

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
February 19, 2013

The Meeting was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:04 AM. Directors T. Pahucki, J. Wright and M. Pillmeier were present, along with K. Sumner, C. DeGroot, K. Brown and M. Monahan (OCSWCD), J. Heller (NRCS) and F. Barber (FSA).

Pahucki made the Motion, seconded by Wright, to approve January's Board **MINUTES**.

CORRESPONDENCE – The National Association of Conservation District (NACD) sent the District an Invoice for 2013 Membership Dues. No Motion was made.

The New York Association of Conservation Districts sent the District a 2013 Membership Invoice requesting \$1,500.00. The District usually pays half. Pahucki made the Motion, seconded by Pillmeier, to pay \$750.00. All in favor.

New York State Conservation District's Employees Association (NYSCDEA) submitted and invoice to the District in the amount of \$450.00. Sumner recommended that the Board table this as we don't know if we will have an Envirothon team this year. Pahucki made the Motion, seconded by Pillmeier, to not pay this invoice. All in favor.

An NYSCDEA Invoice for the 2013 Annual Fair Assessment in the amount of \$100.00 was sent to the District. Pahucki made the Motion, seconded by Pillmeier to pay this Invoice. All in favor.

The Ag and Farmland Protection Board Meeting Agenda and MINUTES were passed around. Wright said that he would be attending the next Meeting.

Pahucki asked when does the District get the \$2 million dollars for the 2013 Black Dirt Region Wallkill Flood Control Program. Sumner said that he completed what he was asked to do and now we are waiting for their president to sign the contract. We will not get all of the money up front. There will be a procedure where we will submit what projects we want to do and they will approve interim payments. It remains to be seen exactly how this will work. Pahucki asked where they were located and Sumner said they have offices in New York City and Albany. The money is coming out of a fund called The Greater Catskill Flood Remediation Fund. Senator Bonacic was able to use his influence to designate \$2 million dollars out of that fund for Orange County. The District has been working with the agency that administers this fund – House and Community Development. We were told that as long as we submit projects that are within the contract work scope, they will approve the reimbursement request and forward the money to us. All of the Directors have seen the Scope of Work which states what the money can be spent on. Pillmeier asked if the office could find out and give a definition of the \$2 million to the oversight committee on February 25th. There are no changes to the scope of work as far as Sumner knows. The District has no extra money to spend and then ask for reimbursement on this project. As soon as we receive a signed contract, we can see if we can get an advance for the professional services contract. There will hopefully be a firm chosen to do the study by the time we get the contract. Pahucki asked if we could hire a fly-over to look for debris while the study is being done. Do it now while there are no leaves on the trees. If there are trees across the river, or trash, those obstructions will be removed. He said that all the aerial photos are outdated. Sumner said the engineers would first do a walk-through or boat through the river channel to see what we're working with. Brown mentioned that she knows of one local farmer that rode in a helicopter to check out damage back when Hurricane Irene went through. We could ask this farmer what company this was. Sumner said that ideas will be generated by the Steering

Committee and then the ideas will be brought to the District Board, whom will have the ultimate say over the use of the money.

The **Financial Reports** for December and January were approved by Pahucki, seconded by Pillmeier. All in favor.

SWCD STAFF REPORTS

M. Monahan (SWCD) – Monahan has been busy in the office completing Soil Group Worksheets.

He has also been working on closing out NYS NPS Grant Rounds 13 and 14.

Monahan attended a Stormwater Basics Training at Cornell Cooperative Extension.

AEM Tier 5 plans were completed on two farms.

K. Brown (SWCD) – Brown received comments back on her Certified Nutrient Management Plan that she submitted several months ago for review. She has not written a Board letter yet as discussed at a prior Board Meeting, as she is still checking around with the other Districts to see if they are having issues with getting certified as well.

Brown attended a Leadership conference in Phoenix, AZ where she learned about navigable and ephemeral waters.

On February 5th and 7th, Sumner and Brown taught a class at SUNY Orange.

On February 6th, Brown joined a teleconference regarding the 590 Standard (nutrient management).

Brown mentioned that tonight is a Farm Bureau Meeting at Cosmos.

