

ONTARIO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Board of Directors Meeting
June 21, 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, Rich Russell, Amanda Amadon (4:40pm)

ABSENT: None

STAFF: Megan Webster, Diana Thorn, Katie Lafler

USDA

FSA: Joann Rogers

NRCS: None (report submitted via email)

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Casella called the regular meeting to order at 4:30pm 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 May 17, 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 #20230621-01

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 #6 in the amount of \$93,401.94.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Ed Jackson.

Ken Livermore reviewed and signed the bills earlier today.

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

Resolution #20230621-02

TREASURER'S REPORT

Diana reviewed her Treasurer's Report with the Board, which includes the financial statements for May 31, 2023. Megan has reviewed and signed payrolls #10, #11, and #12; the May bank

statements; and the reconciliation reports from QuickBooks. All bank accounts are reconciled successfully through May 31st.

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

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Rich Russell.

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

Resolution #20230621-03

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Ed Jackson:

1. Ed asked about the Regenerate NY program. Katie shared that she is working on an application for the Baker Family in the Honeoye Lake Watershed.
2. Ed commented that the District had a nice representation (three project photos) in the State's annual report.
3. Ed stated that he is doing some cleaning out and he shared a 1989 Non Point Source Program Booklet and a newspaper article from 1992 regarding the Canandaigua Outlet.

Amanda Amadon arrived at 4:40pm

FSA

Report presented by Joann Rogers

Disaster/Pandemic Programs: revenue loss assistance programs for either program years 2020 and 2021 for Emergency Relief Program (ERP) Phase 2 or 2020 for Pandemic Assistance Revenue Program (PARP). Deadline has been extended until July 14, 2023. Contact the Ontario County FSA office at 585-394-0525 ext. 2 for specifics or review the fact sheet at: [Revenue Loss Assistance - PARP and ERP 2 \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/programs/parp-erp)

County Committee (COC): The next COC meeting is on Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at 9AM; we are also having a meet and greet with the County Committee members, Billy Rockefeller, Kelley Jensen and Frank Fessner, if interested in attending the COC meeting please contact the office at 585-394-0525 ext. 2.

County Committee (COC) Elections: Local Administrative Area (LAA) 3, which includes the towns of Geneva-Seneca, Gorham and Hopewell is up for elections this year and the nomination period is currently open until August 1, 2023.

Farm Program Loans:

- **Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL):** interest rates range from 3.500% to 3.750% 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/programs/fsfl)
- **Market Assistance Loans (MAL's)** are short-term commodity loans with interest rate of 5.750% for grain stored in bins. [mal ldp fact sheet.pdf \(usda.gov\)](https://www.usda.gov/programs/mal)

Farm Loan: has a variety of loans available and funding is still available. Peter Stoep, Farm Loan Officer; Abbey Combs, Farm Loan Officer; and Kim Weykman, Program Technician.

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.

2023 crop reporting underway: maps and appointment cards have been mailed to Ontario County FSA producers and we are very busy with crop reporting.

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. In addition to myself there are Program Technicians: Courtney Kautz, Alexis McDougal and Sarah Potter.

Please call FSA at 585-394-0525 ext. 2 for information on any FSA programs or to learn more about FSA, 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

➤ **EQIP**

- Existing Contracts:
 - Payments: ~\$15,726—Grazing System components + PISP
 - *PISP = Post Inflationary Supplemental Payments: added to specific practices completed by 9/30/23 that did not already receive 2022 supplemental payments
- 2023—26 applications:
 - Remaining Pre-approved --6 (Reduced Tillage, Cover Crop, High Tunnels)
 - 7 contracts written so far for \$89,727 (forestry, pollinator, high tunnel, grazing, cover crop)
 - **Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)** funding for “Climate Smart and Forestry” (CSAF) practices
 - 12 total applications (new + unfunded regular EQIP)— pollinator habitat, reduced tillage, cover crops, forestry, farmstead

➤ **CSP**

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

➤ **Food Security Act Determinations**

- Ongoing. On-site wetland visits continue. Approx. 15-20 on list for 2023.
- Wetland & HEL: slow progress during recent Program contracting

➤ **Staffing**

- IRA Soil Conservationist announcement, Canandaigua not filled.
Anticipate future announcements for entry-level. Statewide push
- LOY team: additional Soil Conservationist to be re-advertised as well.

