

ONTARIO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Board of Directors Meeting
May 17, 2023
Minutes

Meeting held at the Cornell Cooperative Extension (District Office)

PRESENT:

DIRECTORS: Chairman Sam Casella, Vice Chairman Jim Malyj, Ken Livermore, Ed Jackson, Mark Venuti, Amanda Amadon (4:36pm)

ABSENT: Rich Russell

STAFF: Megan Webster, Diana Thorn, Tad Gerace

USDA

FSA: None

NRCS: None (report submitted via email)

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Casella called the regular meeting to order at 4:33pm and Jim 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 Apr 19, 2023 be accepted as submitted.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved. (Amanda Amadon not present yet)

Resolution #20230517-01

BILLS

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

Diana recommended the following Budget Amendments to consider:

From	To	Amount
Fund Balance	Rent	\$1,398.00
Reimbursable Expenditures	Tree Program	\$1,082.00
Subscriptions	Ads	\$88.00

Motion to approve the following amendments to the 2023 budget: \$1,398.00 from Fund Balance to the Rent line, \$1,082.00 from the Reimbursable Expenditures line to the District Tree line, and \$88.00 from the Subscriptions line to the Ads line.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved. (Amanda Amadon not present yet)

Resolution #20230517-02

Motion to approve the bills as submitted and Abstract #5 in the amount of \$114,730.18.

Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Ken Livermore.

Ken Livermore reviewed and signed the bills earlier today.

All in favor, motion approved. (Amanda Amadon not present yet)

Resolution #20230517-03

TREASURER'S REPORT

Diana reviewed her Treasurer's Report with the Board, which includes the financial statements for April 30, 2023. Megan has reviewed and signed payrolls #8, and #9; the April bank statements; and the reconciliation reports from QuickBooks. All bank accounts are reconciled successfully through April 30th.

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

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved. (Amanda Amadon not present yet)

Resolution #20230517-04

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Ed Jackson:

1. Ed stated that he thought the video prepared by the District and shared by NACD during Water Week was very positive exposure for the District.
2. Ed complimented the District for the spring newsletter.

Amanda Amadon arrived at 4:36pm

NRCS

Report submitted via email by Dan Weykman

➤ **EQIP**

- Existing Contracts:
 - Payments: ~\$10,630—High Tunnel w/seeding and mulching
- 2023—26 applications:
 - Pre-approved (total so far)—11 (Pasture, Forestland, Cropland, Pollinator Habitat)
 - Goal is for contracts to be written by May 26th. With some being recently preapproved, NY goal is 80% by June 30.
 - **Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)** funding for "Climate Smart and Forestry" (CSAF) practices

- 4 applications (+5 possible unfunded regular EQIP)— pollinator habitat, reduced tillage, cover crops, forestry

➤ **CSP**

- 2023: Ranking done,
 - 1 grazing/hayland, 1 cash cropland – no till. Both Preapproved
- **IRA** funding: 2 applications--forestry

➤ **Food Security Act Determinations**

- Ongoing. On-site wetland visits have begun. Approx. 15-20 on list for 2023.
- Wetland determination backlog: Since Jan. 17th, approx.. 112 1026s completed, ~17 w/ other staff, ~16 outstanding with field office
- HEL determinations: Since 10/1/22: 138 complete, 129 outstanding

➤ **Staffing**

- Soil Conservationist announcement: statewide 28 openings, closed May 15th. Only open for 2 weeks. Anticipated re-advertisement until all are filled. Canandaigua is on the list.
- LOY team: additional Soil Conservationist to be re-advertised as well.
- IRA funding

****Reminder—AD-1026 to be completed for cropland activities (tiling, clearing) with for NRCS assessment.**

STAFF REPORT

Tad Gerace

Tad reported that septic inspections are going well. Chairman Casella stated that he has heard from builders that the District is doing really good work with septic inspections, and Amanda Amadon stated that she has heard similar positive comments from real estate agents.

Tad reported that the 2023 Tree and Shrub Sale went well. He also stated that using the Carriage Barn at the County Fair Grounds is working well.

Megan shared that the District needs to replace some equipment used for the tree sale.

Motion to approve the purchase of equipment for the tree sale such as but not limited to saw horses and a hose not to exceed \$300.00.

