

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

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Vice-Chairman at 12:05 PM. Directors G. Keeton, P. DeBlock and P. Ruskiewicz were present, R. Baglia (CCE), K. Sumner and C. DeGrootd (OCSWCD).

2016-2-1 Keeton made the Motion, Ruskiewicz seconded, to approve January's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

- None

CORRESPONDENCE

- Statements from the District's banks were received.
- The most recent Ag & Farmland Protection Board Agenda and Meeting Minutes were passed around for review.
- Various newsletters were passed around.
- The District received a Notice of Complete Application for the Wallkill River Floodplain Bench Project from the NYS DEC.
- A letter was received from Steve Neuhaus, Orange County Executive, regarding the County's work on updating their Hazard Mitigation Plan inviting the District to a stakeholder's meeting on March 2nd. If the Board prefers, Sumner will attend, but it is his preference to prepare a letter to them which gives them an update on our current flood mitigation projects and asks for them to be included in the HMP update. Board agreed with this approach.
- The District sent the Housing Trust Fund a progress report and requested a time extension. The current contract expires in July 2016. They acted on it quickly and our time extension was approved. The new contract expires July 2017. Keeton will sign the time extension for the District.
- The Pochuck Creek Project report was passed around.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- There was a brief discussion regarding the District's Unobligated Fund. **2016-2-2 DeBlock made the Motion, Ruskiewicz seconded, to transfer \$30,000.00 out of the Unobligated Fund and into the Equipment Replacement Fund. All in favor.**
- **2016-2-3 DeBlock moved to accept the Financial Report, Ruskiewicz seconded. All in favor.**
- The District is retaining 5% (approx. \$12,000) from NGS Construction for touch-up/final inspection in the spring on the Pochuck Creek Ledge Project.
- Ag NPS RD 20 Livestock Waste - T. Vellenga payment – State Committee came down to review the project so we could do a partial close-out. We started the process but they are asking for a lot of paperwork. Sumner recommends to Board that we pay Troy his final 10% instead of having staff spend weeks preparing partial-closeout paperwork. Sumner noted that this final payment was already listed on the Bills To Be Paid for this month.
- **2016-2-4 Ruskiewicz made the Motion, DeBlock seconded, to accept the Bills to Be Paid. All in favor.**
- January's Grant Update report was reviewed. It was mentioned that AG NPS RD 18 is due to expire this May. The District is preparing a time extension request.
- There was a brief discussion regarding the Wallkill Flood Project District staff time.

STAFF REPORTS

- DeGrootd
 - Brief update on the upcoming County annual audit.
 - DeGrootd and Sumner participated in a AgNPS Round 22 webinar on February 25th.
 - The annual Performance Measures were completed on time and submitted to State Committee.
 - DeGrootd has been assisting Meyer with Soil Group Worksheets as needed.
 - N. Halloran, Goshen Building Inspector, requested and received stormwater educational material from the District for one of their events.
 - DeGrootd has been working on the Ag NPS Round 22 Walkkill grant proposal.

- Meyer – Meyer was absent but staff gave an update on projects he has been working on.
 - Meyer has been working on AEM Tiers 1 and 2 and working on Tier 3 planning.
 - Meyer has been working on moving along the Ag NPS RD 18 projects.
 - There has been a steady flow of Soil Group Worksheet requests coming in.

- Sumner
 - T. Vellenga Project – State Committee came down with their engineer to see the project and other projects.
 - Pelletizer Project – Tantillos in Ulster County signed a lease agreement for the biomass pelletizing equipment owned by LHLIRC&D. Sumner proposed to the RC&D to send a request for information to colleges and other educational institutions to see if there is any interest in acquiring the equipment at low or no-cost. He specifically reached out to SUNY Cobleskill but has not heard back.
 - Sumner and Meyer met with the owner of Corny Cattle located in Thompson Ridge, NY to initiate the AEM process. Discussion followed.
 - The USDA Service Center is installing new telephones.
 - Ag NPS RD 22 Grant Proposals are due April 1, 2016.
 - There was a brief discussion regarding resubmission of the Ag NPS RD 21 Moodna Proposal, which was not funded, for RD 22. Staff are currently working on a RD 22 Walkkill Proposal.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

