

MINUTES
ORANGE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
September 19, 2016

The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by the Chairman at 9:06 AM. Directors J. Wright, G. Keeton, P. Ruskiewicz and P. DeBlock were present, along with K. Sumner and N. Meyer (OCSWCD), and J. Heller (NRCS).

2016-9-1 DeBlock made the Motion, Ruskiewicz seconded, to approve August 22, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes with a change to a statement made by J. Heller – the NRCS easement will be *next* to the Warwick Drive-in, not *at* the Drive-in. 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 annual Fall Walkkill Maintenance Inspection Trip is scheduled for Tuesday, October 10th.
- A NYSERDA flyer for the ENSAVE Farm Energy Audit Program was passed around.
- The quarterly report on rate changes for the NYS Empire Plan was available for review.

(R. Baglia joined the Meeting at 9:20 AM)

FINANCIAL REPORTS

- **2016-9-2 Wright made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to approve the financial reports for August. All in favor.**
- Bills for Board Approval were reviewed.
 - There was a brief discussion of the first payment request from CFI Construction for work completed on the Walkkill Flood Project. This bill was discussed further under Old Business.
 - A bill from Lehman + Getz Engineering was added on to the Bills for Board Approval in the amount of \$5,000.00 for engineering services on the Middletown Parking Lot Green Infrastructure Retrofit proposal. This amount should be reimbursed by the LHCCD.
 - **2016-9-3 DeBlock made the Motion, Keeton seconded, to accept the Bills to Be Paid with addition of Lehman + Getz Engineering bill. All in favor.**
- The AGNPS grants report was reviewed.

STAFF REPORTS

- Meyer
 - Working with a couple farms on the new NYS Grown + Certified program.
 - Coordinating and planning for Monhagen Watershed Planning grant.
 - Walkkill Maintenance has addressed all issues identified on Spring Inspection trip.
 - No-till program has started up again for the fall with both seeders in use.
 - Site inspections on the Walkkill Bench and Campbell Plaza Rain Garden/Bank Stabilization projects.
 - Cover crop season is starting and Meyer will be checking in with farms that have Cover Crop cost-sharing funds still available.
- Sumner
 - Budget hearing was uneventful, budget was submitted as requested. October 24th is the legislative budget hearing.

- Working on the Monhagen Watershed Planning grant, specifically outreach to town boards, forming an advisory committee.
- Met with the Orange County Law Department regarding an extension of the current Wallkill Maintenance program downstream to include the Pellets Island area and perhaps Quaker Creek.
 - 3 culverts along the access road need replacement. This issue was discussed with the four towns in the maintenance program.
- Sumner was contacted by a City of Middletown DPW employee regarding replacement of a catch basin connected to a Rain Garden at the Cornell Cooperative Extension offices. The original project contractor is re-submitting a proposal to fix the catch basin.
- Sumner spoke with and visited a farmer who was having issues with a denied agricultural assessment. Sumner provided assistance to the farmer.
- Discussion of No-till program user who had an issue resulting in the use of too much seed. Board agrees users are ultimately responsible for seed usage and the equipment does not require an adjustment according to consultation with other program users and equipment maintenance contractor.

INTERAGENCY REPORTS

- R. Baglia of Cornell Cooperative Extension
 - CCE finalized purchase of 50 acres for the 4-H park.
 - Open House on the Farm is planned at the Sprucegate Holsteins Dairy Farm in Walden, NY on October 15, 2016. Pamphlets were distributed.
 - There is a farm tour scheduled on September 27, 2016.
- P. DeBlock of Farm Service Agency
 - FSA recently gave a presentation to 20 Japanese bankers on FSA policies.
- J. Heller of Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Continues to sign farmers up for EQIP program.
 - There is a Golden Winged Warbler focus area in Orange County. Heller is pursuing farms in the focus area to participate in a conservation program.

OLD BUSINESS

- There was a slideshow presentation of photos from the Floodplain Bench project and the Monhagen Brook Campbell Plaza rain garden and streambank projects.
- **Wallkill Flood Project update**
 - Discussion of the contract add-on for Ford Field grading, which has already been approved
 - Discussion of new add-on request for the farm road repair in the amount of \$70,000
 - Road repair was undertaken by the contractor without first consulting OCSWCD or the Professional Engineer (PE)
 - The road was not constructed to standards approved by the PE
 - The engineer should visit the project site to inspect the farm road and develop specifications for the final road design when construction traffic ends
 - It was noted that the contractor had driven illegal vehicles on public roads

(R. Baglia left the meeting at 11:50am)

- Discussion of outlining parameters of communication between OCSWCD and contractor. Board currently dissatisfied with level of communication from contractors.

- **2016-9-4 Wright made a motion, Keeton seconded, to agree to pay 50% of current bill for Road Repair and an additional 50% of any final road improvement needs up to a maximum of \$10,000. All in favor.**
- o **2016-9-5 Keeton made a movement, Ruszkiewicz seconded, to pay first project bill from contractor for work completed on the floodplain bench in the amount of \$166,040.29. All in favor.**
- o Discussion of easement purchase from Floodplain Bench landowner
- o **2016-9-6 Wright made a motion, Keeton seconded, to allow Sumner to sign contract with Floodplain Bench landowner regarding purchase of easement lands. All in favor.**
- o **2016-9-7 DeBlock made a motion, Wright seconded, to pay bill, upon receipt, for title search on easement lands. All in favor.**
- o Discussion of providing drainage for wet bench area to ensure plant survival. Board agrees in concept of developing subsurface drainage plan with contractor and engineer input.
- o Discussion of Celery Ave ledge project and contract bid package.
- Wallkill Maintenance Project – culvert replacement
 - o Board in favor of pursuing Wallkill Maintenance road culvert replacements.
- **2016-9-8 Ruszkiewicz made a motion, Keeton seconded, for Meyer to attend the Conservation Skills training on September 26th-27th. All in favor.**
- Discussion of 2017 Part C projects and New York State Retirement postponed to a later date.

NEW BUSINESS

- No new business to discuss

The next **MEETING** is scheduled for **Monday, October 17, 2016 at 9:00 AM.**

2016-9-9 Meeting adjourns at 12:15 AM on a Motion by DeBlock, seconded by Ruszkiewicz. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Noah Meyer
District Technician