

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
July 18, 2022

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:06 AM. Directors J. Wright, P. DeBlock, P. Ruszkiewicz, G. Constable and B. Cheney were present along with K. Sumner and C. DeGroodt (SWCD) and E. Schellenberg (CCE).

2022-7-1 DeBlock made the Motion, Ruszkiewicz seconded, to approve June's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS – Some bills were paid and are listed on Bills for Board Approval.

CORRESPONDENCE

- The bank statements and collateral agreements were available for review.
- The New York Association of Conservation Districts (NYACD) update was passed around. The NYACD 2022 Annual Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 18th – Thursday, October 20th at the Hampton Inn in Cazenovia, NY.
- The District sent a letter to the Orange County Land Trust (OCLT) regarding their proposal for use of the Legoland Environmental Benefit Project funds. The proposal was reviewed and discussed at a District Board Meeting. If OCLT agrees, the District would allocate \$35,000.00 of the \$50,000.00 EBP funding exclusively to the Sugarloaf Mountain Project providing the Project Management line is removed from the budget, and SWCD will forward the revised proposal to the NYS DEC and notify the Moodna Coalition of that decision.
- The New York State & Local Retirement System sent the District a notification that the deficiency payment for Ferry is due. It can be paid in one lump sum of \$7,144.00 or added to the District's Annual Invoice for a period of 25 years in the amount of \$523.00/year. Discussion under "Bills for Board Approval".
- The District sent a letter to Governor Kathy Hochul, recommending that she veto the changes to the Protection of the Water Regulatory Program via Assembly Bill A6652 and Senate Bill S4162. These bills currently passed both the Senate and Assembly. The NYACD is recommending against the bills and asked Districts to reach out to Governor Kathy Hochul to request that she veto the bills. Currently, streams that are a Class C are non-regulated, these bills would extend regulations to Class C streams.
- New York State Department of Ag and Markets copied the District on a letter to the Orange County Legislature from the Ag & Markets Commissioner, Richard Ball, stating that in accordance with Section 303-b of the Agriculture and Markets Law, the Orange County Legislature submitted to him by Resolution No. 138 of 2022, a report and plan to modify Orange County Consolidated Agricultural District No. 1 by including predominantly viable agricultural land into the District. Following review of the plan and documents, he certified that the inclusion of predominantly viable agricultural land, as proposed, is feasible and shall serve the public interest by assisting in maintaining a viable agricultural industry within the District.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The District received the 2nd and 3rd quarter appropriations from the County.

2022-7-2 Ruszkiewicz made the Motion, Cheney seconded, to file June's Financial Reports for audit review. All in favor.

BILLS FOR BOARD APPROVAL

#4 on the list of Bills for Approval is to pay Pine Island Turf Nursery \$30,000.00 for work on the Wallkill Flood Bench Project. Since we can only get reimbursed from DASNY once a month, Sumner suggests that we pay this bill out of Performance Measures Part C money. Once we receive a second bill from the contractor we will submit for reimbursement from DASNY and replenish the Part C money.

NYS Retirement Update – At last month's meeting, no decision was made to pay the deficiency payment. After researching, Sumner recommended to the Board that we pay it in one lump sum of \$7,144.00. Discussion followed.

2022-7-3 DeBlock made the Motion, Cheney seconded, to approve paying New York State Retirement in one lump sum of \$7,144.00 for Ferry's NYS Retirement deficiency payment. All in favor.

There was discussion on updating the 'Provisions of Employment' to add provisions aimed at reducing the likelihood that the District invests in long-term employee training/benefits and then cannot recoup those investments if the employee moves to another position. For example, fees and training expenses for a certification such as CCA. Sumner will research if examples are available.

2022-7-4 Wright made the Motion, Ruszkiewicz seconded, to pay Ferry for his accrued Annual Leave balance at the time of his resignation in the amount of \$2,008.25. Cheney-Aye, Constable-Aye, DeBlock-Abstained.

2022-7-5 Wright made the Motion, Cheney seconded, to pay the remainder of the bills. All in favor.

