

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
August 22, 2016

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:04 AM. Directors J. Wright, G. Keeton and P. DeBlock were present, along with K. Sumner and C. DeGroot (OCSWCD).

2016-8-1 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to approve July 12, 2016 and July 27, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

- Payments to P. Johnson and D. Stedge were approved by Board Members between meetings. Both bills were added to the Bills for Board Approval for August 2016.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Bank account statements from the District's banks were available for review.
- Letter from the Office of the State Comptroller stating they are in receipt of the SWCD's Corrective Action Plan.
- Orange County Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board Meeting Draft Minutes from June 15, 2016 and July 20, 2016 passed around for review.

(P. Ruskiewicz joined the Meeting at 9:10 AM)

(J. Heller joined the Meeting at 9:11 AM)

- Letter from Senator John J. Bonacic congratulating the District for securing funding through the Ag Nonpoint Source Program.
- Letter from NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee announcing our successful application under Round 22 of the Agricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control Program.
- Letter from the NYS Retirement System re: the District's interest in participating in the NYS Retirement System. Discussion followed.
- Letter from Orange County Department of Human Resources re: Heather Morse is the new Personnel Technician Trainee. Sumner mentioned that N. Meyer's Civil Service test is scheduled in September 2016.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- **2016-8-2 Wright made the Motion, Ruskiewicz seconded, to approve the Financial reports for June and July. All in favor.**
- Bills for Board Approval were reviewed.
 - A bill from Ernst Seeds was added on to the Bills for Board Approval in the amount of \$148.50.
- There was a brief discussion on the Unobligated fund balance on the receivables page. One idea is to consider using some of the funds for the Celery Avenue Project if needed. **2016-8-3 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to accept the Bills to Be Paid. All in favor.**

STAFF REPORTS

- DeGroot
 - Took an online Minute Taking course as part of her 2016 Training Plan.
 - Worked on gathering information on the NYS Retirement.
 - Signed up to take a Webinar on Email Essentials. It will help identify which emails are records, identify the retention period, file and preserve them and identify scams.

- Sumner
 - P. Johnson's Ag NPS RD 17 Wallkill construction project is complete.
 - The Middletown Consolidating Funding Application proposal went out the end of July. This is for the three parking lots submitted in a proposal last year that was not successful. Due to a change in the Clean Water Act, which narrowed the definition of a municipality, SWCDs are no longer eligible to be applicants on Green Infrastructure grants for NYS so the formal applicant was changed to the City of Middletown. The final estimated project cost is \$1.5 million. The District applied for two different green infrastructure grants, GIGP Green Infrastructure Innovations Grants Program and WQIP.
 - Started on the Monhagen Watershed Planning Initiative which the OC Planning Department and Water Authority have the lead on.
 - Actively engaged in building the stormwater filtering practice at the Campbell Plaza as part of the Monhagen/Campbell Plaza Grant. We're past most of the digging. It was mentioned that Vellenga is doing a great job. The owners of the plaza contributed \$3,000.00 towards the project.
 - Staff continue to work on getting the office organized after renovations.
 - Sumner stated that Meyer has been working on AEM plans, moving equipment and the Ag NPS RD 22 work plan.
 - N. Meyer's first AGNPS Round 20 Heavy Use Area plan set for the Weiboldt Farm was approved by the engineer.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

- J. Heller of Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Heller thanked District staff for assisting him with gathering acreage on Cover Crop and No-Till practices that the District certified complete.
 - NRCS is closing on an easement next to the Warwick Drive-In.
 - EQIP – October 15th is the application cut-off date.
 - They are working on certifying irrigation projects.

(R. Baglia joined the meeting at 9:58 AM)

- R. Baglia of Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - The Bountiful Harvest Celebration is on Saturday, September 17, 2016 at the CCE Education Center and 4-H Park in Otisville.
 - There was a Solar Power Program on August 1st from 7-9 pm at the E911 center in Goshen that had approximately 90 people attending.
 - Open House on the Farm is planned at the Sprucegate Holsteins Dairy Farm in Walden, NY on October 15, 2016.
 - There is a farm tour scheduled on September 27, 2016. Angry Orchard will be the hub.