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

STAFF REPORT

Katie Lafler

Katie shared the following report:

Awarded Applications-

WQIP:

Round 17

- Honeoye Lake Watershed Roadside Stabilization grant was awarded in 2021.
 - o Canadice Hill Road and Jersey Hill Road for this year
 - o This will complete Round 17

Round 18

- Roadside Stabilization in the Genesee River Watershed – Award amount of \$610,000
 - o Town of Canadice will be working on Lawrence Hill Road and Purcell Hill Road
 - o Town of Bristol will be working on Egypt Road and Ganyard Hill Road
 - Egypt Road is over \$500,000

HWA

- Grimes Glen is complete
- Briggs Gully will be finished shortly
- Contracts will be sent out to FLLT and Cumming Nature Center to help fund treatment on respective properties. All the same watershed as Briggs Gully

Applications in Progress-

WQIP:

Round 19

- Aquatic Connectivity on Naples Creek
 - o Working with Trout Unlimited for \$10k in match through Embrace a Stream grant
 - o Gian from Fish and Wildlife is helping with design
- Culvert Repair for CR 6 culvert with DPW
 - o DPW providing design, culvert is located in the Town of Geneva on Wilson Creek.
- Roadside Stabilization Application with DPW
 - o Improvements to roadside drainage on CR 33 into Grimes Glen
 - o Additional funds for hydroseeding county wide

Embrace A Stream

- Part of the WQIP Round 19 application for Naples Creek

Regenerate NY

- Working with 1 landowner at this time for a Regenerate NY grant for invasive species treatment and tree planting in the Honeoye Lake Watershed
 - o Scouts have expressed interest

Additional Opportunities:

- Finger Lakes Watershed Grants Program
 - o HWA treatment in Canandaigua Lake watershed
- GLRI/FLOWPA Funding
 - o Streambank stabilization (Naples Creek and Hemlock Outlet)
 - o Culvert replacement

Permitting

- Castle Creek Streambank Stabilization Project
 - o Funding through Part B and Seneca Pure Waters
- Town of Richmond Stream Cleanout Location
- Eelpot Creek Aquatic Connectivity Enhancements
- Town of Victor Stormwater Project within a Class C stream
- Several permitted projects are scheduled to start this summer
- Communication with DEC being the biggest area of concern for submitting applications
 - o The District maintains open lines of communication with DEC and Army Corp

Drone:

- Several municipalities have utilized our drone services for stream surveys and stormwater infrastructure inspections
- We have used it extensively for before and after pictures of construction projects
- Neighboring Districts have expressed interest in our Drone and we have done demonstrations for them

AEM:

- Assisting with AEM program through grant applications and technical assistance
- Several projects currently being installed with more on the schedule for the remainder of the year
- Soil testing program both Spring and Fall
- Several workshops scheduled for summer/winter

On-Going Work:

- Very successful ag value season!
 - o To date we have completed 302 in 2023
 - o Couldn't have done it without Tad's and Megan's help while I was on maternity leave
- Reviewing site plans for the county planning board as needed
- Providing technical assistance to municipalities regarding stream stabilization projects and stormwater concerns
- Continue work with Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force, providing meeting minutes for quarterly meetings

On behalf of the Board, Chairman Casella thanked Katie for her hard work.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was going around the room.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Megan Webster, District Manager Report

Conservation District Educator

Megan shared that Alaina Robarge passed her Civil Service exam. The paperwork has been filed and she is now a Probationary Employee. Congratulations to Alaina!

New Conservation District Technician Position

The new CDT position posting is open until June 30th. Megan will work with the Personnel Committee to review the applications and set up interviews with selected candidates.

Facilities

The new flooring has been delivered and is scheduled to be installed July 5th and 6th. Megan hopes to speak with the installer to prepare for the installation. She will discuss with staff once she knows how the installation will progress. The CCE Board will review the quotes for the new windows in the staff common area at their next meeting. Megan met with the CCE Director and the Facilities person to discuss ongoing maintenance issues. There was discussion regarding the lack of garbage and recycling pickup and general cleaning. It was discussed that perhaps we could modify our lease to decrease our rent so that we could hire our own cleaning service. Megan will be meeting with staff to discuss what staff are willing to take on and what needs to be done.

Ontario County

Megan shared that she will be meeting with the County Administrator and the Deputy County Administrator on June 30th to provide a general update of SWCD activities and benefits to the County. She anticipates that District housing will also be discussed.

Brocklebank Lawsuit

The Scolaro Law Firm has confirmed that the End of the Hill LLC suit has been settled. The written settlement was distributed to the Board. The District's Insurance Carrier has signed off on the settlement. No further action is necessary.

AEM Year 18

Megan shared that there have been several exciting proposed changes to the Year 18 two-year program. The Implementation Track that we use for farm projects has been increased from \$100,000 to \$200,000 (with an 87.5% cost share) and the requirements have been modified so that we have increased flexibility in choosing projects. Additionally, the Base AEM hourly rate has been increased from \$48 per hour to \$51 per hour. The District continues to qualify for the Option B funding level (the highest available) for Technical Assistance and this has increased from \$230,000 to \$260,000. Soil Testing funds will continue to be available with the addition of testing for heavy metals. Staff will prepare the AEM Plan for the November 2023 deadline, and staff will review and plan projects for the Tier 4 Implementation Track to be ready for the May 1, 2024 deadline.