GRANT REPORT UPDATE – The Grant Report is updated monthly to reflect changes.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

E. Schellenberg (CCE) – Fourteen people attended a 4-Hour Erosion & Sediment Control Course taught by Sumner on July 14th at the CCE's 4-H Park.

P. DeBlock (FSA) – The crop acreage reporting deadline was last Friday.

The technician vacancy in the Farm Service Agency has been filled.

STAFF REPORTS

Written staff reports were emailed to Board Members prior to the Meeting for review.

C. DeGroodt (SWCD) – DeGroodt had nothing to add to her report, which was emailed prior to the meeting. She mentioned that the Technician Job Vacancy was posted online to several sites and the District's proposed budget packet was submitted to the County.

K. Sumner (SWCD) – See "Old and New Business".

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Hudson Valley Carbon Farming Project – There has been progress on one of the two remaining construction projects. A draft roof design from Barton & Loguidice (B&L) for the Southway project was provided to the landowner for his review. Discussion followed.

Flood Plain Bench – Working on the last phase of the currently permitted work on the floodplain bench project. Sumner passed around photos. After review by regulatory agencies, areas near the project site were designated for placement of clay and other soil unsuitable for topsoil use. The temporary crossing over the Pochuck Creek was successfully and quickly installed according to the plans. Some of the pipes used were provided by the County Department of Public Works but the contractor was not comfortable using the ones in poor condition. Four were usable and the contractor bought four new ones. Sumner discussed that there would be benefits to keeping this access point but this needs further discussion with appropriate parties. It is probably not advisable to leave the pipes in, but the approaches and stone on the bottom of the channel could potentially be left to facilitate future site access for monitoring and other purposes. Discussion followed.

Ermin Siljkovic, the Recycling Coordinator at the Orange County Department of Public Works/Division of Environmental Facilities and Services, contacted Sumner regarding a Community Composting Project. It sounds like it will initially be a small scale project collecting food scraps from farmer markets and finding a place to process them, collecting around ten gallons a week. Discussion followed.

Meat Processing Facility – There was discussion regarding the idea of a meat processing facility at the last Ag & Farmland Protection Board Meeting. After the meeting Sumner felt it would be a good idea to follow that up with something more formal. A letter was sent to the County Executive from John Wright and Leonard DeBuck, Ag Board Chairman, and emailed to Harry Porr, Deputy County Exec. Porr said he would forward it to Steven Gross (OC Director of Economic Dev). Sumner also sent the information to the Ag Implementation Committee and provided a copy of the letter to Jason Touw, Chairman of the local Farm Bureau (FB) and asked that they discuss it. FB agreed to write to County. Sumner provided a copy of the Wright/DeBuck letter to Jen at OCPD and requested it be put on the Ag Board Agenda. Cheney emphasized the importance of contacting livestock farmers to assess demand. Schellenberg said that he would forward the Livestock Educator's information to Sumner. Sumner said he is willing to work on this, but that he feels other agencies or entities are more suited to be leading the initiative.

Farm Tires – Follow-up to last month's discussion. A Town of Crawford farmer contacted Sumner to inquire about assistance in removing tires from his farm. At last month's meeting, the Board approved making an offer to the farmer to pay 50% of the cost, up to \$1,500 total, for the removal of farm tires. Cheney looked into a reduced rate from the County to remove the tires, but he was told that the County is not comfortable making any kind of commitment to decreasing the rate that they charge because it would set a precedent. Sumner had told the farmer that he could also contact Casings, the company we hired for our Tire Removal Project, as he might get a better price for tire removal from them vs. bringing them to the County Transfer Station.

The NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee will be holding a meeting on 7/26/22 where they will be approving the ranked list for the Ag NPS Grant Round 28 and the Climate Resilient Farming (CRF) Grant Round 6. Orange SWCD did not apply for this round of the Ag NPS Grant, but we do have the purchase of a roller crimper and a 12 foot seeder in the CRF grant.

As previously mentioned, the District Technician Job was posted to numerous sites and several resumes were received. Our job specs allow us to hire someone with two years of ag experience without any college.

