St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District

1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

For February 20, 2019, 11:00 AM

**Board Members Present:** Robert Andrews, Jr. (Chairperson), Adam Cook (Vice-Chair), Becky Allen (Treasurer), Mark Matthews, and John Burke.

**Board Members Excused:** Kevin Acres

**Staff Present:** Raeanne Dulanski (Manager), Aaron Barrigar (Forester), Jevonnah Foster (Technician), and Liz Gallup (Secretary/Treasurer).

**Guests Present:** Ryan Cunningham - NYS SWCC, Clark Putman – FSA, Lisa Ward - FSA, Kent Frary – NRCS.

1. **Call to Order: Agenda and introductions (Attachment A**)

Andrews asked that everyone introduce themselves to Burke, our new Board of Legislators’ Representative and welcomed him to our organization. Burke provided some information on his background and his history with the Board of Legislators.

1. **Training**
2. **SWCC** – Ryan Cunningham – **Director’s Responsibilities**
3. Training provided an overview of the role Director’s play and the responsibilities they have as a District Board Member. Cunningham went over duties as outlined by Soil &Water Conservation District Law and what tasks should be completed for due diligence.

**III. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: *Motion*** *to approve the January 17, 2019 minutes,* made by Cook, seconded by Matthews **approved by all.**

**IV. Treasurer’s Reports:** Gallup related details on deposits received and other financial items*.*

***Motion*** *to approve January 2019 Treasurer’s report,* made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

Break for lunch @ 12:00 p.m. Meeting resumed @ 12:30 p.m.

**V. Reports**

1. **FSA** – Lisa Ward & Clark Putman
   1. Ward provided an overview of the programs FSA is processing and monies that have been paid out. St. Lawrence County ranked high for most programs in number of dollars paid out.
   2. Ward explained that grass reporting has been moved from November to July. This will make it much easier for updates.
   3. FSA was furloughed but did need to work a couple of days without pay.
   4. Ward gave an update on the Tariff relief program and the different levels to be paid for a variety of commodities.
   5. Ward provided the Board with a handout (**Attachment B**) that compares the old Farm Bill with the new one.
   6. Putman gave an update on the US-Canada-Mexico Trade Agreement. He feels that wage limitations in the proposed agreement may cause some issues since each of the countries are supposed to charge the same hourly rate.
   7. Putman reported that AgriMark said they were down about 1.2 million pounds of milk in 2017-2018. Discussion followed.
2. **NRCS –** KentFrary
   1. Frary explained that the 2nd round of EQIP sign up’s are due May 13th. Everything is on hold right now because of a software problem. Final obligation for Rounds 1 & 2 should be done by June 28th.
   2. Waste Storage Facility has been certified and NRCS has paid out $450,000.
   3. Two easement projects may be built this summer. One is 163 acres in Brasher and another is 188 acres in Massena. This easement is in the process of converting from a 30 year to a permanent one.
3. **SWCC** – Ryan Cunningham – Report attached **(Attachment C)**
   1. Cunningham reported on $5 million available through a program called Source Water Protection. It is open until all monies have been awarded. It is a 75% - 25% cost share.
4. **BOL** – John Burke
   1. Burke reported that the County Highway Supervisor reported on the state of the roads in the County. It is evident work is needed and that it needs to be discussed.
5. **Farm Bureau** – None
6. **Grange -** Mark Matthews
   1. Matthews shared with the Board a portion of the Grange statement which he felt reflected values that the District believes in.
7. **AFPB** – Bob Andrews
   1. Andrews reported that he is pleased with group interaction that is occurring across a number of departments and organizations. It is happening more and more.
   2. Andrews reported that the Environmental Manure Spill Clean-up Trailer issue has come up again.

**VI. SWCD Reports**

1. Secretary/Treasurer – Elizabeth Gallup
2. Gallup has been busy finishing taxes and other beginning of the year activities. She has already received a number of tree orders.
3. Gallup has been asked to give a class at WQS on how to do certain clerk activities that happen throughout the year. She has been working on the PowerPoint presentation.
4. ***Motion*** *to authorize a transfer from the Money Market Account to the Checking Account to cover operational costs in an amount not to exceed $20,000 for March 2019* made by Cook, seconded by Matthews **approved by all.**
5. ***Motion*** *to authorize payment of the NYACD dues in the amount of $750.00* made by Allen, seconded by Cook **approved by all.**
6. Technician’s Report – Jevonnah Foster
   1. Foster reported on the 4 hour Erosion & Sediment Control Class that the District is holding. We have received thirty registrations and the final deadline to sign up is March 27th. Notice has been posted to both the District’s Facebook page and to the DEC website.
   2. The office has been busy and Foster has been helping with NARE solicitation letters, flyers for CART, Snowmobile Trail Grant auditing and the tree sale. She has also completed AEM Tier’s 1 & 2 for a NYS Grown & Certified maple operation and has talked with Nature Up North about a possibility of assisting them with a water quality monitoring program and continues to study a variety of topics online
   3. Foster and Barrigar attended a Save the River meeting in Clayton. A number of environmental concerns were discussed by various organizations in attendance. Invasive species and the decline of the Eel were among the topics discussed.

1. Forester’s Report – Aaron Barrigar
   1. Barrigar has been busy studying for his arborist certification exam.
   2. Barrigar and Foster assisted the Environmental Division of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe with an EAB delimitation survey on the Reservation.
   3. Writing Part C project descriptions has taken up quite a bit of Barrigar’s time.
2. Manager’s Report – Raeanne Dulanski (**Attachment D**)
3. Staff has been discussing project to be funded with 2019 Part C monies.  The funding level has yet to be determined, but staff has several project descriptions already developed.

