

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

*****Meeting held in-person at the Cornell Cooperative Extension (District Office) and remotely via Go to Meeting due to concerns related to COVID-19*****

PRESENT:

DIRECTORS: Ken Livermore (in-person), Ed Jackson (in-person), Mark Venuti (remotely), Sam Casella (remotely), Amanda Button (remotely), Jim Peck (remotely), Rich Russell (in-person)

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

USDA/FSA: Joann Rogers (remotely)

NRCS: None

NYS Ag & Markets: PJ Emerick (in-person)

ABSENT: None

CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING

Chairman Casella called the regular meeting to order at 5:00 pm and Ken 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 January 20, 2021 be accepted as submitted.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-01

BILLS

Motion to approve Abstract #2 in the amount of \$237,849.44

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Amanda Button.

Ken Livermore reviewed and signed the bills earlier today.

Ed asked why AT & T and Toshiba Business Solutions were removed from the spreadsheet. Diana explained that neither vendor sent an invoice in time for this meeting.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-02

TREASURER REPORT

Diana reviewed her treasurer's report with the Board, which includes the financial statements for January 31, 2021. Megan has reviewed and signed off on payrolls #3 and #4, the January bank statements, and the reconciliation reports from QuickBooks. All bank accounts are reconciled successfully through January 31st. A spreadsheet was provided that shows the bills that appear in the Abstract listed with more detail and in their current status. There are no Honeoye Lake Watershed Task Force bills this month.

Diana reported that the Ontario Wayne Stormwater Coalition has been completely separated from the District and that this Board will no longer need to approve their bills.

The District Savings Certificate of Deposit matured and was rolled over per your Resolution #20200617-03. It matured with a balance of \$100,908.20.

Chairman Casella led a discussion on the idea of emailing the board packet to board members. In the past, board members have been opposed to this idea. At this time, all board members approved delivering the board packet to members via email.

Ed asked about the deposit from the Genesee County SWCD. Diana explained that this was a reimbursement for a GLRI project. Ed also asked if the municipal contributions to the HLWTF have been received. Diana reported that as of today, all have been received.

Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and January Financial Statements.

Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Ed Jackson.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-03

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Ed Jackson:

1. Ed commended Alaina for doing a fabulous job on the newsletter and annual report.
2. Ed asked about Katie's work with the Town of Victor on the streambank stabilization project at Fishers Park. Megan explained that FLOWPA funds have been set aside for this project, however the quotes that have been received are for significantly higher amounts. The Town needs to decide if they want to commit the additional funds and/or do some of the work. If they decline, the FLOWPA funds will be re-allocated to other pending projects.
3. Ed asked about the possible clean out under the Rt 20A bridge in the Town of Richmond. Megan explained that Katie participated in a virtual meeting with NYS DOT, NYS DEC, and the Town. DOT is requiring the Town to do significant work, including engineering and survey work. Once this work is completed, DOT will do maintenance. This is an expensive project. The District has previously provided an estimate for the survey work. Megan shared that the work must be completed within a short time window of the survey work, so the Town needs to be ready with the full funding before starting anything. The Town is considering all aspects of this project and no decisions or commitments have been made at this time.
4. Ed stated that he continues to bring up concerns over the lack of reliable septic inspections since the Town of Richmond changed their code, but the Town Board is not acting.
5. Ed shared news that DEC has provided funding to the University of Buffalo to study tire recycling. He asked Megan if she was familiar with this. She stated that she is not and asked that he share the information.

USDA

Report presented by Joann Rogers

- **Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP):** The Ontario County payments to producers for CFAP 1 and 2 was \$15.2 million dollars. Some CFAP activities have been suspended during the transition between Administrations, to include statutory provisions included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021.
- **ARC/PLC (Agricultural Risk Coverage-ARC/Price Loss Coverage-PLC):** safety net program enrollment goes until 03/15/2021; for details and specifics on the program contact the FSA office.
- **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):** General CRP signup and CRP grassland sign up deadlines have been extended.
- **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>
- **Non-insured Assistance Program (NAP):** covers crops not covered under conventional crop insurance; deadline for 2021 coverage for most spring planted vegetables is 03/15/2021.
- **County Committee: outreach and informational information is available to anyone who is interested**
- **Farm Program Loans: Farm Storage Facility loans (interest rate ranges from 0.250% to 1.125% and Commodity loans (Market Assistance Loans) interest rate is 1.125%**
- **Farm Loan has a variety of loans available and funding is still available.**

County Committee meeting: next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 23rd, 2021 at 9AM. These meetings are open to the public BUT will need to call in advance for meeting details, as the USDA-Canandaigua Service Center building is not open to the public but we are open for telephone appointments.

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.

LAND CHANGES: please report As Soon As Possible (ASAP)

Reminder for any producer/landowner that is doing any improvements, drainage, clearing, tiling to any land to complete an AD-1026 request for NRCS to review PRIOR to the project.

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, Chelsea Jones and Alexis McDougal.

The FSA office is open by **TELEPHONE APPOINTMENTS** only, CALL the office at: 585-394-0525 ext. 2; NOTE: this is subject to change and is a very fluid situation with the COVID-19 virus.

