

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
June 15, 2015

The Meeting was CALLED TO ORDER by the Chairman at 9:07 AM. Directors J. Wright, G. Keeton, P. DeBlock, P. Ruskiewicz and S. Wong were present, along with K. Sumner, C. DeGrootd and N. Meyer (OCSWCD) and R. Baglia (CCE).

Keeton made the Motion, seconded by DeBlock, to approve May's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

Wright made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to approve the Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors that was held on May 26, 2015. All in favor.

Correspondence

- a) Letter from Brian Steinmuller informing us that two time extension requests for the Ag NPS RD 17 contracts were approved by the State Committee.
- b) Copy of letter Sumner sent to New York State Homes & Community Renewal requesting a time extension for the Wallkill Flood Project. The current contract end date is July 31, 2015.
- c) Copy of letter the District Chairman had sent in to the Orange County Board of Ethics regarding the storage of the District's UTV and trailer. The Board of Ethics responded that they hope to review this at their June meeting and if they wanted the District Chairman to attend they would let us know.
- d) A letter was received from Dale Stein, Chair of the Soil and Water Conservation Committee, indicating a willingness on the part of the Committee and NRCS to have a joint meeting between NRCS, SWCD and State Committee staff regarding the Cooperative Working Agreement. Discussion followed.

Ruskiewicz mentioned that he was contacted by John Harrington, NYS DEC, regarding the Madura Bridge. Harrington said that he found an easement for the bridge and that Madura can contact Berhanu Gonfa from DEC's Flood control Bureau to find out about getting a permit to remove the bridge. Sumner asked if Madura was willing to pay for the work. Sumner stated we may need to address this bridge in the future. DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Ruskiewicz, to authorize seeking preliminary estimates for the cost to remove the bridge and contacting the Wallkill Maintenance group to see if they would be in favor of using Maintenance Funds to remove the bridge. All in favor.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Wright made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to approve April's Financial Report. All in favor.

Keeton made the Motion, seconded by Wright, to approve May's Financial Report. All in favor.

DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Ruskiewicz, to pay June's bills including the employees' health insurance. All in favor.

The Ag Grant Update Report for May was reviewed. No action taken.

STAFF REPORTS

C. DeGroot (SWCD) – DeGroot discussed the District's banking and credit cards. Discussion followed. Wright made the Motion, seconded by DeBlock, to lower the amount available on the District Manager's credit card to \$10,000.00. The amount had been increased by the credit card company in absence of any request from the District. All in favor.

DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Ruskiewicz, to transfer \$200.00 to the District's TD Bank main checking account. All in favor.

Keeton made the Motion, seconded by Wright, to close the District's Key Bank main checking account and open a new one that will not charge us monthly fees. All in favor.

N. Meyer (SWCD) - Meyer has been busy moving, fixing and billing for the no-till equipment. So far this year the machines have been used to plant over 315 acres with the corn planters and 415 with the seeders.

Campbell Plaza Project – A few weeks ago 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. Last week staff also surveyed an area of the Brook where they are looking to complete the streambank stabilization part of the project. 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. Roessler also walked two other sites on the Monhagen Brook with staff, one at the Maple Hill Middletown schools complex and one just downstream from the school on private property, to scope TFT projects that could also satisfy some of the RSR project deliverables.

Meyer attended a course on Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) which was offered by Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Meyer attended the NRCS Organic Event that was two weeks prior. It was an interesting event and a lot of organizations attended.

Meyer has begun re-evaluating older AEM projects.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

R. Baglia (CCE) – CCE has been working on the Stormwater Consortium in Rockland County.

CCE is seeking to hire a Resource Educator.

The Stormwater Management Series is complete for this spring but CCE has begun planning the series for next year.

OLD BUSINESS

Wright stated that at a recent Farm Bureau Meeting it was mentioned by someone that the District's no-till equipment was not being used just for no-till. As it was in the past, it was again clarified that although the District promotes using the equipment for no-till, it is allowed to be used for conventional tilling. A brief discussion followed.

The NRCS Cooperative Working Agreement Meeting will be held sometime in July.

Wallkill Flood Project – There was a field meeting with Sumner, Brian Orzel, Army Corp of Engineers., Doug Dekoskie and Todd Phillips from B&L and Gary Keeton regarding the bench project site. The Pochuck Ledge project is fully permitted. There was a brief discussion regarding the Celery Avenue Ledge project. Sumner will schedule a meeting with the Celery Avenue landowners, date and time to be determined.

RSR Mitigation Project Update – previously discussed by N. Meyer.

Monhagen Brook Projects at Campbell Plaza – In addition to activity noted in staff reports, Sumner apprised the Board that staff collaborated with Orange County Water Authority/OC Planning Department on a proposal to develop a watershed management plan for the Monhagen. The District had originally intended to be the applicant, but D. Church indicated that they wanted OCWA to be the applicant. The cost-share percentage used by OCWA for partner agencies, including the District, was 50%.

The monitor for the old no-till corn planter is not working. Sumner will take it to Hudson River Tractor to see if it can be sent out for repair. Meyer will research after-market monitors.

Equipment storage estimates were passed out for Director review. Discussion followed.

It was noted that Brown started her maternity leave.

There was a brief discussion regarding bidding out the no-till rental space. It is not subject to bidding requirements.

NEW BUSINESS

Wright made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to accept the 2014 Annual Audit Report. All in favor.

The District's draft 2016 Proposed Budget was passed out for Director review. There are quite a few forms that need to be filled out for the County's budget packet, which staff are working on now. They are due back to the County by July, 2 – before the next Board meeting. By and large, the forms presented to the County are generated based on the numbers we put in the 1-page budget presented to the Board today. Sumner felt the important input staff needed from the Board was what amount should be

requested for our County appropriation. Guidance from the County was to try to submit an appropriation request lower than last year's. Discussion followed. DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to increasing the appropriation request by an amount equal to scheduled step increases and a 2% cost-of-living increase for District staff. All in favor. It was noted that this amount is estimated to be between 7 and 8 thousand dollars.

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

The NEXT MEETING is scheduled for Monday, July 20, 2015 at 9:00 AM.

The MEETING was adjourned at 12:16 AM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Wong. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroodt
Secretary to the Board