Motion made by Jim Malyj, and seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-05

Megan also stated that based on recent years, staff would propose changing the pickup times for the tree sale.

Motion to approve tree sale pickup schedule of Friday 8am – 4pm and Saturday 8am- 11am.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-06

On behalf of the Board, Chairman Casella thanked Tad for his hard work.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was going around the room.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Megan Webster, District Manager Report

NYS Budget

The NYS budget has been passed with a 1.5 million dollar increase for Soil & Water Conservation Districts. We should see an increase in our Part C funding next year.

Environmental Bond Act

Listening sessions are being scheduled. The first is scheduled in Buffalo. We are waiting on a date/time for the Finger Lakes region.

Facilities

The CCE Board has approved new flooring for our office space. Their facilities people are finalizing the quotes and plans, and will let us know the install date(s).

Drinking water for staff is an issue. Years ago, CCE had the drinking fountains removed from the building due to failing pipes. At the time, it was decided that replacing the pipes was cost prohibitive and CCE purchased a water dispenser for their staff upstairs. OCSWCD was not included. The District purchased a water dispenser and currently individual staff pay out of pocket for the jugs of filtered drinking water for the District's water dispenser. Megan met with Tim Davis at CCE and asked that the situation be reconsidered. Tim has agreed to have the building's water tested. Once the results of that testing are known, CCE will decide whether or not to provide water jugs for the District.

Motion to approve the arrangement of a drinking water delivery service for District use IF the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ontario County does NOT provide acceptable drinking water for District use.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-07

Brocklebank Lawsuit

The Scolaro Law Firm has been in contact with Megan and Tucker. They have had one meeting and have another scheduled for Friday. Tucker is expected to give testimony and Megan is expected to be at the trial as a representative of the District. The trial is scheduled to begin June 20th if a settlement has not been reached before then.

Comp Time Clarification

The Board clarified that comp time for after hours and weekend events is timed from the District Office to the venue and back to the District Office.

New Conservation District Technician Position

The new CDT position has been posted by the County and is open until June 30th. The posting has been shared with all NY SWCDs and partner agencies. An advertisement has been placed on the Finger Lakes Times online site as well as setup to be in print on June 3rd. The posting has been placed on Handshake (a college message board) and Indeed.com. Applications are beginning to arrive at the County.

Grants & Projects Updates

Ontario County Residential Tire Recycling

8.6 tons of tires were recycled after the Canandaigua collection event. The next event is in the Town of South Bristol on July 22nd. The last event of 2023 is at the Town of Gorham on September 9th.

AgNPS Round 24

Tucker and Katie have been working on finalizing the design for the grassed waterway at F & W Farms. It should be installed soon. This is the last project in this grant and it needs to be completed and paid out this year.

Motion to approve the final payment to F&W Farms for the grassed waterway project not to exceed the contracted amount of \$31,605.00.

Motion made by Amanda Amadon, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-08

AgNPS Round 27

The project at Reifsteck Farm is complete. Payout will be handled by Yates County. Ontario County DPW has been notified and will hydroseed a portion of the site as critical area seeding.

AgNPS Round 29

Applications are due June 26th. Staff are working on finalizing projects for this round and will begin writing the applications soon.

Motion to authorize participation by the Ontario County Soil and Water Conservation District in the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program's Round 29.

Motion made by Amanda Amadon, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-09

CRF Round 5

Megan reported that we are in receipt of a letter from Fruition Seeds. The letter explains that there has been a change in leadership and they no longer feel that they have the financial resources to move forward with this project. The District will need to return the funds to the State. Megan is working with our AEA to make this happen. The Board acknowledged the return of these funds and directed Megan to continue with the closeout of this grant.

FOLLOWPA

The County has submitted the final design for the project at Castle Creek. The County DPW will do the work. Katie has submitted the permit. The District will coordinate with the County and City of Geneva and oversee the installation which will be later this summer dependent on the permit.

Motion to approve the purchase of hydroseed material for various FLOWPA and WRC projects not to exceed \$6,000 with \$3,000 to be reimbursed by a WRC mini grant.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-10

The East Lake Rd project in Richmond is set to begin.

