

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
May 16, 2016

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:02 AM. Directors J. Wright, G. Keeton, and P. DeBlock were present, J. Heller and D. Mortensen (NRCS), K. Sumner and C. DeGroot (OCSWCD) and P. Canterino (OC Legislator).

Introductions were made to David Mortensen, Assistant State Conservationist for NRCS.

2016-5-1 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to approve April's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

- Sumner sent a request to the Directors requesting permission to spend up to \$100 for phosphorous testing on water samples collected by Meyer and SUNY Orange students and sent to Orange County Labs. Directors approved via email.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Statements from the District's banks were available for review.
- The District's Budget Hearing for the year 2017 will be on Friday, August 26th from 2:00-2:30 PM.
- NYS AgNPS Round 18 time extension to be signed by Chairman and notarized.

(P. Ruszkiewicz joined the meeting at 9:05 AM.)

- **2016-5-2 Ruszkiewicz made the Motion, DeBlock seconded, to sign the Climate Resiliency Farming Program Grant Resolution. All in favor.**

(R. Baglia joined the meeting at 9:07 AM.)

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- An outstanding no-till bill has been paid.
- **2016-5-3 Keeton moved to accept the Financial Report, DeBlock seconded. All in favor.**
- Sumner reviewed the list of Bills to Be Paid with the Directors. The tree cutting contractor has not been paid yet. We are waiting on Housing Trust Fund to pay us. Vellenga Lawn Care who performs the annual Wallkill maintenance was hired to remove branches in the river that the tree cutting contractor did not remove and the amount paid to Vellenga will be deducted from the tree cutter's contract. The Board approved to pay #11 – Gurda Landscaping once funds from the Housing Trust Fund come in. #12 – Vellenga's Lawn Care invoice will be submitted for reimbursement to the Town of Wallkill for the RSR EBT Grant along with additional expenses and staff time. There was discussion that if the A. Weiss Engineering bill is over 30 days old, the District should pay it. Sumner mentioned that Pine Island Turf had previously been approved for a payment of \$20,000.00 at April's Board Meeting for an Ag NYS NPS Stream Corridor and Shoreline Management System. Not all of the work was completed so Sumner certified the Streambank and Shoreline Protection component in the amount of \$17,550.00. The Critical Area Planting component is in progress and once complete they will receive the balance. **2016-5-4 Wright made the Motion, Ruszkiewicz seconded, to accept the Bills to Be Paid and to pay any outstanding bills over 30 days old. All in favor.**
- April's Grant Update Report was reviewed.

STAFF REPORTS

Sumner noted to the Directors that DeGroodt had shown extra initiative and effort – taking the lead in preparing the office for upcoming renovations.

- Meyer – was absent from the meeting but his report was read by Sumner.
 - Meyer completed the AEM Year 11 Final Report and submitted a Year 12 Action Plan.
 - Working on Ag Environmental Management (AEM) planning on farms.
 - No-till equipment use is fairly low this year, approximately 15 farms have utilized the equipment.
 - Wallkill Maintenance is planned to start in August when Vellenga’s schedule slows down.
 - Coordinated the third tree planting for the RSR EBP grant near Route 84 in New Hampton on Saturday, May 14, 2016. 250 trees and shrubs were planted with over 30 volunteers assisting. Trash in the area was also removed.
 - Meyer assisted with preparing the office for renovating.
- Sumner
 - A Round 18 Ag NYS NPS project at M&M Produce was completed. They had Critical Area Planting as a component. A tall slope was gullied out badly so it was re-graded and re-vegetated. Photos of the project were passed around.
 - There was a brief discussion on the Green Innovations Grant for the City of Middletown that the District submitted last year and did not get funded. Sumner had a conference call with the Environmental Facilities Corporation who handles the funding to get some feedback regarding what they liked and didn’t like about our proposal. One of the outcomes is that it might help if we strengthened the relationship between our project and the Heritage Trail Expansion. Brief discussion followed. Sumner is working on getting another \$3,500.00 through the Lower Hudson Coalition of Conservation Districts Planning Grant to help offset consulting costs. He will not know about the \$3,500.00 until the end of this month. The GIGP applications are due in July. Board approved re-submitting the proposal for this year with some edits.
 - **2016-5-5 Wright made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to hire Lehman & Getz to be our engineers on the GIGP and to pay them up to \$5,000.00. All in favor.**
 - Sumner again mentioned the water samples collected by students from a SUNY Orange environmental class and Meyer that were tested for Phosphorous. Samples were collected by a branch that comes through the SUNY Orange campus. Meyer collected his sample at another branch in the creek at the same time.
 - Sumner is working on satellite facilities for D. Ford - our last dairy CAFO. Still issues with the NYS DEC. Trying to come up with solutions to make all happy.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

