

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
October 17, 2022

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:04 AM. Directors P. DeBlock, P. Ruskiewicz, G. Constable and J. Wright were present along with K. Sumner and C. DeGroodt (SWCD).

2022-10-1 Ruskiewicz made the Motion, Wright seconded, to approve September's Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

ACTIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS – The District used the credit card to purchase metal fence posts for the Phase 3 Area 2 project. It will show up on next month's credit card statement.

CORRESPONDENCE

- The bank statements and collateral agreements were available for review.
- Ben Luskin, NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee (SWCC), sent us a written report of general updates on NYS SWCC activities.
- The District received a letter from the NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee informing us that we were awarded the CRF Round 6 funding in the amount of \$178,595.00. This included funding for a new seed drill and roller crimper.
- The District received raffle tickets from the Vegetable Growers Association.
- A Dues Request that was received from the National Association of Conservation Districts was Tabled.
- The District received a Fact Sheet from the NYC DEP on the Catskill Aqueduct Repair and Rehabilitation Project.
- The District's Budget Hearing is scheduled for Monday, October 24th at 2:00 PM. Information was emailed to Directors prior to the Board Meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Sumner mentioned that no-till receipts are up this year and all three seeders are out in use.

2022-10-2 Ruskiewicz made the Motion, Constable seconded, to file September's Financial Reports for audit review. All in favor.

BILLS FOR BOARD APPROVAL

2022-10-3 DeBlock made the Motion, Ruskiewicz seconded, to pay the bills as presented. All in favor.

GRANT REPORT UPDATE – The Board reviewed the monthly Grant Report. The Grant Report is updated monthly to reflect changes.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

P. DeBlock (FSA) – Since Orange County was declared to be in a drought this summer, it will affect the Livestock Forage Program, which is pasture for farm animals. FSA staff are going to a training to learn more about this program on Thursday.

The FSA Election is coming up. Mark Hoyt is running and could replace Phil Johnson as his three-year term is up.

STAFF REPORTS

Written staff reports were emailed to Board Members prior to the Meeting for review.

C. DeGroodt (SWCD) – DeGroodt emailed her staff report prior to the meeting. She mentioned that the Wallkill Maintenance Expansion Easements were sent out to landowners and most have been received back, signed and notarized.

K. Sumner (SWCD) – See “Old and New Business”.

OLD & NEW BUSINESS

Flood Plain Bench Phase 3, Area 2 – The bulk excavation is complete. The herbaceous seeding of the bench was completed and all of the trees (except for 60) have been planted. The NYS DEC approved leaving the ‘hardened crossing’ after temporary crossing pipes and fill are removed. Sumner recommends investing in a gate at the top of the approach. Discussion followed.

Meat Processing Facility – The District is still receiving surveys back in the mail. Sumner participated in a tele-meeting with the Ulster County Working Group. One of the potential sites they are looking at is the old “Tech City”, now called “I Park 87”. A company called IQRA wants to expand, and could be a potential operator at this location. Todd Erling, from Hudson Valley Agro Business Development Corp., was on the call and he said his understanding is that they are currently working on a facility in Herkimer County. Ulster County approved putting \$5,000 into an update to the study that was done in 2000 by Shepstone, the total cost for the study may be \$15,000. It’s unclear where all of the money will come from. The District feels that Cornell Cooperative Extension should be the contractor but that the Ag Board should have a hand in hiring the contractor. CCE mentioned that if they were to be the contractor, they would form a Steering Committee. Discussion followed.

Ag NPS Round 27 - Signed contracts were received back from Stewart and Weibolt for the Ag NPS RD 27 Grant program. **2022-10-4 Wright made the Motion, Ruszkiewicz seconded, to enter into Ag NPS RD 27 contracts with Stewart and Weiboldt. All in favor.**

Sumner met with NRCS’s consultant who will be doing the ‘PIFR’ study for Wallkill/Black Dirt flood mitigation (Infrastructure investment and Jobs Act funding). It was decided that they would focus on the main stem, from the upstream end of our Phase 4 project, up to the New Jersey line. Discussion followed.

Conservation Project Part B, due November 1st was reviewed at last month’s Board Meeting. Several projects were discussed. The Board authorized Sumner to develop and seek NYSSWCC approval for whichever project idea works best.

