

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
October 17, 2016

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:10 AM. Directors J. Wright, G. Keeton and P. DeBlock were present, along with K. Sumner, N. Meyer and C. DeGrootd (OCSWCD).

2016-10-1 Keeton made the Motion, DeBlock seconded, to approve the September Board Meeting Minutes. All in favor.

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

- No actions taken between meetings.

CORRESPONDENCE

- Bank account statements from the District's banks were available for review.
- The Ag and Farmland Protection Board Meeting September Agenda and August Minutes were available for review.

(P. Canterino joined the Meeting at 9:12 AM)

- The NACD Dues request was discussed. No action taken.
- Letter from IRS was discussed. No action taken.
- Town of Goshen submitted a past due notice to the District for work on the Wallkill River Flood/Celery Avenue Rock Ledge Project. No action taken.

(R. Baglia joined the Meeting at 9:14 AM)

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- **2016-10-2 Wright made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to approve the financial report for September. All in favor.**
- Bills for Board Approval were reviewed.
 - **2016-10-3 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to accept the Bills to Be Paid. All in favor.**

STAFF REPORTS

- Meyer
 - Finishing up with the no-till season. Equipment will be put away for the winter.
 - Attended a two day course on soils at the Conservation Skills Workshop.
 - Working on the Monhagen Watershed Planning Grant with the Orange County Water Authority. Attended some town board meetings last month to present information.
 - Continuing work on AEM plans.
 - The Orange County Water Authority and partners will have a project kick-off meeting regarding the Monhagen Watershed Planning Project, at Cornell Cooperative Extension on October 26th from 3-7 PM to to get the public involved and to identify and assess resources, issues and recommend solutions to improve the local natural resources located in the City of Middletown and Towns of Wallkill and Wawayanda.
 - Working on finishing the Ag NPS Round 22 paperwork.
 - Submitted engineering plans for review to an engineer for a fuel tank site.
 - Meyer has been working on Agricultural Assessments.

- Meyer will be checking in with farms that have Ag NPS Cover Crop cost-sharing funds still available.
- Sumner
 - Finished the Campbell Plaza/Monhagen project. The last item was fencing that was put up.
 - The Monhagen Brook Tree Planting is scheduled for Saturday, October 22 from 9 AM – 1 PM. The site is across from the Maple Hill Elementary School on County Route 78.
 - Ag NPS Round 22 Grant - There was construction on the DeBuck property.

(P. Ruskiewicz joins the Meeting at 9:30 AM)

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

- R. Baglia of Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - Working on the Monhagen planning work.
 - Open House on the Farm was on October 15th at the Sprucegate Holsteins Dairy Farm in Walden, NY. Attendance was down from previous years.
- Farm Service Agency
 - Corn Grain Base Program – changed in 2014 Farm Bill which resulted in no payments last year/maximum payments this year. 97 farms got paid. \$440,000.00 paid to Orange County farmers in 2016.

OLD BUSINESS

- Wallkill Flood Project update
 - Approximately 80% completed on the bulk excavation of the bench project. This was the most time sensitive due to the weather. There is still a huge stock-pile of soil on the site that has to be moved. Plants are out there but all of the planting still needs to be done. The contractor wants the District to cost-share the trucking of the soil off site with tri-axle trucks. They estimate it will cost \$110,000.00 to move the soil and they want the District to pay for ½. A change order was being considered but Sumner wanted to first consult with our attorney. The attorney's recommendation to the Board was to hold any changes until towards the end of the project. Sumner asked the Board if they wanted to move forward on a Change Order or to hold. He would also like to rehire the surveyor who did the original survey to confirm soil is being graded to the plan. The cost would be \$4,000.00. **2016-10-4 Wright made the Motion, seconded by Ruskiewicz to follow the attorney's advice to hold any changes and to hire the surveyor for \$4,000.00. All in favor.**
 - Brief discussion on the planting plan.
 - Discussion of easement purchase from Floodplain Bench landowners. The District wants to do the easement first and then the land purchase. With an easement in place first, Barron would like the easement language revised because it is too restrictive. Canterino suggested using a "hold harmless" letter.
 - Sumner asked if the Board wanted to pre-approve payment to D. Ford for the easement if the attorney approves paying. Discussion followed. No action taken.
- Flood Mitigation Initiative - A letter to appropriate groups/agencies to request assistance with funding and other matters relating to Black Dirt flood control was presented to the Board last month. No further action has been taken on distributing this letter.
- The District is developing a Round 2 CRF grant proposal to assist with continuation of the Wallkill floodplain bench concept. There is \$875,000.00 available Statewide in the relevant CRF category. The proposal is due in by December 12th. We will request a 25% County match (\$50,000.00) if we

apply for \$150,000.00. The District may be able to use D. Ford as the project sponsor/participant. This money could be used to work on the west side of the phase 2 Wallkill River Project area. Wright asked Sumner to attend the next Ag & Farmland Protection Board Meeting to ask for their endorsement to request match from the County.

- Wallkill Maintenance Project – Sumner and Ruskiewicz met with Damian Brady from OC Law Dept. to find out where we are with the SEQR paperwork and other matters needed in order to expand the Maintenance area. He also spoke with the title company that the County does business with, Hill-N-Dale, and received a proposal from them in the amount of \$6,300.00 to do the title search on relevant properties in Towns of Goshen and Wawayanda, approx. 20 properties. Sumner sent the RFP to two other abstract companies to see if they are cheaper than \$300.00 per parcel. A bid was received in the amount of \$22,000.00 from Vellenga Lawn Care to repair the worst of several failing culverts. Town of Wawayanda thought this price was too high and felt that their Highway Department could repair it for a cheaper price but they have not yet gone out to look at it. Discussion followed. No action taken.
- The Wallkill Fall Inspection will be on October 18th. Meyer and Keeton will attend. They will be meeting at the old packing plant at 10:00 AM.
- Agricultural Environmental Management Program (AEM) - Brief discussion regarding staff time charged to AEM.
- Performance Measures – Meyer will provide an AEM training to the Directors before the end of the year. Discussion followed on what meetings Directors need to attend in order to satisfy this year's Performance Measures.

NEW BUSINESS

- **2016-10-5 Ruskiewicz made the Motion, seconded by DeBlock, to approve the District's 2017 Annual Plan of Work. All in favor.**
- No-till Repairs – Photo passed out of the hitch on the corn planter. It could be welded but it would be a weak point. A new hitch would cost \$650.00. **2016-10-6 Ruskiewicz made the Motion, seconded by Keeton, to purchase a new hitch and jacks. All in favor.**

The next **MEETING** is scheduled for **Monday, November 21, 2016 at 9:00 AM.**

2016-10-6 Meeting adjourns at 11:52 AM on a Motion by Keeton, seconded by DeBlock. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine DeGroodt
Secretary to the Board