- R. Baglia of Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - The Stormwater Management Training Series – Getting the Most out of GI will be on May 26, 2016 from 8:30-4:30.
 - There was a brief discussion on a solar energy program. Working with the Orange County Planning Department.
 - Streams 101 will be on June 30th.
 - On June 23rd, The New Blue: The Updated NYSDEC E&S Manual, will be held. Don Lake is presenting and they have approximately 75 people signed up.
- P. DeBlock of Farm Service Agency
 - Discussion on Farm Storage Facility Loans. Terms are now 3 and 5 years.
 - Today is the last day for onion reporting. July 15th will be corn and other crops reporting deadline.

- J. Heller of Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Heller was a presenter at the 1st ever Newburgh Urban Farming Fair on April 29-30.
 - Hoping to close on two conservation easements in Warwick within the next few weeks.
 - Working on irrigation applications under the Ag Assistance Program.
 - There was discussion on drip tape irrigation on the black dirt.
 - He mentioned that the water in the ditches on the Chester muck was high. Farmers were trying to get the pump station to drain them but only one pump out of three is functioning.
 - Heller mentioned that some of the black dirt farmers were asking if the District's ditchbank mower was still available to rent.
 - Last month there was a tour of a wetland reserve project out in the muckland along the Wallkill River. He just received notice from the soil scientists saying it is not a restorable site.
 - Heller has been working on organizing and clearing out the office.
- David Mortensen, Acting State Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Introduced himself. He has been in his current position for five months.

OLD BUSINESS

- Wallkill Flood Project (**see Board Meeting Flood Work Report/Action Items**). Additional notes below:
 - #1 Easements/Landowner Issues:**
 - There was discussion on the Board's conceptual agreement to hold easements associated with the Wallkill Bench Project. No action taken at this time.
 - #5 Bonding:**
 - **2016-5-6 A Motion was made by Ruszkiewicz, seconded by Keeton, to approve the addendum to the Bid package to modify the bonding requirements to qualify the requirement of a Performance Bond. All in favor.** Although he is not a formal Board member so far as anyone present knew, so he could not vote, Canterino noted he was not in favor of the Motion.
 - Continued discussion from earlier. Tree cutting contractor has not yet been paid. Vellenga's Lawn Care had a machine on site to remove branches in the river left from tree cutting. ½ day of excavator time is anticipated. We will deduct funds from the tree cutting contractor bill in order to pay Vellenga's Lawn Care.
- Sumner said we need a Mined Land Exemption because we will be moving more than 1,000 tons of soil in a calendar year. Sumner provided DEC with a report stating where the soil is going. Sumner had already asked the towns what permits we needed from them and he got flood plain development permits from them.
- Sumner got a call from DEC permit administrator on Friday. In response to Sumner's request, they are no longer requiring 4" caliper trees. We can do 2" caliper trees. We also will have the option of digging appropriate trees from future project areas such as across the river from the current phase.

(D. Mortensen left the meeting at 11:32 AM)

(J. Heller left the meeting at 11:37 AM)

#8 Celery Avenue Ledge Project

There was a meeting at the County Attorney's office last November. They contacted the Town of Goshen's lawyer and requested a meeting to resolve permit issues. That was late last year and the District has not heard back since. The District wanted to know if the consultant bill sent to us by Town of Goshen is paid, will we get our permit. Canterino offered to look into this. Discussion

followed.

Other Flood Project Discussion - Sumner mentioned that Kevin Shuback stopped in our office. He indicated he was in support of the Bench project, but wanted to discuss a couple of concerns, including wear and tear on the bridge over the Cheechunk and the farm roads. Sumner told Shuback he would discuss his concerns with the Board, and expected they would be in favor of making sure the farm roads and bridge deck would be repaired from any damage resulting from Flood Project work. Shuback said if we bought the materials, he'll put a new deck on. Board suggested that Sumner ask B&L to fast track the Celery Avenue Bid package.

(R. Baglia left the meeting at 12:00)

NEW BUSINESS

- Discussion on the District's wireless internet password. **2016-5-7 DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Wright, to not give out the District's wireless password to other agencies.**
- Wood gate trailer bids were opened. 1-Roland O'Dell bid \$555.00. 2-Mark Tufano bid \$701.00. **2016-5-8 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to not accept any of the bids. All in favor.**

The **NEXT MEETING** is scheduled for **Monday, June 20, 2016 at 9:00 AM.**

2016-5-9 Meeting adjourns at 12:13 PM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Keeton. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroodt
Secretary to the Board