Dulanski reported that she is anticipating setting $30,000 aside to fund the Part C Conservation Assistance Program, as they have done in the past.  This Project covers staff time to provide technical assistance to those that request it.

Dulanski and Barrigar presented Roadside Right-of-Way Ash and Hazard Tree Assessment project description (**Attachment E**).  To complete this project, the Dulanski requested hiring a Forestry Summer Intern.  ***Motion*** *to approve using Part C monies to fund the Roadside Right-of-Way Ash and Hazard Tree Assessment project as outlined in the project description* made by Allen, seconded by Cook **approved by all.**  ***Motion*** *to authorize hiring a Forestry Summer Intern at $12/hr. for* *up to 480 hours and to authorize Dulanski to complete all necessary paperwork and to dismiss intern if necessary* made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

Dulanski and Barrigar presented the project description for Reducing Outlier Populations of EAB and the Progression of Ash Mortality (**Attachment F**).  ***Motion*** *to approve using Part C monies to fund the Reducing Outlier Populations of EAB and the Progression of Ash Mortality as outlined by the project description* made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

Dulanski and Barrigar presented a third project idea, for informational purposes.  St. Lawrence County Urban Tree Resource Inventory; Increase Municipal Readiness for EAB (**Attachment G**).  The Village of Potsdam has already reached out to us and has presented Barrigar with a request for assistance (**Attachment H**).

Dulanski and Foster presented the project description Conservation in the Schools Grant (**Attachment I**).  This project would allow for a school to submit a grant proposal to help fund conservation and ag related activities.

Dulanski has also been in discussion with the County’s Planning Department.  If there are funds available again this year to assist with the administration of the DEC Septic System Grant, the help would be greatly appreciated.

1. Dulanski reported that she would like to hire another intern for the summer. The intern would work with Jevonnah on WRP monitoring and NAACC assessments. We would like to hire one to work up to 400 hours at minimum wage ($11.10/hr.) with the option to increase to $12.50 if they have experience with WRP monitoring and/or are NAACC certified already. ***Motion*** *to hire summer intern for 400 hours at a rate of $11.10 if inexperienced and $12.50 if experienced and to authorize Dulanski to complete all necessary paperwork and to dismiss intern if necessary* made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all**.
2. Dulanski informed the Board that the CAFO Waste Storage & Transfer System Grant – Round 3 has been announced. The District has had interest expressed by a Planner on a farm’s behalf. She has created a timeline agreement for Board consideration which she hopes will clarify the application process and inform interested participants of some expectations prior to the application process starting. It is a busy time for the office and the timeline will help with workload. ***Motion*** *for Resolution* ***(Attachment J)*** *to participate, authorization for Chair to sign and acceptance of timeline agreement* ***(Attachment K)*** made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all**.
3. NYS Ag NPS Round 23 GRWPP is completed.
   * 1. Dulanski presented the project’s costs and final documentation. District technical assistance costs for GRWPP were lower than estimated and may be used towards BMP expenses. ***Motion*** to a*pprove transferring underutilized Personnel Services monies to monies available to pay BMP expenses for the NYS Ag NPS Round 23 Grant made* by Matthews, seconded by Allen **approved by all**.
     2. ***Motion*** *to accept the closeout of* NYS *Ag NPS Round 23 GRWPP* *and to make payments as monies are available from NYS and to authorize closing the bank account when all monies have been expended* made by Matthews, seconded by Cook **approved by all**.
     3. NYS Ag NPS Round 23 GRWPP was estimated to be completed in 2018 and was reflected in the District’s 2018 budget. Budget modifications will need to be made to reflect it closing in 2019 instead. ***Motion*** to a*pprove increasing State Grants and Appropriations by $70,825.00 and to increase Construction – NPS Grant Implementation by $393,150 in the District’s 2019 Budget* made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all**.

**VII. Old and New Business:**

1. Employee Handbook Consultation
2. Dulanski referred to the changes to the District Employee’s Handbook that were mailed to each Member and asked if there were questions. ***Motion*** *to accept changes to the Handbook as suggested by Public Sector HR Consultants, LLC* made by Matthews, seconded by Cook **approved by all**.
3. Staff noticed there was a gap between part-time at 20 hours employee and full-time at 40 hours. The Consultant recommends a “Gap Employee” for between part and full-time. Leave accruals will have to be decided if we create a new category of employees. Dulanski recommends accruals for all types of leave at a pro rata rate based on hours worked in a week with leave calculations to be rounded up to nearest .25 hour. This is similar to how we calculate compensation time. *Motion to create a Gap Employee description with pro-rata accruals of all leave time rounded up to the nearest quarter hour based on number of hours worked in a week effective February 24, 2019* made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all**.
4. *Motion to pay Public Sector HR Consultants, LLC $950.00 upon completion of all revisions and receipt of the new Employee Handbook with all changes discussed reflected* made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all**.

**VIII. Correspondence:** Mail was available for the Board’s review. (List of items in **Attachment L**)

**IX. Announcements:** None

**X. Time and Date of Next Meeting:** March 28, 2019, 7:30 PM at the SWCD Office.

**XI. Meeting Adjourned:** 3:02 PM

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Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson Date

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Elizabeth J. Gallup, Secretary/Assistant Treasurer Date

**Attachments: A-L**