Environmental Bond Act

Megan attended a listening session in Cortland. The State is currently focused on determining how the funds will be distributed. Plans are being made to utilize existing programs such as AgNPS and CRF. The additional funds may be available as soon as the 2024 rounds of these programs which would be helpful as these two programs are often extremely competitive with more projects submitted than funds available.

Grants & Projects Updates

AgNPS Round 29

Applications are due Monday, June 26th. We have two applications to submit: 1. Fa-Ba Farm manure storage and 2. Northern Watersheds – 5 farms for structural erosion control installations.

CRF Round 7

Applications are due August 7th. This program now includes manure storage and cover and flare installs.

AgNPS Round 25

Will-O-Crest is working on access for the transfer line. They are aware of the end of year grant deadline.

AgNPS Round 28

Tamberlane is collecting bids for this project.

CRF Round 6

EL-VI Farms has begun construction on the manure storage. They are getting bids for the liner and cover.

AEM Year 17

The remaining implementation project in this year is the project at Canandaigua Stockyard (formally Finger Lakes Livestock). The pre-construction meeting should be scheduled soon depending on the engineer's schedule.

FLLOWPA

The East Lake Rd project in the Town of Richmond has been completed. The paperwork has been received, and the reimbursement request has been submitted to Ontario County.

Part B

The Castle Creek project is moving forward.

GLRI HWA

Megan reported that the work at Briggs Gully is almost complete. The final rope work will be done the first week in July. We will be contracting with the Finger Lakes Land Trust and the RMSC Cumming Nature Center to make arrangements to fund treatment on land adjacent to the County owned land that has already been treated.

WQIP Round 17

The installation of the Fleximat material on Canadice Hill Rd and Jersey Hill Rd will be complete in the next few weeks, depending on the weather.

Motion to approve payment to the Town of Canadice for reimbursement of the purchase of Fleximat materials not to exceed \$50,000.00 per the grant contract.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Jim Malyj.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230621-04

WQIP Round 19

Megan and Katie are working on an aquatic connectivity application and they are meeting with the County DPW to discuss other possible projects for this round.

DEC Finger Lakes Watershed Grant

The District is looking into two possible submissions for this grant. The first would be a stormwater retention project with the Town of Geneva in the Castle Creek watershed, and the second would be an invasive species control project to continue treatment of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in the Canandaigua Lake watershed.

GLRI Funding Opportunity

DEC has contacted SWCDs through both FLOWPA and the Genesee River Watershed Coalition to submit a collective, non-competitive proposal to EPA for GLRI funding. The District will look into possible projects to submit for this funding. The timeline for submission is quite aggressive.

Regenerate NY

The Baker Family in the Town of Richmond has requested that we submit an application. Katie is working on this.

Stream Restoration / Aquatic Connectivity Projects

Megan and Katie met with Trout Unlimited and USFWS to review projects and designs. The initial application has been submitted and Katie is working on land owner agreements and letters of support.

Environmental Project Funding

As requested, Megan submitted the information to the County Administrator and the partner agencies. A meeting will be scheduled.

Other

Septic Camera – Sold on Auctions International for \$3,350.

Vehicle – The Dodge Ram is listed on Auctions International currently. The auction ends at 7:55pm on July 6th.

CPESC – NYS DEC has stated that it will continue to recognize CPESC for field inspections. No additional training/certifications will be required.

E & SC Inspections – The County has requested Erosion and Sediment Control Inspections at the County's Firing Range expansion project. Staff will do the inspections.

Genesee River Watershed Coalition – Megan has been asked to serve as Vice Chair for 2023.

Motion to authorize Megan Webster to serve as Vice Chair of the Genesee River Watershed Coalition for 2023.

Motion made by Rich Russell, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230621-05

Upcoming Events

Tad and Tyler will be presenting to Yates County and Ontario County Code Enforcement Officers at their upcoming meeting July 27th. This is based on a request from new CEOs who would like more information on the septic inspection programs.

Megan and Tucker will participate in the Farm Bureau Tour- June 29th.

Megan will present at the Skaneateles Shoreline Program -July 13th

Alaina will present a Rain Barrel Workshop in Partnership with the Ontario-Wayne Stormwater Coalition at the Victor Municipal Park - July 26th.

Megan will attend the Leadership Institute July 18th – 21st.

Motion to reschedule the July OCSWCD Board of Directors meeting to July 12th at 4:30PM.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230621-06

Megan shared that she has the results of the SWCC Strategic Plan survey – please let her know if you are interested in seeing them.

Chairman Casella shared that he has been assigned to the NACD Legislative Committee and the Water & Climate Committee. Each committee will meet quarterly.

Chairman Casella shared that both a Code Enforcement Officer and a Realtor have recently told him that Tyler is doing a great job.

Next meeting: July 12, 2023

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 5:33pm.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Mark Venuti.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20230621-07

Diana Thorn, Secretary-Treasurer to the Board