acting through January 27, 2024
 - Permanent position announcement closed, hiring process underway.
 - Natural Resource Specialist in Geneseo FO started in November
 - Potential hiring in process: Natural Resource Specialist & Soil Conservationist to be stationed in Canandaigua, covering all of Liv, Ont, Yates counties.
 - Statewide postings will be recurring, large push to fill IRA positions over next few years.

AD-1026 to be completed for cropland activities (tiling, clearing) with FSA staff for assessment.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was shared digitally.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Megan Webster, District Manager Report

Annual Approvals

2024 Comprehensive Fee Schedule

Megan shared the 2023 Comprehensive Fee Schedule and stated that no changes were recommended for 2024.

Motion to approve the 2024 Comprehensive Fee Schedule.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-05

District Staff participation on various Boards

Megan recommended appointing her to serve on the Genesee River Watershed Coalition, the Eastern Finger Lakes Coalition, the Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Board, and the Ontario County Water Resources Council and giving her the authority to designate an alternate when she needs to.

Motion to approve appointing Megan to serve on the Genesee River Watershed Coalition, the Eastern Finger Lakes Coalition, the Ontario County Agricultural Enhancement Board, and the

Ontario County Water Resources Council and to give her the authority to designate an alternate when needed.

Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-06

Data Breach Notification Policy

Megan shared the draft policy that was developed using the Ontario County IT Services policy as a template.

Motion to approve the Data Breach Notification Policy.

Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Dale Stell.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-07

Motor Vehicles

Motion to approve ordering and purchasing a replacement vehicle for the 2020 Chevy Silverado (SW2) and a new truck for the new employee.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-08

Logo wear

Motion to approve the purchase of staff 2024 logo wear per the Budget.

Motion made by Dale Stell, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-09

Computer Hardware and Software

Motion to approve the purchase of required computer and software (including but not limited to HydroCAD, Cropware, QuickBooks, Adobe and/or Microsoft Office) upgrades.

Motion made by Jim Malyj, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-10

Training and Conference participation

Motion to approve Staff and Director registration and attendance at NYSCDEA and State sponsored trainings such as Water Quality Symposium, Conservations Skills Workshops, Admin Conference, Soil & Water Conservation Society, and Managers and Clerks meetings including any related expenses.

Motion made by Jim Malyj, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-11

Please remember to notify Megan when you attend any trainings or Statewide meetings as it counts toward our Performance Measures and impacts our funding.

Certification and License renewals

Motion to approve the purchase of renewals for staff certifications and licenses including but not limited to CPESC, NYSESCCP, CCA, and UAS Pilots License.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Jim Malyj

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-12

General Updates

Staff are working on the required annual reports. They are due February 15, 2024 but we anticipate submitting them in the next week.

Staff are currently working on the District Annual Report/Winter Newsletter which will be distributed by the end of January or early February.

The bi-annual updated grants spreadsheet was distributed to Directors. We have 5 open grant applications for which we are still waiting to hear about awards. We were awarded over 3 million dollars in project value in 2023.

State Budget Proposal – Governor Hochul released her budget proposal for next fiscal year. Environmental Protection Funds are showing an increase of 2 million dollars. Additionally, this proposed budget has a line item for the Eastern Finger Lakes Coalition funded at 1.2 million dollars. FLOWPA remained stable.

Grants & Projects Updates

Ag NPS Round 24

The F & W Farms erosion and sediment control structure project is underway. We will need to request a short-term extension.

Ag NPS Round 25

The installation of the transfer line at Will-O-Crest is experiencing difficulty with boring under roadways due to the wet weather. We would like to ask for an extension on this project.

Motion to approve applying for an extension for the Ag NPS Round 24 and Ag NPS Round 25 projects.

Motion made by Amanda Amadon, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-13

Ag NPS Round 28

Much of the project at Tamberlane is completed. Staff are working on the paperwork to reimburse for what has been completed to date. Remaining work will be completed in the spring.

CRF Round 6

The closeout package has been submitted to our AEA for review.

CRF Round 8

The RFP has not been released. We are still working with the Technical Advisory Committee and SWCC to understand how Federal funds will be incorporated and what the new requirements will be.

FLOWPA

The materials for the Wells Curtice Rd project have been staged. Work is now dependent on Town of Canandaigua employee availability and the weather.

2024 Plans – FLOWPA funds have been earmarked for the Armstrong Rd retention project and the Castle Creek Water Management project, both in the Town of Geneva. Funds may be used for work

in Naples/Eelpot Creeks Aquatic Passage projects depending on whether or not we are awarded WQIP funds for these projects.

AEM Round 17 Implementation

The final project in this round is the project at Canandaigua Stockyard. The work is complete and staff are working on the closeout and final report.

AEM Round 18 Implementation

Staff are finalizing farms and projects for the next 2-year implementation program.

WQIP Round 19

We are still waiting to hear on awards for this round.

Tire Recycling

Ontario County would like us to continue to coordinate the annual tire recycling events. There will be 3 in 2024. The Towns of Seneca, Richmond and Farmington will be host sites this year. We are working with the County to try online registration for these events. Our cost proposal for the year was submitted to the County.

Septic System Replacement Program Round 4

Megan is working with County Administration to administer this new round of funding. The County will need to accept the funds. Once that occurs, Megan can work with IT to map the covered areas and determine eligible properties. Letters will be sent to eligible properties and OCSWCD will review any submitted applications.

ECOHABs Project

Megan has been asked to serve on the Management Technical Advisory Group if this project is funded.

Needs

Motion to approve payment for the NYS Dept of State fee and to purchase supplies related to the Realtor Workshop.

Motion made by Dale Stell, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-14

Motion to approve payment of registration fees and purchase of supplies related to the Local Roads Training.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-15

Motion to approve purchase of supplies for the 2024 Rain Barrel Workshops not to exceed \$1,500.00.

Motion made by Amanda Amadon, seconded by Dale Stell.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-16

Motion to approve purchase of a WQS Raffle/Silent Auction item not to exceed \$80.00.

Motion made by Jim Malyj, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-17

Director Training

Megan is working on updating the Director Training plans.

ALL DIRECTORS are responsible for obtaining Sexual Harassment Training on an annual basis. Megan will be sending a link to a training video for Directors and Staff to view. Please let her know via email the date that you watch the video. If you take this training somewhere else, please email Megan the date that you complete the training. You do not need to do the training more than once.

Annual full Board training. Our AEA Patrick PJ Emmerick will be at the February meeting to present a Board training. It has been five years since the Board listened to the State Aid to Districts training so Megan will ask him to present that module.

Next meeting: February 21, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 5:32pm.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240117-18

Diana Thorn, Secretary-Treasurer to the Board

Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District

2024 Board Meeting Schedule

Wednesday	January 17, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	February 21, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	March 20, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	April 17, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	May 15, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	June 19, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	July 17, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	August 21, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	September 18, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	October 16, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	November 20, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM
Wednesday	December 18, 2024	4:30-6:30 PM

Board Committee Structure 2024

Chairperson	Sam Casella
Vice-Chairperson	Jim Malyj
Annual Planning & Facilities	Jim Malyj
	Dale Stell
Audit	Ken Livermore
	Mark Venuti
	Dale Stell
Budget	Ken Livermore
	Mark Venuti
	Dale Stell
Personnel	Ed Jackson
	Amanda Amadon
	Mark Venuti
Policy	Amanda Amadon
	Ed Jackson