

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

Meeting held at the Cornell Cooperative Extension (District Office)

PRESENT

DIRECTORS: Vice Chairman Jim Malyj, Ken Livermore, Mark Venuti, Dale Stell,

ABSENT: Chairman Sam Casella, Ed Jackson, Amanda Amadon

STAFF: Megan Webster, Diana Thorn

USDA

FSA: None

NRCS: None

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING

Vice Chairman Malyj called the regular meeting to order at 4:35pm and Jim led the pledge to the flag.

MINUTES

Vice Chairman Malyj asked for any comments, changes, or corrections to the minutes from March 20, 2024. The following motion was offered:

Motion that the minutes of March 20, 2024 be accepted as submitted.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240417-01

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 #4 in the amount of \$55,466.90

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.

Ken Livermore reviewed and signed the bills earlier today.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240417-02

TREASURER'S REPORT

Diana reviewed the Treasurer's Report with the Board, which includes the financial statements for March 31, 2024. Megan has reviewed and signed payrolls #6 and #7; the March bank statements; and the reconciliation reports from QuickBooks. All bank accounts are reconciled successfully through March 31st.

Diana discussed with the Board their preference for posting interest to the Sick Leave Buyout equity account. The board would like to see this done at year end each year.

Diana shared with the Board that she met with the accountant (Mike DeBadts, MMB+Co.) and discussed our current accounting procedures. Diana is making some changes in 2024 to make our financial statements more compliant with audit guidelines. Megan and Diana reminded the Board of the Federal Government's \$750,000 threshold for requiring a financial statements audit. It does not look like the District will reach the threshold in 2024. In the future this may be an issue and Megan and Diana are monitoring and preparing for this. Megan also requested that SWCC speak on the issue and clarify the District's position if we are awarded federal funds in the CRF Round 8 grant cycle, including clarifying if grant funds can be used for the required audit.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and the March financial statements.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240417-03

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Jim Malyj

1. Jim reported that he attended the Farm Bureau meeting and heard many farmers expressing concerns about the delays in processing 1026 forms. Jim shared that he is concerned tiling and clearing work is being done without guidance or approval. Megan shared that there are general community concerns regarding this as well.

FSA

Report submitted by Joann Rogers

County Committee (COC): The next COC meeting is on Tuesday, 04/23/2024 at 9AM

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):

- Continuous CRP: is a voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is devoted to conservation benefits; inquiries can be directed to Courtney Kautz or Joann Rogers; [Conservation Reserve Program \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/conservation-reserve-program)
Fact sheet: [Conservation Reserve Program: CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT PERIOD \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/conservation-reserve-program/continuous-enrollment-period)

Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC): 2024 enrollment began on 02/28/2024 and ends on 04/29/2024.

[Dairy Margin Coverage Program \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/dairy-margin-coverage-program)

Farm Program Loans:

- **Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL):** interest rates range from 4.250% 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 \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/farm-storage-facility-loan-programs-fact-sheet-july-2022.pdf)
- **Market Assistance Loans (MAL's)** are short-term commodity loans with interest rate of 6.000% for grain stored in bins. [mal ldp fact sheet.pdf \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/mal-ldp-fact-sheet.pdf)

Farm Loan: has a variety of loans available and funding is still available. **Farm Loan staff:** 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.

Crop Reporting: producer can contact the office for a set of their maps for the upcoming crop reporting requirement

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 by Dan Weykman

No major updates from last month. We are still waiting to find out who is getting preapproved for funding (fingers crossed for this week). Next up will be lots of field visits and trainings for our new staff, planning for the next round of funding and writing contracts for CSP & EQIP pre-approvals as soon as we know who they are.

Currently the Food Security Act determination workload (HEL and Wetland Conservation) is still behind, but we have been getting help with the backlog as of late from Area staff and some statewide soils staff before their field season starts. We're making some progress, but still have a long way to go. If there are concerns heard anywhere, please let me know.

Any other questions or comments, please send to me or Julie Miller, DC.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was shared.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Megan Webster, District Manager Report

Megan reported that she met with FLCC, CCE, Ontario County Planning Dept representatives, and the architects to discuss the conceptual plan for a shared facility on the FLCC campus. This new building could potentially house FLCC programs, OCSWCD, CCE, and Workforce Development. Overall space and function were discussed. Based on this meeting, a draft conceptual plan will be created.