Motion to approve payment to the Town of Richmond for the purchase of materials for this project not to exceed \$5,000.00.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-11

GLRI HWA

2023 chemical treatment is ongoing. Staff are working on planning to use the remaining \$15,000 in funding for HWA treatment at Grimes Glen and Briggs Gully in 2024.

Motion to approve payment for HWA treatment at Briggs Gully to Murphy Forest Management not to exceed \$20,000, for reimbursement for chemicals to treat HWA in Briggs Gully purchased by Finger Lakes Land Trust not to exceed \$5,000.00, and to reimburse RMSC Cummings Nature Center not to exceed \$10,000 for chemical treatment of HWA in Briggs Gully.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-12

WQIP Round 19

Megan and Katie are working on an aquatic connectivity application. They will be meeting with the County to discuss possible projects where we can help with WQIP applications.

Stream Restoration / Aquatic Connectivity Projects

Megan and Katie met with Trout Unlimited for an "Embrace A Stream" grant application.

Motion to authorize a Letter of Support for this grant.

Motion made by Jim Malyj, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-13

Environmental Project Funding

Megan submitted a one-page informational sheet to the County Administrator and partner agencies. She is waiting to hear back regarding scheduling a meeting.

Other

Vehicle

The new Chevrolet Silverado should be delivered soon. It will be insured and registered as soon as we receive it here at the Office.

Motion to authorize the sale of the 2019 Dodge Ram and the District's sewer snake through Auctions International.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-14

Envirothon

Eight teams competed in the Regional Envirothon hosted at FLCC by Ontario, Yates, and Seneca Counties SWCDs. Teams from Marcus Whitman, Midlakes, Romulus, and Penn Yan competed and the top team from each County will move on to the State competition May 24th and 25th.

Fish Sale

We had 6 orders for the spring fish sale. Pick up is scheduled for May 18th.

EnviroCert CPESC

The rules for CPESC certification have changed. CPESC no longer covers field inspections. They have an additional certification for field inspections, the CESSWI. EnviroCert is offering the CESSWI test and the first-year annual fee for no charge to current CPESC holders to assist with the transition. Going forward the CESSWI will be \$145 per year. Megan is watching to see how this national certification change will interface with the NYSESCC program.

Approvals

Motion to approve purchase of materials and supplies for the three rain barrel workshops scheduled this summer up to the budgeted amount of \$3,000.00.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Amanda Amadon.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-15

Motion to approve purchase of inserts for our sandwich board signs for the Tree and Shrub sale and for general events.

Motion made by Amanda Amadon, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-16

Motion to approve purchase of materials and supplies for the New York State Fair and for Empire Farm Days to be reimbursed by NYS CDEA.

Motion made by Amanda Amadon, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-17

Upcoming Events

Megan and Katie will be presenting to the Code Enforcement Officers from Yates and Ontario Counties at their upcoming meeting. They would like more information on permitting, stream and wetland work, and stormwater regulations.

OCSWCD and OWSC are partnering to develop a stormwater training to be held this fall.

NYS Envirothon – May 24-25, 2023. The OCSWCD will be giving a tour to fit with the Envirothon theme ‘A Changing Climate’ and sites will include DeFelice wetland complex, Kashong Conservation Area retention basins, and Reed for agriculture BMP projects. Staff will assist with the State Envirothon where possible.

Rain Barrel Workshops – May 20th with the Finger Lakes Museum and June 14th with the Naples Brewing Company.

Managers' Meeting – Cortland County SWCD June 14th.

Farm Bureau Tour – June 29th.

Skaneateles Shoreline Program July 13th – This group has asked for a presentation about projects we have done. Megan will attend and present.

Ed Jackson asked if any staff have expressed interest in the Leadership Institute. Megan shared that she is considering attending.

Ed Jackson reported that he attended a meeting with a group of forest owners where the Regenerate NY grant was discussed. Megan explained that these grants are now open to SWCDs. Staff have reached out to several land owners about this, and the District has received calls from several other land owners.

Chairman Casella informed the group that the NYACD Annual Meeting will be held in October in Penn Yan.

Next meeting: June 21, 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 5:36pm.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230517-18

Diana Thorn, Secretary-Treasurer to the Board