

**MINUTES**  
**ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**June 17, 2013**

The Meeting was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:01 AM. Directors T. Pahucki, J. Wright, G. Keeton and M. Pillmeier were present, along with K. Sumner, C. DeGroot, K. Brown and R. Franke (OCSWCD), R. Baglia (CCE), J. Heller (NRCS), F. Barber (FSA) and P. DeBlock.

**CORRESPONDENCE** – Letters were sent out to the two contractors that were not selected for the “Equipment Rental with Operator for Wallkill River Flood Control Maintenance”.

The District received a FOIL request from Jacob C. Cohen.

\$9,000.00 was brought in to the District for the NYS DEC Endorsed 4-Hour Erosion and Sediment Control training that Sumner taught.

The District is waiting for a final payment on the Ag NPS Grant Round 14. It will be approx. \$26,000.00. The Round 13 final payment will bring in approx. \$16,000.00.

The first reimbursement request on the Flood Control Project was received. A second one is pending.

Discussion followed regarding staff time on the Flood Control Maintenance Project. In the future, Pahucki requested monthly reports on staff time be sent out with the financial report. He wants hours and rates for all staff for both the Flood Control Project and the annual maintenance work. Sumner provided this information verbally.

The **Financial Report** for May was approved by Pahucki, seconded by Keeton. All in favor.

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**SWCD STAFF REPORTS**

**C. DeGroot (SWCD)** – DeGroot asked if the District could donate \$100.00 to James Bergen for the use of his barn for the District’s Tree and Shrub Program. Pillmeier approved the donation, seconded by Keeton. All in favor.

Sumner introduced Richard Franke, the new District Technician.

**R. Franke (SWCD)** – Franke has been working on a culvert sizing study in the Woodbury Creek Watershed, which includes the Towns of Cornwall and Woodbury and the Village of Woodbury. The goal is to map and collect data on bridges and culverts in the watershed. The data will then be sent to Cornell to have computer models identify whether or not culverts are too small to pass stream flow during storm events. This information should help the County and Towns plan for infrastructure changes in the future.

Franke has also been busy soil testing, surveying and moving the no-till equipment.

**K. Brown (SWCD)** – On June 3<sup>rd</sup>, Brown taught some cub scouts about stream buffers at the Benedict Farm Park on the site the District completed a “Trees for Tribs” project.

District staff surveyed at T. Vellenga’s and P. Ewanciw’s farms.

The corn planter needed some new parts (bearings, sprockets and a drive chain). Brown called Rock Stream

Planter to inquire about rebuilding the corn planter and got a price of between \$3-5,000.00 to rebuild all moving parts. The Board recommended getting a price quote from John Deere/Hudson River Tractor.

The box is in on the new seeder. The master cylinder was replaced as well as a hydraulic hose. The second cylinder went bad and had to be sent to Pine Plains equipment to be repaired.

Water levels in the Wallkill were recorded last Friday after all of the rain. Brown gave an overview of water levels in different areas.

**K. Sumner (SWCD)** – Sumner introduced Paula DeBlock, who is interested in taking her father, David Hulle's place on the Board. She was nominated by the Grange. It will not be official until the July Legislature Meeting.

Discussion followed regarding choosing a new Treasurer. Pillmeier made the Motion to appoint T. Pahucki as Treasurer, seconded by Wright. All in favor.

Sumner mentioned that a lot of construction has been completed. He passed around pictures of some of the projects.

Today they are starting construction at Cornell Cooperative Extension on the Stormwater Planter and the tree box filter as well as gutter on the front porch. They are still searching for a contractor for gutter work on porch roof. They will also be installing split rail fencing that will keep people from driving off the asphalt.

Bioretention Basin at the Warwick High School – Lehman & Getz designed it and the plan is to build it this summer.

SUNY Orange Rain Garden – The District received a \$5,000 award last year for this project. We are hoping to build it this summer when school is not in session.

Sumner mentioned that Howard Shapiro stopped in to see him regarding parcels he submitted to be placed into the Ag District. Sumner asked if this could be brought up at the next Ag & Farmland Board Meeting. Pahucki said that he does not remember anything coming in from Shapiro this year. Sumner said the parcels were submitted two years ago.

**R. Baglia (CCE)** – Cornell Cooperative Extension's Agriculture Program Board Report for June 2013 was passed out.

Work has begun on the garden-based Grow to Learn Program grant at the Middletown Residential Center. The goal of this program is to offer enrichment and skill building opportunities that complement the gardening program at the facility.

