

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

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:05 PM. Directors J. Wright, G. Keeton and P. DeBlock were present, along with R. Baglia (CCE) and K. Sumner, N. Meyer and C. DeGroodt (OCSWCD).

2015-11-3 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to approve October's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

2015-11-4 Wright made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to approve the Minutes as written from the Special Board Meeting that was held on November 9, 2015. All in favor.

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

- No actions.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Statements from the District's banks were received.
- The Ag and Farmland Protection Board Draft Meeting Minutes for September 2015 were passed out for review along with an Agenda that was for October 2015.
- A letter to M. Rogowski and S. Osczenpinski from K. Sumner regarding the Walkkill Valley Drainage District was passed around for review. A brief discussion followed.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- Discussion took place regarding allocating some of the money in the Unobligated Fund into the Equipment Fund or Contingency Fund in December. Sumner would like to rename the Ag Grant Contingency Fund to Contingency Fund.
- There was discussion regarding repairing a catch basin at one of the rain gardens at Cornell Cooperative Extension. **2015-11-5 Wright made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to approve spending up to \$500.00 to repair the basin using C. Vellenga. All in favor.**
- **2015-11-6 Keeton moved to accept the Financial Report, DeBlock seconded. All in favor.**
- A bill from Healey Ford for a tailgate was added to the Bills to Be Paid for November in the amount of \$1,125.08. A payment from the District to Morgiewicz Produce was decreased to \$556.00. **2015-11-7 DeBlock made the Motion, Wright seconded, to accept the Bills to Be Paid. All in favor.**
- October's Grant Update report was reviewed.
- G. Johnson's Ag NPS RD 17 Moodna project is complete. **2015-11-8 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to pre-approve paying Johnson as soon as our voucher we sent in to the State is paid to us. All in favor.**
- An Ag NPS Grant Round 17 Walkkill voucher will need to be signed.

STAFF REPORTS

- Meyer
 - Meyer has been working on the AEM Year 11 Interim Report which is due December 3rd and recordkeeping. It was noted in the report that we are under the contract amount for AEM due to staff working on other projects and K. Brown being out on maternity leave.

- Meyer attended an Illicit Discharge Training held at Cornell Cooperative Extension on November 4th.
 - The Wallkill River Maintenance Fall Inspection was last week. There are still a few trees that Vellenga did not remove yet from the Spring Inspection.
 - Brief update on the RSR Project. 200 trees were already planted on property along the Monhagen Brook off of Route 78 in Middletown. A second planting took place on October 24th where an additional 260 trees and shrubs were planted. All District staff along with approximately 30 volunteers participated.
 - Meyer has been continuing with cover crop checks.
 - Sumner and Meyer did an AEM and Waste Management Presentation at Mark Ford Stables in Middletown.
 - Meyer had marked about a dozen trees to create an extended access road to support Wallkill maintenance activities. John Harrington from NYS DEC did not have an issue cutting these trees but wanted to clear it will Bill Rudge, DEC Resource Director. Meyer has also been corresponding with the landowner near the pump station.
- Sumner
 - District staff touched up both the Newburgh Rain Garden and Cornell Cooperative Extension rain gardens with additional plants from Jansen Nursery.
 - D. Ford had his CAFO inspection. Both the Times Herald Record and the District were invited to attend.
 - Sumner received a call from a local organic vegetable farmer, who uses land in the Chester muck area, regarding a development going in on Route 94 towards Blooming Grove. This development drains into the black dirt and the farmer has concerns over what may get into the water. He requested Sumner to come and inspect it. Sumner suggested to him that he contact the Ag and Farmland Protection Board. Sumner also told the farmer that if the farmer was able to set up a meeting between the Village and the Developer that he (Sumner) would participate.
 - The District received a call from the Crawford Town Attorney regarding a local beef farm that had neighbor complaints. A brief discussion followed. No action taken.
 - There is a Wallkill River conference on December 2, 2015 in the Village of Montgomery. Sumner will be participating.
 - The District's 2016 Budget was approved at the Legislative Budget Hearing. While there, Sumner highlighted some of the larger projects the District has been working on which included Troy Vellenga's. One Legislator stated that he hopes the District will do a press release on this project when it is finished.
 - There was a brief discussion regarding the District's NYS Comptroller's Audit Report.
 - Sumner had a meeting at the County of Orange's Attorney's office regarding expanding the Wallkill Maintenance Agreement downstream to Pellet's Island. He was pleased with the discussion and he agreed to provide a list of parcels involved so the Law Department could contact a title company and get an estimate on doing a title search. He provided them with the parcels the next day and has not yet heard back.
 - A brief discussion followed on hiring a new technician and the vacant Director position.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