NRCS

Report submitted by Dan Weykman via email

- **EQIP**
 - Dec/Jan: ~\$24531 in payments processed for:
 - Seasonal High Tunnels
 - Fence

- Currently NY potentially has more \$\$ to offer a Round 2 in FY 2021, stay tuned; already have a handful of applicants (forestry, high tunnels)
 - Accepting applications at any time.
 - Meeting with all FY2021 applicants continues; Hopefully in the home stretch with planning/applications. Anticipate preapprovals in March and contracts written in March/April
 - **AMA**
 - New Urban Initiative, FY2022. Summer 2021 planning; Outreach ideas welcomed. Info attached:
 - Urban Area map (+ 2mi radius is eligible)
 - population centers identified throughout the county; small home or community operations in towns/cities
 - **CSP**
 - “Classic” CSP: FY2021 signup deadline sometime after March 26th. Applications can be taken at anytime
 - **Upcoming Online Events**
 - <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/usda-farm-service-agency-new-york-state-office-32322457411>
 - Navigating Grants for Urgan Ag
 - USDA Resources for Beginning Farmers
 - Understanding Eligibility Requirements for FSA & NRCS programs
 - **Program Info:** I have been providing website to customers. Please feel free to share: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/ny/programs/farbill/>
 - **Food Security Act Determinations**
 - Winter is good time to make requests, so projects are ready to go in spring. Drainage, ditch cleaning, clearing, etc.
 - On-site determinations will resume in Spring
- **Reminder—AD-1026 to be completed with FSA staff for NRCS assessment

DIRECTOR TRAINING PRESENTATION

PJ Emerick, AEA NYS Ag & Markets presented: The History and Future of Conservation Districts.

CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence was shared via email.

GENERAL BUSINESS

Megan Webster, District Manager Report

COVID19 Response Update

The draft of the District's required NYS Public Employers Emergency Plan has been completed and will be shared with Directors via e-mail for review. The plan should be approved at the March meeting so it can be submitted to NYS by the April deadline.

Budget update

We were notified that the 2021 County appropriation will include funds for the Septic System Replacement Program, so the actual County appropriation will be higher than budgeted.

Annual Reports

All of our Annual Reports have been submitted to and accepted by NYS Ag & Markets. Thank you to the Board for helping us to meet all of our performance measures.

Grant and Project Updates

FLX EBM:

The project at Green View Farms has been completed. Work was done by the Town of Gorham and you have approved the Assignment of Payment to the Town of Gorham previously (Resolution #20201216-06).

Motion to approve payment of \$7,261.35 to the Town of Gorham for FLX EBM grant work.

Motion made by Rich Russell, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-04

CRF Round 3

We will be closing out this grant next week with PJ Emerick. We just missed the NYS black out period for State payments so reimbursement for this grant will be delayed.

CRF Round 5

We just received Governor Cuomo's press release stating that the District was awarded \$20,168. These funds will be used for a water conservation and irrigation project at Fruition Seeds.

Invasive Species Update

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

At the request of the County, Megan has been participating in a group of resource professionals focused on treating the invasive Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) in the Honeoye Valley. Initial meetings led to a question on prioritizing areas before looking to obtain funding for treatment. The District partnered with the Hemlock Initiative to host a web-based training on February 12th with 35 attendees. With support from CLWA, outreach material was created to post on our website. An in-person scouting training will be held Friday, February 19th at Canadice Lake using iMapInvasives technology. Future trainings may be held upon request after Megan, Katie, and Alaina go through this training with the Hemlock Initiative. Trained volunteers are tasked with documenting sightings of the HWA and identifying areas where it is prevalent. These surveys need to be completed by April 1st due to the life cycle of the HWA. Once areas are mapped, this group can partner with additional groups to manage treatment and look for additional funding for treatment.

Megan reported that at this time, 2 bio-controls have been released in small amounts in our area and the results are being studied. Chemical treatment is still the primary response.

Gypsy Moth

The District has also been contacted by CLWA regarding Gypsy Moth outreach. We will be working with CLWA to identify ways we can work together to get information out to land owners and help with understanding treatment options through outreach education and training events.

NYSDEC 4 Hour Course

We have been working with DEC and another SWCD to understand how we can offer this course virtually. We were originally going to offer two classes but due to the required turnaround time to get participants registered and payments and paperwork processed, we have settled on offering the class one time on March 4th. The plan is to hold an in-person course in May when an outside venue can be used. We have had a very good response to the March 4th course.

Training

Sexual Harassment Prevention Training was reviewed with the Board. All Directors have watched the required videos. This time was used for questions and discussion. No questions were asked. Megan reminded Directors that individuals with concerns or an incident to report can come to Megan and/or Directors. All reports must be investigated and resources are available in the District Office.

Needs

Megan reported that the drill that was donated to the District has burned up and no longer works. The staff would like to purchase new drills and accessories.

Motion to approve purchase of new drills and accessories not to exceed \$300.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-05

Megan reported that we are beginning to organize rain barrel workshops for the spring. The Finger Lakes Museum has requested an event. We will need to purchase supplies to make additional rain barrels.

Motion to approve purchase of rain barrel supplies up to \$600.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-06

Water Quality Symposium Annual Scholarship Fund Raffle

Ed asked if the District was planning to donate an item to the WQS annual scholarship fund raffle.

Motion to approve purchase of a raffle donation of Megan's choosing for up to \$50 including any shipping costs.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-07

Motion to enter Executive Session at 6:08pm to discuss Employee Benefits offered by the District.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Rich Russell.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-08

Exited Executive Session at 6:26pm. No action taken.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 6:27pm.

Motion made by Ed Jackson, seconded by Ken Livermore.

All in favor, motion approved.

Resolution #20210217-09

Diana Thorn, Secretary/Treasurer to the Board