

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
April 16, 2019

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:07 AM. Directors P. DeBlock, G. Keeton, J. Wright, J. Kulisek and P. Ruskiewicz were present, along with K. Sumner, T. Ferry and C. DeGroot (OCSWCD), J. Heller (USDA NRCS), E. Schellenberg and R. Moody (CCE), D. Church (OC Planning Dept.) and R. Schreibeis (OC Exec. Office).

2019-4-1 Keeton made the Motion, DeBlock seconded, to approve March's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS – A bill from R. Hoyt for work on the Barron Fields, LLC land purchase was paid and is listed on Bills for Board Approval.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Bank account statements from the District's banks were available for review.
- Various newsletters were available for review.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

2019-4-2 Wright made the Motion, DeBlock seconded, to file March's 2019 Financial Report for audit review. All in favor.

2019-4-3 DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to accept the Bills to be Paid. All in favor. It was mentioned that the District decided to keep Volunteer Insurance (K&K) which is on the list.

Ag Grant Update Report – Ag NPS RD 22 runs out at the end of this year. We will soon be working on the Round 25 AG NPS Grant application.

STAFF REPORTS

- **C. DeGroot**
 - DeGroot has been continuing to enter data into Quickbooks.
 - The District's website has been updated and new Farmer's Market information added.
 - The quarterly NYS Income Tax and Federal tax reports were submitted.
 - The District is still working on getting new business rewards credit cards.
 - The District's audit was March 27-29.
 - The Quarterly Grants Update Report was completed and emailed out to Directors prior to this month's Board Meeting.
 - DeGroot completed and submitted the AG NPS Grant Interim Reports to Ag & Markets.
 - The District is organizing a Monhagen Brook Stream Clean-up Event scheduled on May 11th. A draft copy of the flyer was passed around.
 - The District is looking into joining the NYS Retirement System.
- **T. Ferry**
 - The District's no-till seeder was serviced.
 - R. O'Dell is trying to figure out why the native grass drive on the new drill is not working.
 - Ron O'Dell did the maintenance on the District's UTV and is servicing the no-till corn planters.
 - Ferry is caught up on Soil Group Worksheets.
 - Ferry has been working on AEM Program paperwork and he submitted the Year 15 Annual Action Plan.

- The AG NPS RD 25 proposal should be announced by the end of this month. Letters were sent out to interested parties.
 - A survey was sent out to other Districts to find out what no till seeders they use and Ferry received a lot of responses. The most commonly used seeder is the Great Plains models.
 - Ferry will be attending the Walkkill River Maintenance Inspection that is scheduled for this Thursday.
- **K. Sumner**
 - **2019-4-4 Keeton made the Motion, DeBlock seconded, to approve the Round 4 Climate Resilient Farming Resolution. All in favor.** As discussed at prior meetings, Round 4 will be submitted for the Celery Avenue Ledge Project. Sumner had the proposal available for review. \$214,128.00 is being requested and the sponsor match is \$90,740.00 (District cash and in-kind).
 - Flood Plain Bench Update – As discussed at last month’s Board Meeting , one of the permit conditions for the Phase 2 South floodplain bench project we are hoping to do this summer is to establish a conservation easement on the project area. Karen from the Orange County Law Department has been assisting us in obtaining legal services from her department. There has also been progress on obtaining surveying services from the County. Sumner met yesterday with Tom Berry from DPW and Karen about the P2S project. The County has an easement on the river corridor going downstream of County Route 1 which Sumner was not aware of. This will have to go to the County DPW engineering department for review. There will now be four easements that overlap each other. Sumner met with Gurda Landscaping, who was the low bidder on the project, last Friday and they are hoping to start the project in the middle of May. Sumner keeps getting last minute changes from Green Farmland and we still do not have an okay from the pipeline company. Gurda will call for the Dig Safe mark-out. There is nothing new to report on the request to the County of Orange for funding for the tire project. Ruskiewicz said that it is on Monday’s Physical Services Agenda. Ruskiewicz and Sumner have not heard anything from IDA since Sumner submitted an updated financial plan to them.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

E. Schellenberg (CCE) – This week CCE will be holding their last training in their Stormwater Series called “Stormwater and the Multi-Sector Permit”.

CCE is partnering with some universities and researchers on gas testing and will be doing gas analyses from samples taken from the no-till versus regular tilled black dirt/muck soils.

J. Heller (NRCS) – USDA announced the Soil Conservationist vacancy. There is also an opening for an engineer.

The new State Conservationist is Blake Glover.

Kathleen Capella, District Conservationist for NRCS in Ulster County, is retiring in July.

NRCS is contracting seven Hi Tunnels for 2019 in Orange County and have 10 EQIP Round 2 applications.

There are changes in the Farm Bill on how livestock waste funds are managed. In the past all of the practices that were listed in a comprehensive nutrient management plan had to be in a contract with NRCS to get funded but now you can be more selective in practices. The annual cost cap on organics has been eliminated.

Federal Programs Update: There is a currently a county office training position open which is shared management with Dutchess County.

K. Sumner summarized why we are holding a meeting today with Orange County dairy farmers and Senator Metzger which is to find out what farmers think the issues are that Senator Metzger could potentially help the dairy farmers in Orange County with.

OLD BUSINESS

Previously discussed.

NEW BUSINESS – There are revisions to the AEM program. Up until now this program has just been for staff time. Starting in 2020 implementation money will be available in the form of two-year contracts - up to \$100,000 (\$50,000 per year). This grant program is non-competitive and will be able to be used for projects.

The next **MEETING** is scheduled for **Monday, May 20, 2019 at 9:00 AM.**

Immediately following this Board meeting, the meeting mentioned above with dairy farmers and Senator Metzger was convened.

2019-4-5 The Meeting adjourns at 9:50 AM on a Motion by Ruszkiewicz, seconded by DeBlock. All in favor.

Minutes Prepared By:

Christine DeGroot, Secretary to the Board