

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
December 18, 2017

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

2017-12-1 Keeton made the Motion, DeBlock seconded, to approve November's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS –None.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Bank account statements from the District's banks were available for review.
- NYS Association of Conservation Districts – Legislative Days will be March 6, 2018.
- NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee – Ag NPS Round 19 contract amendment was approved. The new deadline is 12/31/18.
- Wagon Wheel Farm in Goshen, NY – The District was copied on a letter to the Goshen Planning Board regarding concern over the proposed 68-house non-conforming subdivision Maplewood at Goshen.

(J. Heller joined the Meeting at 9:06 AM)

(M. Kemnitz joined the Meeting at 9:11 AM)

FINANCIAL REPORTS

2017-12-2 Wright moved to file the November 2017 Financial Report for audit review, Keeton seconded. All in favor.

Sumner reviewed the list of Bills to Be Paid with the Board. There was a brief discussion on Sumner's Envirocert professional certification renewal fee. **2017-12-3 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to accept the Bills to Be Paid. All in favor.**

The Grant Reports for August-November '17 were available for review.

STAFF REPORTS

- T. Ferry
 - An annual vegetation report as required by our Wallkill Flood Control Bench permit was submitted to the NYS DEC.
 - The AEM Interim Report was sent to the state.
 - The Wallkill River Maintenance work was completed by Vellenga Lawn Care.
 - Working on certifying cover crop on T. Owen's farm and working on his secondary fuel storage project.
 - Working on the Monhagen Brook Watershed Plan and working on restoration and retro-fit lists with Sumner. Working with techs at the Orange County Planning Department on the streamwalk photos. People will be able to see the streamwalk segments, proposed stormwater practice locations, etc. on the web once the information is entered. It was mentioned that a training was previously completed in the field for streamwalk volunteers with N. Meyer and K. Sumner.
- K. Sumner
 - Working on the covered barnyard project at M. Lain's, which is an engineered design. Sumner explained that these projects can be more challenging to complete than projects where he did the

design and can more easily determine if changes desired by the owner or contractor are acceptable. It needs to be strongly emphasized to project participants that if the project is subject to the approval of an outside engineer, no significant changes can be made from the design drawings and specifications without the supervising engineer's approval. Participants unable or unwilling to comply with these requirements should not proceed with projects.

- The no-till equipment parts that were ordered are at the O'Dell farm. We are waiting on paperwork from the Orange County Planning Department in order for us to be reimbursed for the row cleaners per Ag and Farmland Protection Board action.
- Bench Phase II easements – Attorney Richard Hoyt has been working on these. The easement for Gantt will cost approx. \$8,000. Gantt prefers to receive the money in the year 2018. There is a small .6 acre piece owned by DePalma. DePalma does not want to pursue an easement. He wants us to deal with the new landowner once he sells it. We will put this off to the side for now. Gantt would be willing to purchase the small DePalma piece which is on his side of the River if DePalma was willing to sell, but we would have to pay for the subdivision.
- Bridge Approach Removal Project – There are two farm bridges within the Black Dirt flood control project area that are thought to restrict flow. There is interest in removing the earth approaches at the Madura Bridge. SWCD staff went and looked at it with the contractor who does the River maintenance work for us. We met there with farmer L. DeBuck and John Madura who owns the land on the east side of the bridge. All agreed it appeared that the bridge approaches restrict flood flows. Streambanks appear to be blown out below the bridge. J. Madura is in favor of removing them. He indicated that his brother Chris, who owns the land on the west side, would also be. Sumner called our flood project contact at NYSDEC, J. Harrington, who thought it was a good idea but he had to check with Army Corp and DEC flood control staff in Albany. Sumner reviewed the proposed project with our engineer Wendell to ensure that he did not have any concerns with it and to make sure we address the issue of any potential downstream impacts. Wendell responded in writing that there would be none.
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- Sumner met with Chazen Engineering located in Poughkeepsie, to discuss the possibility of them providing engineering design, environmental assessment, permitting and related consulting for future project work. No action taken at this time.
- CRF Round 3 – Proposals are due back at the end of February. It had been previously discussed that money be applied for to complete the Celery Avenue project. Sumner discussed with the Board the question of whether a second CRF3 application should be developed looking at progressing the Bench project further upstream. It was decided to keep the focus on the one CRF3 proposal for the Celery Avenue project. Discussion turned to a participant for the CRF3 proposal. The Vegetable Growers Association and the Drainage District were both considered. It was decided that the Drainage District would be more appropriate. Sumner will ask the State Committee about this group being the sponsor as opposed to an individual farmer.
- The Vegetation Report discussed earlier in the meeting was brought up again. Sumner said the Report includes information that will support a request to NYSDEC to allow for revisions to the permitted Planting Plan details – primarily eliminating the live stake plantings from the bench but keeping them on the actual River bank.
- Phase I Bench Project – Subdivision proposal packet prepared by Lehman and Getz to take Bench area out of ownership by Dean Ford and Barron Field, LLC went to the Town. The Town is requesting more information about Right of Way access to the new parcel.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

- M. Ullrich – Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - Greenhouse Grower School will be on February 26th.
 - The Stormwater Management Training Series will be February through June. The Flyer is finished.
 - Onion School will be held sometime the end of February/early March.

- The 2018 Empire State Producers Expo will be held January 16-18 in Syracuse, NY.
- J. Heller – Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Twelve of fifteen EQIP applications moved to the next round.
 - Ag Management Assistance was zeroed out for 2018.
 - Ag Land Easement – 1 closing in February in Warwick.
 - M. Bittner is temporarily working in Dutchess County.
 - The USDA lost 17 vehicles statewide.

P. DeBlock mentioned that R. Minkus was elected as County Committee Chairman for the Farm Service Agency.

OLD BUSINESS

It was mentioned that the pelletizer equipment is at Cobleskill except for the tub grinder, which is supposed to go to Tantillos.

NEW BUSINESS

(J. Heller left the meeting at 10:26 AM)

M. Kemnitz offered to continue attending monthly Board Meetings until her replacement is chosen. The Board was appreciative and accepted her offer.

District Law Training – Sumner reviewed the District Law Training Module with the Directors. He will email the full Powerpoint presentation to each of them. They will complete the training module before the end of the month and let Sumner know when they have completed it.

The District's Reorganizational Meeting will be in January at the monthly Board Meeting.

The next **MEETING** is scheduled for **Monday, January 22, 2017 at 9:00 AM.**

2017-12-4 The Meeting adjourns at 10:33 AM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Wright. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroodt, Secretary to the Board