ORANGE COUNTY SWCD OCTOBER 2022 BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The 2023 Draft Annual Plan of Work was distributed to Board members last month for review. **2022-10-5 Ruszkiewicz made the Motion, DeBlock seconded, to approve the District's 2023 Annual Plan of Work. All in favor.**

There was a discussion at last month's meeting on the possibility of changing auditing firms. The District has not heard back from the Orange County Finance Department.

NEXT MEETING DATE - The next **MEETING** is scheduled for **Monday, November 21, 2022 at 9:00 AM.**

ADJOURNMENT

2022-10-6 The Meeting was Adjourned at 10:16 AM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Wright. All in favor.

Minutes Prepared By:

Christine DeGroodt, Secretary to the Board

C. DeGroodt

Board Meeting Activities September 16, 2022 – October 14, 2022

- We have \$573 cash awards on the rewards credit cards.
- **AEM Round 17** - Updated the AEM time log. Worked on the AEM Round 17 paperwork and updated ledgers. Started work on a 90% advance request for two participants. Mailed one contract for signature.
- **Wallkill Maintenance Expansion** - Continue working on the Wallkill Maintenance Expansion paperwork. Received more signed easements back in the mail.
- Worked on Soil Group Worksheets.
- Submitted our 3rd quarter tax reports (FICA and NYS).
- Created spreadsheet to keep track of who sent back surveys for livestock processing plant.
- Work on **Ag NPS Round 27** paperwork.
- **Carbon Farming Project** - Collected soil samples for one of the Carbon Farming Project farms and packaged samples from other farms.
- **CRF 6** - Sent out contracts for signature to two participants in the CRF 6 Program.
- **MISC/MONTHLY:** Payroll, taxes, mail, phones, walk-ins, office supplies ordered, type minutes/board meeting documents/financials, update website, pay bills, NYS Retirement report, ordered 2023 tax forms, computer backup, no-till calls/billing, post office (stamps), bank deposits

Report to Board KMS

October, 2022

AEM/AEM Round 17 Tier 4 (Implementation Projects)

Planning to start Ford Farms streambank project this fall. Stone and soil from P3A2 Bench project to be used.

O'Dell has been contractor proposals for his manure spreader shed project. Will try to construct soon, but may be postponed until 2023 construction season.

Hudson Valley Carbon Farming Project [contract extended to 4/2023]

Southway Compost Facility – Complete plan set now in hand. Using the same plan for other projects in rd 27. Kezialain is seeking contractor and materials proposal.

Still waiting on Minkus controlled drainage project.

Soil Health tests currently being collected.

Floodplain Bench

Phase 4 (CRF 5)

DEC has been reviewing JAP, there are several items we are still working on providing to them.

Received Floodplain Permit from Warwick. Still waiting on Minisink.

SEQR requirements completed. Not quite ready to tell DEC we consider JAP complete.

Phase 3, Area 2

Bulk excavation complete.

Herbaceous seeding completed. Tree planting completed.

Stockpiled soil still being exported off-site.

County completed 'as-built' survey.

DEC approved leaving 'hardened' crossing' after temporary crossing pipes and fill are removed. I recommend we invest in gate at top of approach, Iris Road side.

Other Flood Mitigation

Pellets Island Reach Maintenance Program – Continuing to follow up with easement requests. Status - _____

Round 27 ANPSACP

Waiting for contract documents (start date for contract – November, 2021). Continuing to move along design work including Kezialain and Weiboldt. Brady construction mostly complete.

CRF 6 Contracts prepared and sent to participants.

Other

Legoland EBP – DEC has verbally ‘OK’d’ using \$35,000 all on boundary survey for Sugarloaf Mountain project. They need a formal written request to issue written approval. I asked Kyle from OCLT to prepare request draft.

Pulaski Culverts – nothing new to report since last month

New Hire – nothing new to report

Meat Processing Facility – to be discussed at Board meeting. Spent a fair amount of time on it over the past month.

2022 Soil Health Incentive Program (SHIP) Not many fall, 2022 projects reported as completed to us yet. Will ramp up follow up activities after 10/20 (last recommended date for planting)

Fair amount of seeder rental activity, for cover crops and fall seedings

Met with NRCS’s consultant who will be doing the ‘PIFR’ study for Wallkill/Black Dirt flood mitigation (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act funding)

Phone conference with NYSDEC – TMDL for Wallkill under development