At the end of May, staff of Cornell Cooperative Extension went to Truman Moon in Middletown and participated in Farm Day. This allowed students to see a variety of species of farm animals. Jen Simpson, Dairy and Field Crop Educator, went back the following week to present a genetics lesson to the 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

Maire Ullrich, Agriculture Program Leader, and staff from various offices visited Orange County in the Summer of 2012 to see farms and facilities that had the capacity to supply NYC for the 150,000 meals they serve a day. In May, Ullrich helped make connections with growers to help fill this demand.

Baglia is hoping for a Green Infrastructure Tour at the Greenwood Lake Site sometime in August.

**F. Barber (FSA)** - The acreage reporting deadline is July 15, 2013.

County Committee elections – They still need north of Rte 84 area and so far no one is running.

The Farm Bill passed the Senate vote and is supposed to go to the House by July 1<sup>st</sup>. So far it looks like there are very few issues. Conservation programs are getting condensed and they are getting rid of a couple of subsidy programs from FSA.

NAP – FSA just started getting notice of losses from a couple of producers, mostly greens and small crops. They just changed the program a little so instead of protecting the sum of all crops for the entire season, it's broken down into planting periods.

MILC – FSA was on hold issuing payments because of budget issues. Those payments were released last month.

The furlough concern is not effective this year and they are trying to work it out so it's not next year either.

New aerial maps of Orange County are being flown this summer. The 2011 aerials were flown almost immediately after Hurricane Irene.

**J. Heller (NRCS)** – Received additional funding for a high tunnel and two cover crop contracts (approx. 300 acres).

There was a brief discussion regarding Cultural Resources Reviews where a State Historical Preservation Officer takes a look at projects where there is a potential for Native American findings.

Heller has been assisting FSA with Food Security Act Plans and also with CREP compliance.

Two Wetland Reserve Program applications were deemed ineligible due to lack of resource concerns.

Civil Rights – Heller requested to be put on the July Agenda to give an Annual Civil Rights Training to the District Board.

NRCS is looking for one Earth Team Volunteer for the Middletown office to put in a minimum of 20 hours/year. The person would be soil testing, surveying and some administrative work. Heller mentioned that they are looking for locking file cabinets to store the older contracts.

Astor Boozer is now the Acting Deputy Under Secretary for Agriculture.

They are moving up the application season to the end of September.

**OLD BUSINESS** – Sumner received a request from Joe Mahoney, County Law Department, that he would like to come to the office to talk about a suit being brought against the County of Orange. Several landowners are suing the County, stating that the County did not respond adequately to the flooding caused by Hurricane Irene and Lee. Pillmeier suggested that an Officer of the Board should sit with Sumner when he talks to the County lawyer. Keeton offered to sit in on Wednesday the 19<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 PM.

The 2014 Proposed Budget needed approval from the Board. It will be adjusted to reflect step increases and a 3% cost of living increase. A Motion was made by Pillmeier to adjust the salary table up 3%, seconded by Keeton. All in favor. A Motion was made by Keeton to accept the step increases, seconded by Pahucki. All in favor. The Board was in favor of the District asking for these increases from the County in the 2014 Budget.

Black Dirt Flood Control Project Update – Sumner spent most of a day in the field with the B&L engineer that’s doing most of the modeling on the river and some of the main stem projects. The Lidar imagery was discussed with the engineers. One area they need to field verify was in the channel of the river. Sumner said that Lidar becomes fuzzy in the channel. The Engineer is running a model – he’ll come down in July to give reports. We still don’t have a fully signed contract between B&L and the District. Sumner was hoping for bi-weekly reports but they can’t even bill us without a contract.

FOIL Request - They are asking for copies of any permits (we don’t have any). The title they have for the project is incorrect and they mentioned dredging the Wallkill River, which is also incorrect. Keeton said that the River Keeper is a major entity and that we need to be gentle regarding this request. There is currently no signed contract, no work has been started and nothing has been planned yet. Sumner said that the request came in on Friday, and we have five business days to respond. Sumner said he has a request in for the County’s assistance as to how the District should handle this request.

Wallkill Flood Control Maintenance Update – We have signed contracts from two of the three chosen contractors. Russell Kowal was given the go-ahead to start mowing.

Pahucki Mentioned getting on the County Agenda to discuss the expansion of the Maintenance Agreement area at the June 24<sup>th</sup> Physical Services Meeting at 3:30 PM.

**NEW BUSINESS** –Two Wallkill Flood Control Maintenance Contracts needed the Chairman’s signature.

The Ag NPS Round 14 Final Voucher needed the Chairman’s signature.

The **NEXT MEETING** is scheduled for Monday, July 15, 2013 at 9:00 AM. The **MEETING** was adjourned at 11:05 AM, on a Motion by Keeton, seconded by Pillmeier. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroodt  
Secretary to the Board