OLD BUSINESS

- **Celery Avenue Ledge Project**
Waiting for lawyer review of bid package from B&L.
- **Pochuck Ledge Project**
There was one additional day of work on a section of the Creek between the two areas worked on previously. This work lowered the stream level by an additional 18 inches. Still waiting on NGS Construction to send us their final invoice.
- **Wallkill Bench Project**

- D. Ford signed the easement and Barron has been very cooperative. P. Ruszkiewicz gave a correspondence from the County Real Property Department to K. Sumner regarding the estimated value of the Bench project lands.
- CFI is on location moving dirt. Sumner is performing the weekly erosion and sediment control inspections as required by the Project's Construction SPDES permit, in addition to regular construction inspection activities. The stabilized construction entrance has still not yet been built, and there are other erosion and sediment control concerns on the site. The Project Engineer wrote a letter to CFI raising issues. It was mentioned that payments have to be approved by the engineer. Sumner has not received a single phone call from the foreman of this job. Their trucks destroyed a farm road that provides the main access to the Project, but is owned and used by others. They immediately began repairing the road, but did not apprise Sumner of the situation. When Sumner visited the site for a regular construction inspection he discovered the situation. B&L stated in the Bid Package Addendum that the Farm roads were expected to be adequate for use but contractors are responsible for spot repairs. Sumner is not pleased with the communication or responsiveness of the contractor. About 100 feet of the project is down to finished grade.

Sumner suggested a Project Steering Committee meeting should be scheduled soon to discuss progressing the flood mitigation initiative. A letter to appropriate groups/agencies to request assistance with funding and other matters relating to Black Dirt flood control, as previously suggested by the Chairman, was discussed. Sumner will work on a draft of the letter for review.

Sumner received correspondence from M. Ulrich (CCE) stating that she had received calls from several growers indicating the water was high in the Quaker Creek after recent storms. Sumner used this as an example of additional flood mitigation efforts that could be pursued. A formal maintenance program for Quaker Creek and other areas – such as Rutgers Creek and the Wallkill downstream of Maple Avenue – similar to the one currently in place for maintenance of the 1980's Federal Flood Control Project could help to further alleviate flooding. The County could potentially be a big help in coordinating such an initiative including development of agreements, dealing with easement and Right of Way issues, etc. Discussion followed. P. Ruszkiewicz will follow up on a maintenance extension.

Wallkill Maintenance - Sumner received a text message from L. DeBuck with a photo. He reported that there is a large tree hanging over the river. If we do the fall inspection we can get the NYS DEC to look at it. C. Vellenga may start work on the Wallkill soon.

Performance Measures Part C – This year Part C is approximately \$60,000.00-\$70,000.00. We need to decide what the money will be used for. We will not find out what the exact amount is available until March '17. We will have to be ready to start a project in March and finish it by December. Examples: construction projects like Shop Rite, cover crop. We will send information to Directors on upcoming regional meetings to meet the rest of the Performance Measures. Maybe hold an RC&D meeting or a Water Quality Coordinating Committee meeting before the end of the year.

NEW BUSINESS

Ag NPS Round 18 Time Extension Request to be signed by the Chairman.

Ag NPS Round 22 Wallkill Landowner Contracts to be signed by the Chairman.

The Budget Hearing is August 25, 2016 at 3:00 PM at the County Executive's office on Matthews Street in Goshen.

Discussion on the Cromline Creek pumping station. Ruskiewicz will follow up on finding out who maintains them.

The next **MEETING** is scheduled for **Monday, September 19, 2016 at 9:00 AM.**

2016-8-4 Meeting adjourns at 11:16 AM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Keeton. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroot
Secretary to the Board