

**ONTARIO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**November 17, 2021**  
**Minutes**

**\*\*\*Meeting held in-person at the Cornell Cooperative Extension (District Office) and remote via Go to Meeting\*\*\***

**PRESENT:**

**DIRECTORS:** Chairman Casella (in-person), Vice Chairman Ken Livermore (in-person), Rich Russell (in-person), Mark Venuti (in-person), Ed Jackson (in-person), Jim Peck (remote),

**STAFF:** Megan Webster (in-person), Diana Thorn (in-person)

**USDA/FSA:** Joann Rogers (remote)

**NRCS:** None

**ABSENT:** Amanda Amadon

**CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING**

Chairman Casella called the regular meeting to order at 4:00pm and Ed led the pledge to the flag.

**MINUTES**

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

**Motion that the minutes of October 27, 2021 be accepted as submitted.**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Ed Jackson.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-01*

**BILLS**

**Motion to approve Abstract #11 in the amount of \$97,806.12**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Rich Russell.**

**Ken Livermore reviewed and signed the bills earlier today.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-02*

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Diana reviewed her treasurer's report with the Board, which includes the financial statements for October 31, 2021. Megan has reviewed and signed off on payroll #23, the October bank statements, and the reconciliation reports from QuickBooks. All bank accounts are reconciled successfully through October 31<sup>st</sup>. A spreadsheet was provided that shows the bills that appear in the Abstract listed with more detail and in their current status. There is one Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force bill this month.

**Motion to approve the treasurer's report and October financial statements.**

**Motion made by Rich Russell, seconded by Mark Venuti.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-03*

## **PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

**Ed Jackson:**

1. Ed commented "nice report in Key Events". He also stated that he is glad that we have an entry in every issue.
2. Ed shared that he gave a copy of the Small Farmer handout provided at the last meeting by Joann Rogers to a person starting a small farm in the Town of Richmond. The new farmer appreciated the information and also made several very positive comments about OCSWCD.

## **USDA/FSA**

*Joann Rogers*

- **Disaster programs:** FSA has a variety of weather-related disaster programs; visit the website at: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/disaster-assistance-program/index> Please report any weather-related incidents to the FSA office.
- **Fall Crop reporting:** just finished with the small grains (wheat, rye, triticale) crop reporting deadline of 11/15/2021.
- **County Committee:** members, Frank Fessner, William Rockefeller and Kelley Jensen next meeting is on Thursday, December 9th, 2021; if interested in participating contact the office at 585-394-0525 ext. 2 to make arrangements due to Covid. This year's election in in Local Administrative Area 1 (Bristol-Richmond-Canadice, East & West Bloomfield, Naples-South Bristol and Canandaigua: Frank Fessner and Seth Pritchard are on the ballots that were recently mailed and need to be returned by 12/06/2021.
- **Farm Program Loans:** Farm Storage Facility Loans-FSFL (interest rate ranges from 0.625% to 1.625%); the FSFL has a variety of loan options from bulk tanks, hay barns, grain bins/driers, telehandlers and storage coolers just to name a few; Market Assistance Loans (MAL's) short-term commodity loans with interest rate of 1.125% for grain stored in bins. For details on the farm loans contact the FSA office.
- **Farm Loan** has a variety of loans available, and funding is still available.
- **Organic & Transitional Education & Certification Program:** pandemic assistance to cover certification and education expenses to agricultural producers who are certified organic or transitioning to organic; application deadline is 01/07/2022.

### **RECAP of some of the Ontario County FSA fiscal year 2021 payments/loans/activity:**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| 2 new FSFL loans; 9 FSFL loans for servicing  | 11 MAL commodity loans for 2020; with a value of |
| \$1,365,085   |  |
| 29 DMC (dairy) contracts; \$1,569,654.77 payment to date  |  |
| 53 CRP (conservation) contracts with annual rental payments \$62,502.00; with 3 new CRP contracts |  |
| 233 CFAP2 (Coronavirus/Pandemic) applications; \$7,510,854  |  |
| 2 ELAP bee loss applications \$3352.00  | 1 TAP (Christmas Trees) application \$580.89     |

2021 ARCPLC contracts 697 contracts  
\$690,949

2019 PLC contracts (paid in FY2021) 521 contracts;

3 wool LDP's \$1386.40

8 NAP applications for coverage on 72 crops

14 NOL's on file for 2021 crop year

1068 farms fully crop reported; 187 different type crops; 129,864.1 acres reported

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

Farm Loans: For specifics on any of the farm loan programs please contact the Farm Loan team at 585-394-0525 ext. 2. Karen Rugenstein, Farm Loan Manager, Peter Stoep, Farm Loan Officers, Abbey Allison, Farm Loan Officer Trainee and Kim Weykman, Program Technician.

Please feel free to refer any inquiries on any FSA programs or what programs we have to offer by contacting our office. In addition to myself there are Program Technicians: Courtney Kautz, Alexis McDougal and Sarah Potter. We are open by appointment only, please call FSA at 585-394-0525 ext. 2. NOTE: this is subject to change and is a very fluid situation with the COVID-19 virus, so please always call in advance.