R. Baglia (CCE) joined the meeting at 9:40 AM.

K. Sumner (SWCD) - The Wallkill Maintenance Group Meeting went well. It was agreed in concept to pursue expansion of the Maintenance Agreement to downstream of Pellets Island reach. The group agreed that increasing the maintenance fund by \$10,000 should be pursued. Each Town and Orange County's contribution would increase. All four Towns attended the Maintenance Meeting. They are trying to get a bid project out for current maintenance work. Pillmeier agreed to get the Legislative Attorney to help with the RFP Agreement expansion. Antoinette Reed said it's much more complicated and has to go through SEQRA process. The original Agreement is over 30 years old and Antoinette cannot find any history of how it was created. How did they come up with the amount the Towns contribute? Sumner said the scope for the \$2 million was written so that expenses associated with an expansion of the current Maintenance Agreement could be included. The other discussion item at the meeting was trying to get a bid packet out for continuing on the Wallkill Maintenance work. The current contract for the Maintenance Agreement expired at the end of 2012. Sumner passed around a draft equipment bid list. Sumner met with James Burpoe from OC Purchasing and Stacy from the OC Law Dept. He was told it's not so simple by them, yet he was told by several Town Supervisors that they use a similar equipment bid list every year. Pillmeier took the bid packet to the Assistant County Attorney. Initially she saw no problem with what Sumner drafted. He will check on it later this week. Wright said he'd like to add some equipment to the list, a forestry cutter or stump cutter for the stumps.

District staff have been busy working on the ag grants.

The District is expecting \$60,000.00 reimbursement from the State. This was previously at a cap of \$30,000.

The District is preparing for spring construction.

There are no resolutions yet on the Jim Bastek pipeline issue.

R. Baglia (CCE) – M. Ulrich has been busy with vegetable school and Audrey Reith and Jen Simpson are also working on programs.

Rose has been working on Nursery Greenhouse School and the Stormwater Series.

Greenhouse season has started and they have been busy doing a lot of field visits as people are preparing for spring.

F. Barber (FSA) – They are still waiting for approval on the Emergency Forestry Restoration Program which restores forests after fires or salt water inundation. The area down around Warwick had wind damage from Hurricane Sandy.

DCP and MILC – both were reauthorized by the Farm Bill extension and they've made the September payments.

NAP deadline is March 15th. New this year, they have multiple planting periods, and can now have as many as 5 separate units per crops that are insurable.

Micro Loans came out recently and are loans for up to \$30,000 that help to offset small start up costs (helping establish new farmers, new equipment).

J. Heller (NRCS) – Processing applications. They will know by March 15th which ones were funded.

Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program – received one application on 70 acres in Warwick.

No allocation of funds right now for WRP.

Wright asked if there has been any discussion on paying RC&D dues? Sumner said that it was agreed that dues would be paid. Sumner already spoke to Bob Thomas, Pelletizer Manager, and Jill (the new RC&D project coordinator).

Pahucki asked Heller about specific details regarding one of their participants after he was approached by the person. Heller stated he is not at liberty to discuss this contract. Pahucki feels it is important to know what the program guidelines are.

OLD BUSINESS – District Policies – Pillmeier made the Motion to postpone approving District policies until all members are present, seconded by Pahucki. All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS – 2013 Black Dirt Region Wallkill Flood Control Program Request for Information - Sumner summarized the Request for Information results. Six responses were received. One firm was much higher in cost estimate than the others. A few of the firms have good relevant experience. All agreed the work could be completed in three months.

According to the latest revisions to general municipal law, we are not required to go to bid for professional services, but municipalities generally establish a number over which they would go to bid. If we adopt this new procurement policy for professional services it would be set at \$50,000.

Sumner will try to find out where the contract for the \$2 million is this week and what we have to get set up for quick reimbursement of initial expenses.

The District set up multiple interest bearing savings accounts for the NYS NPS Ag Grants at Key Bank. Pillmeier recommended discussing this in more detail at next month's Board Meeting. Wright suggested researching other banks. Sumner said we'll find out if funds are covered if accounts are hacked.

The Board went into Executive Session at 10:42 AM.

The Board came out of ES on motion by Pahucki, seconded by Pillmeier. Pahucki then made a motion to accept the employee appraisals prepared by Sumner for Brown, Monahan and DeGroot dated 1/2/13.

The **NEXT MEETING** is scheduled for Tuesday, March 19, 2013 at 9 AM. The **MEETING** was adjourned at 10:50 AM on a Motion by Hulle, seconded by Keeton.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroot
Secretary to the Board