Grant and Project Updates

AEM Round 18

Megan reported that the projects have been submitted to NYS Ag & Markets for review. One project may require further archaeological review. We are currently waiting on NYSHPO to review the project. Tucker and Jenny have been surveying and designing the projects. Multiple projects should begin construction in May.

AgNPS 25

Will-O-Crest continues to wait on engineering certification for this project. Once that is complete and the project paperwork has been received, we will begin the close-out for this grant.

Ag NPS 28

Megan reported that a pre-construction meeting was held with J Minns Farm for this waste storage project. Construction is imminent. The designed project will disturb under 5 acres and the engineer has determined that formal construction inspections are not required.

GLC SNRP

Tucker and Jenny have been surveying and designing erosion and sediment control projects for this grant funding. Multiple projects are expected to begin in May.

NYSDEC Finger Lakes Watershed Grant

The contract has been finalized for the project in the Town of Geneva. Tucker met with the Town Engineer to discuss the project. Design development and surveying will happen soon.

Seneca Pure Waters SNRP

We applied for \$10,000 to supplement the NYSDEC Finger Lakes Watershed grant and we hope to hear about this soon.

GLRI/US Forest Service

We applied for an additional \$200,000 in funding for HWA treatment. Unfortunately, we were not awarded funding in this round.

FOLLOWPA: We continue to wait for the paperwork from the Town of Canandaigua for reimbursement of materials costs for the Wells Curtice Rd project. Once these funds are expended we will have about \$5,000 in FOLLOWPA funds not under contract. These funds will be used to purchase hydroseeding materials to be shared with the County and to supplement Part B funds to install vernal pools at the Canandaigua Lake Vista in partnership with the FLLT. The FLLT is expected to do educational signage for the pools.

Regenerate NY

We are still waiting on executed contracts for these two projects. In the meantime, work continues. Yellow Rose is submitting paperwork for \$20,000 in reimbursement.

Motion to approve reimbursement to Yellow Rose for work on their Regenerate NY project per the contract once we have an executed contract.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Dale Stell.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240417-04

Eastern Finger Lakes Coalition

This group is waiting on the finalization of the NYS Budget to proceed.

Drinking Water Source Protection 2

The Town and Village of Naples are working with NYS Department of Health, Bureau of Water Supply Protection on a Drinking Water Source Protection Plan. Megan and Tyler are serving as part of the stakeholder group.

Updates

2024 Realtor Workshop

This recent workshop received great feedback from participants. We are now considering expanding the event to include Municipal Planning Boards, Code Enforcement Officers, and the general public. We would present the same information but to the larger audience. We will also look into expanding the credits available for the workshop. Staff are looking at possible grant funding opportunities to expand the workshop.

CCA Exam

Jenny is trying to pass this exam to earn her CCA status. In an effort to better prepare for the exam and to further her knowledge in all areas covered by the test, she would like to register for the preparatory class that includes the fee for retaking the exam once the class is completed.

Motion to approve the CCA preparation class and exam for Jennifer May.

Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Dale Stell.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240417-05

Upcoming events:

Tire Recycling

Registration is underway online for the first 2024 event in the Town of Seneca. To date people have registered to bring about 300 tires. Online registration seems to be going smoothly. Remaining 2024 Events are July 20th- Town of Richmond, September 7th – Town of Farmington.

NYS DEC 4hr Course April 18th (Megan, Katie and Tyler presenting – 15 people registered)

Tree & Shrub Sale Pick Up- April 19th- 20th (Tad is busy packing up the orders)

Geneva Green Fair, Rain Barrel Workshop- April 27th

Roadside Drainage Workshop May 8th with Cornell Local Roads Program - registration has maxed out with 35 participants registered.

Jim asked if the District is receiving calls about downed ash trees. Megan shared that she and Katie flew the drone over the Canandaigua Outlet to check for snags and/or blockages. We hold an account with dedicated funds to use for maintenance in the Outlet. For residents not on the Outlet, we

offer site visits and technical support, answer questions, and help with the permitting process. Unfortunately, we do not have any funds available to help with work.

Megan shared that in general we have received a number of calls regarding drainage issues. We offer site visits and serve as technical resource providers. We assist municipalities with working with elected officials to move necessary work up the DOT priority list.

Next meeting: May 15th, 2024

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 5:24pm.

Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20240417-06

Diana Thorn Secretary-Treasurer