- R. Baglia of Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - A Christmas Tree Diagnostic Skills Workshop will be held on Monday, March 14th from 8:30 AM -12:15 PM at Cornell Cooperative Extension Orange County.
 - A 4-H Tractor Safety Program will be on February 24th at the CCE office.
 - Vegetable School will be held on February 24th in Albany and the 25th in Kingston
 - The Stormwater Project Design From Planning to NOI is on February 25th from 8:30-4:30
 - Onion School will be on March 8th at CCE.
 - Increase Profits Through Milk Quality Series is on March 31st at CCE in Middletown.
 - Dairy Days will be on March 9th at the Pine Bush firehouse.

OLD BUSINESS

- DeBlock mentioned that Jill DeBlock, whose family owns a farm in New Hampton, won the First Alternate title in the New York State Dairy Princess Contest.
- There are no updates on a new District Director.
- Walkkill Flood Project

- Flood Plain Bench Project - Things are moving quickly. The Army Corp completed their review and they are considering the project to qualify under one of their nationwide permit programs. We are now aggressively pursuing DEC and other permits. After meeting with regional DEC staff, we agreed to undertake the Project in three phases instead of two. This phasing is primarily intended to minimize impacts to the Indiana Bat. The current plan for phase 1 is to do the bench on the north side of the river from the Cheechunk Canal upstream to Rutgers Creek, which is approximately 2,600 feet. In order to retain the ability to start the Bench construction this summer, trees would need to be cut before March 31, again because of bat concerns. Trees could be processed after March 31st. It is not certain that we will have all necessary permits in time to do the tree cutting, but we are making preparations just in case. Sumner passed out four tree cutting proposals from contractors for review. Discussion followed. **2016-2-5 DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Rusczkiewicz, to offer the contract to County Logging, the lowest bidder, based on a contract prepared with legal advice by Richard Hoyt. All in favor.**
- For the DEC permits, a public comment period was required. This had to be listed in the paper for fifteen business days. Public comment stays open until March 3rd.
- Sumner briefed the Board again on the issue of utilization of the large quantity of soil material that will be generated by the Bench project excavation. He believes the best approach is to try to utilize as much of the soil as possible to improve the farm fields adjacent to the excavation area. This will require a great deal of planning and arrangements with the owners of the land, including compensation for lost crops and possibly hired survey work to allow for proper development of a field grading plan.
- The execution of conservation easements for the land that will become the Bench is also an issue needing attention, as well as appropriate compensation to the landowners for permanent loss of the use of these areas.

(R. Baglia left the meeting at 1:20 PM.)

- Sumner reviewed the edits he made to the Provisions of Employment based on Director input at the January 2016 Board Meeting. **2016-2-6 DeBlock made the Motion to adopt changes in the District's Provisions of Employment as presented and to renew all other District Policies that remain unchanged, seconded by Rusczkiewicz. All in favor.**

NEW BUSINESS

- Prices for an enclosed trailer for the District's UTV were passed around. **2016-2-7 Rusczkiewicz made the Motion, seconded by DeBlock, to purchase the 7' x 12' V Nose enclosed trailer from V Nose Trailers in Middletown, NY at the cost of \$4,095.00 and to request reimbursement from the Town of Wallkill RSR Grant. If it is not reimbursed it will be paid for out of District funds. Also, to list the District's current trailer for sale. All in favor.** Sumner recommended that the open trailer could be offered for sale but that the Board review any offers received before any action is taken.

The **NEXT MEETING** is scheduled for Monday, March 21, 2016 at 9:00 AM.

2016-2-8 Meeting adjourns at 2:05 PM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Rusczkiewicz. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroot
Secretary to the Board