## **NRCS**

*Dan Weykman*

### **EQIP**

- Existing Contracts: \$16,985 in payments; cover crop, forestry
- 2022—Nov 1, 2021 signup, 26 applications received so far. Multiple funding categories
- Spending time now with 2022 applications field visits
  - High Tunnels
  - Cropland Erosion/Soil Health
  - Energy Improvements
  - Pollinator Habitat
  - Forestry
- **CSP**
  - FY 21 Payments underway. \$24,046 in 5 contracts so far
  - 2021: Obligated 3 contracts for \$77000, 900+ acres
    - 4 applications unfunded, deferred to 2022
  - 2022: no application deadline yet, will accept at any time
  - Currently working on 1 renewal for Yates & 1 CSP-Grassland Conservation Initiative to be obligated by December 31.
- **AMA**
  - No current applications. Will accept continuously
- **Staffing**
  - Jo Beth Bellanca, DC, will be on Detail next 4 months
    - Julie Miller, Yates Co. acting currently
  - Nov 22: Official acting to be named for duration of Jo Beth's detail
- **Food Security Act Determinations**
  - On-site determinations complete for the year (end of growing season)

- Still backlogged as we shifted to program priorities last 3 months. Approx. 55 requests for Wetlands. No change
- HELs up to date

\*\*Reminder—AD-1026 to be completed for cropland boundary change activity with FSA staff for NRCS assessment. Call with Questions.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence was going around the room and was also distributed electronically.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

*Megan Webster, District Manager Report*

### **Timesheet Program/Payroll**

Megan reported that the proposed changes to payroll (moving to a semi-monthly cycle) will not happen. After further review, it was determined that having a fluctuating number of hours per pay period was disadvantageous to staff. We will continue with the current bi-weekly cycle. This change has been communicated to our representative at Bergmann and the work on the timesheet program upgrade continues on-time for delivery by the end of the year. Pre-paid health insurance corrections will be made and will be reflected in the December bill.

Megan stated that the proposed changes to the employee handbook to reflect the proposed change to a semi-monthly payroll cycle are no longer needed. The Board discussed continuing with the change to calculate comp time at the time and a half rate after an employee reaches 8 hours in a work day. An additional change regarding payment via direct deposit was also discussed.

**Motion to approve the changes to the employee handbook to reflect the change to the comp time formula and the payment by direct deposit.**

**Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Ed Jackson.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-04*

### **Conservation Approval Authority**

Megan requested that the Board table this discussion while documentation is being gathered.

### **DEC Permitting**

Megan shared with the Board that she and Katie have been getting an increased number of calls regarding drainage and streambank stabilization/erosion issues mostly due to the wet weather this year. Stream stabilization work usually requires permitting through NYS DEC, USACE and Town Code Enforcement. While the District has a General Permit (GP) issued by NYS DEC, an application is required to utilize the permit. Recent staffing issues at DEC Region 8 have caused delays in the permitting process. Additionally, she stated that it has been our normal procedure to only use our permit on work that we are overseeing. Recently we have been asked to use our permit on work that we are not overseeing. Megan is working with DEC personnel to arrange a meeting to discuss this and get clarification on liability if our permit is used on work when we are not onsite. Megan will keep the Board informed regarding the outcome of this meeting and the plan going forward.

The Board expressed agreement that use of our General Permit should coincide with work that we are overseeing if the District bears responsibility for the project.

## **Grants & Projects**

### **AgNPS Round 23**

Half Dutch has the liner and the fencing installed. They are waiting on concrete and some final stabilization. This project should be ready to close out soon.

### **AgNPS Round 25**

Heifer Haven Farms has completed their manure storage project. Megan is currently working with Ag & Markets personnel to clarify some procurement issues. Once these issues are resolved, this project will be ready to close.

### **Motion to approve final payment to Heifer Haven Farms, LLC not to exceed contracted amount of \$358,012.00**

**Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Rich Russell.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-05*

### **GLRI:**

Rogers Farms is still hoping to start this work in December. Genesee County SWCD who is overseeing this grant has given us until December 31<sup>st</sup> to close this project.

### **AEM Implementation Year 16**

The project at Purdy Farm is the last of these projects. The pump is in for this project and needs to be delivered and installed. The farmer is aware that this project must be completed before the end of December to qualify for this funding.

### **2021 Part B Project**

Megan and Katie have been working on surveying the Canandaigua Outlet with the drone. Recently they had a problem with a drone controller overheating. They worked with SkyOp to get a loaner to continue their work. SkyOp also advised them on how to file a warranty claim with DJI and Katie is working on the claim.

### **OWTSIT Upgrade**

Our new representative at Bergmann is beginning this project. A meeting is scheduled to go over the work schedule. The project is still on target to bill as planned with partial in 2021 and the remainder in 2022.

### **Upcoming events:**

- Private DEC 4 Hour Erosion and Sediment Control (E&SC) Course at the Hampton Inn in Victor Tuesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>. 13 registrants. Megan and Katie will instruct.
- DEC 4 hour E & SC course open to the public is scheduled for December 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- Realtor Workshop is scheduled for December 9<sup>th</sup>. 6 people registered and paid at this time.
- CPR/AED training hosted by CCE Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>. \$35 fee per registrant.

### **Motion to approve payment of fees for staff that register for the CPR/AED class at CCE.**

**Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Rich Russell.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-06*

**Other:**

2022 Soil Health Workshop planning continues. We need to upgrade our projector before the event.

**Motion to approve purchase of a new projector.**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-07*

2022 Health Insurance information is available. Health Savings Account employer contributions need to be approved by the Board. \$20,500 is needed and the budget allocation is \$30,000.

**Motion to approve payment of Health Savings Account employer contributions to match the deductibles.**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-08*

**Motion to approve a Holiday Party for staff and Board members.**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Rich Russell.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-09*

**Motion to approve entering into Executive Session at 4:42PM for discussion regarding employee retention concerns.**

**Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Rich Russell.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-10*

**Motion to approve ending Executive Session at 5:07PM**

**Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Ken Livermore.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-11*

**Motion to approve talent retention disbursements for 2021.**

**Motion made by Rich Russell, seconded by Ken Livermore.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-12*

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn at 5:09pm.**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20211117-13*

---

**Diana Thorn, Secretary/Treasurer to the Board**