

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
July 20, 2015

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:02 AM. Directors J. Wright, G. Keeton, P. DeBlock and P. Ruszkiewicz were present, along with K. Sumner, C. DeGrootd and N. Meyer (OCSWCD) and E. Schellenberg (CCE).

2015-7-1 DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to approve June's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

Sumner briefly discussed the Draft Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors that was held on June 24, 2015. Doug Dekoskie had sent some suggested language edits regarding the Town of Goshen Floodplain Development permit discussion. Sumner recommended accepting Dekoskie's suggestions for this section of the minutes. **2015-7-2 Keeton made the Motion, seconded by DeBlock, to approve the Minutes as amended. All in favor.**

S. Wong joined the meeting at 9:07 AM.

Introductions were made to Erik Schellenberg, Good Ag Practices for Fruits and Vegetables, Cornell Cooperative Extension. Schellenberg has worked for CCE for almost one year.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a) Email string regarding NRCS Working Agreement - Sumner read aloud his email dated February 18, 2015 to Heller, Greg Kist and Mary Kerstetter to the District Board.
- b) Letter from B. Steinmuller, Asst. Director, NYS SWCC, announcing that the new deadline for the SWCD Annual Plan of Work submittal will be November 1, 2015.
- c) The Riverkeeper Water Report was passed out for review. Wright asked if there were any findings that could be summarized. Sumner and Keeton offered a few comments, including that the study is focused on fecal bacteria sampling and that there were some interesting results for the Wallkill River through Orange and Ulster Counties.
- d) A letter from the Orange County Board of Ethics regarding equipment storage space was reviewed by the Board. Discussion followed.
- e) A letter from Kevin Sumner to William Rudge, Director of Natural Resources, regarding tree/woody debris removal for the Wallkill River Flood Control Project was passed around for Director review. Discussion followed.
- f) A response letter from Willian Rudge, Director of Natural Resources, was discussed

J. Clifford (NYS SWCC) joined the meeting at 9:15 AM.

- g) The Orange County Ag and Farmland Protection Board Meeting Agenda and Draft Minutes were passed around for review.
- h) Key Bank's monthly bank analysis was available for review. No action taken.

- i) The New York Association of Conservation Districts Invoice was reviewed. No action taken.
- j) The National Association of Conservation Districts Invoice was reviewed. No action taken.
- k) A cover letter to J. Neal Blair, Orange County Budget Director, was signed by the Chairman and will be included with the District's proposed 2016 hard copy budget packet.
- l) The year 11 AEM Contract was presented for the District Chairman's signature in front of a notary.
- m) An email from Dan Farrand, President of the New York Association of Conservation Districts, gave an update on the Directors Association.
- n) Bank Statements passed out for review as correspondence:
 - Key Bank Public Money Market Savings Account Ag NPS RD 17Wallkill
 - Key Bank Public Money Market Savings Account Ag NPS RD 17Moodna
 - Key Bank Public Money Market Savings Account Ag NPS RD 18
 - Key Bank Public Money Market Savings Account Ag NPS RD 19
 - Key Bank Public Money Market Savings – Main Account
 - Key Bank Public Checking Account
 - TD Bank Business Interest Checking Account
 - TD Bank Business Interest Checking Account Ag NPS RD 20 Farm Runoff
 - TD Bank Business Interest Checking Account Ag NPS RD 20 Livestock Waste

FINANCIAL REPORTS

It was noted that employee payroll deductions are no longer shown on the financial reports per the NYS Comptroller auditor's recommendation.

2015-7-3 Keeton made the Motion, seconded by DeBlock, to approve June's Financial Report. All in favor.

2015-7-4 Wong made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to pay July's bills. All in favor.

The Ag Grant Update Report for June was reviewed. No action taken. Sumner added that both Ag NPS RD 17 Wallkill and Moodna Grants were approved for time extensions and the new expiration date is May 2016.

STAFF REPORTS

C. DeGroodt (SWCD) – There was a brief discussion regarding ordering work shirts. Prices from vistaprint.com and Amsterdam were available for review. Ruskiewicz suggested contacting T-Bone Designs in Port Jervis. **2015-7-5 DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to have a set limit of \$150.00 to purchase work shirts for staff. All in favor.**

DeGroodt and Meyer participated in the Invasive Species Webinar on July 24th.

DeGroodt worked on the Draft 2016 Proposed Budget.

N. Meyer (SWCD) - The District's no-till equipment usage is slowing down. Meyer will be working on cleaning the corn planters soon and preparing the equipment for winter storage. One of the seeders is still in use.

Middletown GIGP Update – Sumner and Meyer have been working on surveying, mapping and working on the application.

Campbell Plaza Project Update – Last month, District staff walked the Monhagen Brook at the location of the Campbell Plaza project to identify invasive plants with Beth Roessler from Trees for Tribes. The site was also scoped for a potential fall Trees for Tribes planting. Staff also surveyed an area of the Brook where they are looking to complete the streambank stabilization part of the project. Meyer has already drawn the first streambank stabilization plan set. A brief discussion followed.

RSR Mitigation Project Update - The Campbell Plaza TFT project mentioned above, may be done as one of the planned stream restoration projects for the RSR project. Another planting project is planned for September 26th near the Monhagen Schools.

Meyer is attending a Level 1 training the first week of August in Cobleskill.

Meyer has been working on the AEM Tier 5B's for farms participating in the AG NPS grants and working on Ag NPS Fuel Storage projects.

The Wallkill Maintenance Project started last week.