- R. Baglia of Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - There was a class on Illicit Discharge on November 4, 2015.
 - CCE's 100th Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner will be on December 7, 2015 at the Villa Venezia on Goshen Turnpike in Middletown, NY.

(F. Barber, FSA, joined the Meeting at 10:22 AM)

- F. Barber of Farm Service Agency
 - CRP – flyers were sent to producers informing them of the opportunity to enroll in CRP.
 - CREP – no longer offered in Orange County.
 - Office space – still working on getting a long-term lease.
 - FSA is having a fiber optic service installed as well as a new phone system.

OLD BUSINESS

- Wallkill Flood Project
 - Pochuck Ledge project is moving forward.
 - No word yet on the Wallkill Bench Project. It's still at Army Corp.
 - Sumner sent B&L a Draft Agreement with a revised work scope. He has not yet heard back. Discussion followed.
- Monhagen Brook Project
 - The District has still not received any money. We are being told there is at least a two month delay in getting contract approval. The District is trying to work on the bioretention project but it's getting late in the season.

NEW BUSINESS

- Last month there was discussion on the District submitting a proposal for the flood project for the Climate Resilient Farming Grant. \$1.4 million is available to support projects that mitigate environmental impact of agriculture-related activities and increase the resiliency of farms throughout the state. Possible sources for the required 25% minimum local match were briefly discussed. Sumner has not heard back from the County of Orange regarding contributing match towards the project.
- There was a brief discussion regarding the District requesting funds from the Ag & Farmland Protection Board to recondition our no-till equipment. A total of 8 corn planter and 4 soybean units need to be reconditioned. The District also needs a new monitor for one of the corn planters. An after market monitor is estimated at \$500.00 - 700.00.
- A draft of the District's response to the NYS Comptroller Audit, prepared on behalf of the Board by Sumner and previously distributed to the Board for review, was discussed. The Board was in agreement with the letter, except for the last sentence, which expressed concern that the Comptroller's office would initiate a municipal audit based on an unsubstantiated complaint. DeBlock was in favor of keeping this sentence in the letter, while the other directors thought it should be removed. **2015-11-9 Keeton made the motion, seconded by Wright, to submit the District's response letter with the last sentence removed. Wright-aye, Keeton-aye, Ruskiewicz-aye, DeBlock-nay.**

(R. Baglia left the Meeting at 11:40 AM)

- There was a brief discussion regarding a new UTV trailer. Wright suggested inquiring about a trade-in of the current trailer.
- Delinquent no-till bills were discussed. Future invoices will include a note stating "users who fail to pay within **4 months** after the invoice mailing date may be indefinitely placed on a pre-pay list for all future rentals at the discretion of SWCD".
- **2015-11-10 DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to approve the District Director Training Plans for 2016. All in favor.**

- **2015-11-11 DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to approve the 2016 training plans for District staff which includes an item for minute taking training for DeGrootd. All in favor.**
- **2015-11-12 DeBlock made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to appoint DeGrootd as the District's FOIL officer. All in favor.**

The **NEXT MEETING** is scheduled for Monday, December 28, 2015 at 9:00 AM.

2015-11-13 Meeting adjourns at 12:17 PM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Keeton. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGrootd
Secretary to the Board