There was a brief discussion on the need to have two corn planters and that we may want to think of replacing or updating the older one. Our seeder was rebuilt at Pine Plains Tractor.

ORANGE COUNTY SWCD JULY 2022 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The 2021 Auditor's Report was passed out to Directors. To be discussed next month. No significant findings.

The District's County Budget hearing is August 10th at 10:00 AM.

NEXT MEETING DATE - The next **MEETING** is scheduled for **Monday, August 15, 2022 at 9:00 AM.**

ADJOURNMENT

2022-7-6 The Meeting was Adjourned at 10:55 AM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Wright. All in favor.

Minutes Prepared By:

Christine DeGroodt, Secretary to the Board

July, 2022

AEM/AEM Round 17 Tier 4 (Implementation Projects)

No recent activity on AEM17 T4 projects

Hudson Valley Carbon Farming Project [contract extended to 2023]

Progress on one of two remaining construction projects – draft roof design from B&L for Southway provided to landowner for his review.

Recommend letter be sent to other project participant with deadline for starting project.

Floodplain Bench

Phase 4 (CRF 5)

Met with second of the two affected landowners (Bastek Family Trust). He will defer to renter of the land, Brian Ford, regarding details for the project but he does not have objections to it.

Need both landowners to sign Access Licenses for DEC permit application.

Phase 3, Area 2

Work started on 7/5. Pipes that were to be provided by the County DPW were in poor condition, contractor was not comfortable using most of them. Four were used, four more were purchase new.

Temporary crossing over Pochuck Creek installed successfully. Stump removal and grubbing complete. Excavation of bench in progress.

Requesting Board to approve reimbursement to sponsoring farm for 1st partial payment of \$30,000. We can only bill DASNY once a month, so I recommend borrowing from one of our dedicated funds, to be replenished when we receive DASNY reimbursement.

Other Flood Mitigation

Pellets Island Reach Maintenance Program – We are trying to get TP-584 forms completed for all landowners while waiting for more maps/descriptions from County Surveyor. Waiting on some guidance from attorney.

Round 27 ANPSACP

Waiting for contract documents (start date for contract – November, 2021).

Other

Legoland EBP – OCLT proposal , as amended after discussion last month with Directors, provided to DEC. Waiting for their reply/approval.

Pulaski Culverts – nothing new to report since last month

Farm Tires

Apprised Crawford farmer of c/s proposal approved last month.

New Hire – Some resume's received.

Meat Processing Facility – letter sent to County Executive from Wright and DeBuck. I am not aware of any follow up on this other than a reply from H. Porr that he was forwarding to S. Gross. Provided copy of letter to Chair of local Farm Bureau and asked that they discuss it. They have agreed to write to CE and Legislature.

Call from Washingtonville farmer – Will County DPW investigate?

Streams Bill – letter sent to governor.

NYS Retirement – Need to take action on deficiency payment. To be discussed at meeting.

There is a group working on developing a 'community composting' project. I am following and looking at opportunities to link with our farm composting projects. But I currently have limited time to become fully involved with this group.

2023 proposed budget submitted to County. Hearing with CE 8/10, 10AM.

Presented 4 hr contractor's erosion and sediment control course at 4H park 7/14.

Looks like corn planter rentals are done for this year. Seeder business continues.



Pochuck Creek Temporary Crossing

C. DeGroodt

Board Meeting Activities June 18, 2022 – July 14, 2022

- We have \$543 cash awards on the rewards credit cards.
- Worked on paperwork for the 4-Hour E&SC course.
- Cancelled Ferry's NYS retirement, credit card, insurance, etc. Submitted MSD form to County w/ Ferry's resignation letter. Cancelled Ferry's Zoom account and created one in my name.
- Posted tech vacancy on several sites. Several resumes received.
- 2023 Proposed budget submitted to County.
- Updated NT equipment spreadsheets (agreements, insurance, bills).
- Submitted 2nd quarter FICA and NYS quarterly tax reports.