K. Sumner (SWCD) - Sumner gave a presentation to the Middletown Rotary.

Sumner has a meeting scheduled with farmer J. Bastek and relevant parties on July 29th regarding the Millenium Pipeline Project. In pre-field meeting discussions with M. Brower (NYS&M) and M. Ullrich (OCCCE), Sumner suggested coming up with an independent team of professionals to prepare a plan to restore Bastek's property. Sumner agreed to look for a soil scientist that is familiar with muck soil and to contact local attorney Richard Hoyt to discuss legal aspects of the situation. Hoyt indicated he is not really seeking new clients but would review the original agreement Bastek had with the pipeline company and offer informal opinion if we could provide it to him. On a separate note, Sumner asked Hoyt for a quote to provide legal assistance to Soil & Water. His quote was \$185/hour. Discussion followed.

Pellet Project Report - Tantillos Farm in Ulster County expressed verbally their interest in leasing the pelletizing equipment for one year. Details of this potential arrangement continue to be discussed.

T. Vellenga's barn/manure storage project is making progress. There was a pre-construction meeting at the site with the primary contractors.

Sumner received a call from an attorney working for Tuxedo Reserve asking if the District was interested in holding an easement. The Board felt that if it involved agricultural land they would consider it, but this is not ag land. No action taken.

Sumner was previously asked by the District Board to research estimates for the cost to remove the Madura Bridge over the Wallkill River. Wendell Buckman, B & L Engineer, gave an estimate of \$40,000.00 to remove it. Sumner sent a note to the Town Supervisors to see if they would consider using Maintenance Funds to remove the bridge if there is any left over after inspection work is completed. The only response he has received to date is from Mike Sweetman who said if some flood control benefit could be demonstrated that Warwick would consider it. Discussion followed.

The District is working on a Time Extension Request for the Housing Trust Fund regarding the Wallkill Flood Project. The current contract ends July 31, 2015.

Phil Johnson, a local dairy farmer, has NYS NPS Ag Grant Round 20 funding coupled with EQIP funding for a composted bedded pack barn and covered barnyard. The District is trying to assist him to avoid losing his EQIP funding since the contract is old and NRCS felt that no significant progress has been made on completion of the project. Discussion followed.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

E. Schellenberg (CCE) – The 2015 Cornell Floriculture Field Day will be held on August 11, 2015.

On Wednesday, July 22, 2015 at 3:30 PM there will be a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Cornell Cooperative Extension's new Education Center & 4-H Park in Otisville, NY.

J. Clifford (NYS SWCC) – Clifford handed out the 2014 NYS Soil & Water Conservation Districts Annual Report.

Clifford stated that the Districts' Annual Plans of Work which were due in April are now due in November effective immediately.

Climate Resiliency Program – An extra \$500,000.00 was given in the District's line item. There will be RFP to be released this year.

There are approximately 20 new soil technicians that will be attending the week-long training that Meyer is going to.

Conservation Approval Authority – The State Committee's new engineer developed the training in the form of videos that can be accessed online. This helps to build up the level of training state-wide.

There was a brief discussion on the State's new initiative to support agricultural drainage via a loan program.

OLD BUSINESS

NYCS Cooperative Working Agreement - There was a brief discussion regarding the NRCS Working Agreement.

Wallkill Flood Project Update – The Pochuck Project went out to bid. One bid was received from Montana Construction in the amount of \$1.8 million. **2015-7-6 Keeton made the Motion, seconded by DeBlock, to reject this bid on the basis that there was only one offer and it was nine times higher than the engineer's estimate. All in favor.** Discussion followed on ways in which the Project plans might be modified to achieve the same result but result in more affordable bids. Sumner will discuss this with the Project engineer. A rock sample from the ledge was taken and Meyer is working with a geologist to find out what kind of rock it is in order to determine if it can be broken up easily. Sumer stated that he will show the project to some local contractors. More discussion followed.

Sumner received an email from Sean Hoffman, Town of Goshen Engineer, stating he sent a bill to Goshen and Goshen told him to forward the bill to the District. This is regarding his work reviewing the Flood Plain Development Permit. His firm had spent 1.75 hours reviewing the permit totaling \$350.00. Sumner suggested to him that he make the bill out to the District or otherwise have Goshen pay it, then Goshen bills us.

Kevin stated the District is doing the Flood Project Contract/Agreements with B&L with a one-year term and a \$50,000.00 cap. Either you get to the end of the term or you get to the end of the money. If one or the other happens, a new contract is created. According to General Municipal Law, the District does not have to go out to bid for professional services. According to the District's Procurement Policy, professional services contracts \$50,000 or under do not need to go out to bid.

Equipment Storage – Mr. Bergen has not yet submitted a price quote in writing to the District for storing the UTV and trailer. Sumner had emailed County of Orange DPW to see if they had any equipment storage space available but has not heard back. There was discussion regarding rebidding for the no-till equipment storage. Ideally all pieces of equipment would be housed together. It was decided to send out an RFI.

NEW BUSINESS

The District's 2016 Proposed Budget packet was sent in to the County Budget Department. The Board had given staff guidance on the 2016 budget and the appropriation request to be made to the County at last month's meeting. The proposed 2016 budget prepared by staff according to this guidance and provided to the County was presented to the District Board for their final approval. **2015-7-7 Keeton made the Motion, seconded by DeBlock, to adopt the District's 2016 Proposed Budget. All in favor.**

The District's Executive Office Budget Hearing is scheduled for August 13, 2015 at 2:00 PM.

The way that Motions are tracked was discussed. It was decided to begin bolding motions in the minutes, and maintaining a numbered record of motions coded by year and month. This will facilitate review of past motions and determination if any past motions need to be rescinded or modified.

The **NEXT MEETING** is scheduled for Monday, August 17, 2015 at 9:00 AM.

The MEETING was adjourned at 12:24 AM on a Motion 2015-7-8 by DeBlock, seconded by Ruszkiewicz. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroodt
Secretary to the Board