

**DRAFT**

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District  
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**  
For February 19, 2020, 11:00 AM

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

**Board Members Excused:** Patrick Smith

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

**Guests Present:** Ryan Cunningham - NYS SWCC, Emily Decker – FSA, Kaitlyn Kulp - FSA, Stacy Morrison – FSA, and Kent Frary – NRCS.

**I. Call to Order: Agenda (Attachment A)**

**II. Training**

**A. SWCC – Ryan Cunningham – State Aid to Districts & Partner relationships**

1. Training provided an overview of the various sources of state funds available for Districts to earn. Cunningham also went over flow charts detailing how the four partners – SWCC, NRCS, SWCD and NYACD, interact.

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

**III. Reports**

**A. FSA – Emily Decker, Kaitlyn Kulp, Stacy Morrison**

1. Decker, Farm Loans manager, updated the Board on staffing changes that have happened and ones that will occur in the near future. She also introduced Kulp, Farm Loan Officer Trainee. Board asked about different loans that Decker’s department has been handling. Decker provided an overview of loan amounts and procedures followed to service them.
2. Morrison, Farm Commodities Program Technician, informed the Board that there is one deadline coming up for the ARC/PLC Program. She also answered questions from the Board about the programs she works on.

Acres left meeting 1:05 p.m.

**B. NRCS – Kent Frary**

1. Frary updated the Board on new tools and programs that will be used and the training that staff has been receiving to become familiar with it. It will impact how programs will be rolled out and will cause some delays as the new procedures are implemented.
2. The Grassland Conservation Initiative Program – Round 3 letters went out with a deadline of March 6<sup>th</sup> for a response. Letters went to all eligible people as identified by FSA.

3. Local Workgroup meetings may change significantly starting with the one to take place this summer. Participants may be able to choose which type of plan for f/y 2021 will be offered. Each FOT may receive monies that they can then decide how they want to utilize it.
4. NRCS has identified WRP sites that NRCS staff will monitor this year.
5. Memorandum of Agreement (MOA): Dulanski gave an update on what her understanding was of the MOA and what other Districts felt about it. She also informed the Board that the District would not be able to have a contribution agreement with NRCS if we do not sign the MOA. Board expressed their feelings about Frary not being able to attend the board meetings per a memo dated April 8, 2019. Dulanski said that she felt that the MOA is something that we could work with and is ok to sign given that any further developments could be dealt with then. After much discussion, the Board felt strongly that a written letter should be sent with the signed MOA detailing our concerns. **Motion to authorize Andrews to sign the Memorandum of Agreement with NRCS and to attach a letter detailing our concerns signed by Andrews, made by Allen, seconded by Cook approved by majority, Matthews opposed.**

**C. SWCC – Ryan Cunningham – Report attached (Attachment B)**

1. Cunningham reported on current grant opportunities available to Districts and the due dates for each one.
2. AEM Year 15 closeout is due. Dulanski said ours has already been submitted by Foster.
3. Cunningham said the blackout period for processing payments starts soon.

**D. BOL – John Burke**

1. Burke said sales tax distribution is still a big topic of discussion. There is no consensus on how to divide sales tax revenue yet.

**E. Farm Bureau**

1. Andrews told the board that Dave Fisher has been appointed to the National Board.

**F. Grange - Mark Matthews**

1. Matthews reported on various topics covered by the 2020 Grange Legislative Booklet.

**G. AFPB – Bob Andrews**

1. Andrews said the next meeting is February 27<sup>th</sup> and solar farms using prime farmland will be discussed.

**IV. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: Motion to approve the January 9, 2020 minutes, made by Matthews, seconded by Allen approved by all.**

**V. Treasurer's Reports:** Gallup related details on deposits received and other financial items. **Motion to approve January 2020 Treasurer's report, made by Cook, seconded by Allen approved by all.**

**VI. SWCD Reports**

**A. Secretary/Treasurer – Elizabeth Gallup**

1. **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 2020 made by Allen, seconded by Cook **approved by all.**

**B. Forester’s Report – Aaron Barrigar**

1. Barrigar has been busy marking the County’s forest boundaries.
2. Barrigar has been working with Franklin County EAB Taskforce to host a workshop on the Emerald Ash Borer, what to do and how to handle an infestation. There will be two dates, one in St. Lawrence County and one in Franklin County.
3. Barrigar has been writing 2020 Part C project descriptions.

**C. Technician’s Report – Jevonnah Foster**

1. Foster continues to complete Ag-Value Assessments as they come in and is auditing the Snowmobile Grant information. She is also working on NARE donation requests.
2. Foster completed two NRCS trainings - Conservation Desktop & CART programs and continues to work with NRCS on completing a Nutrient Management Plan. Data is being entered into Cropware & RUSLE2.
3. Foster did three presentations on the importance of trees at Canton Middle School at the request of the Green Team teacher, completed farm visits with Kitty O’Neil from CCE on farms who attended the Soil Health Workshop. The purpose was to follow up with them and get feedback and see if there is any other information they might want to hear about. Foster also spoke at CCE to the Dairy Grazing Group about our AEM program.

**D. Manager’s Report – Raeanne Dulanski (Attachment C)**

1. Staff has been discussing project to be funded with 2020 Part C monies. The funding level has yet to be determined, but staff has several project descriptions already developed.
  - i. Dulanski reported that she is anticipating setting monies 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 landowners and municipalities.
  - ii. Barrigar reported on the outcome of the 2019 SLAM project. Dulanski and Barrigar presented the project description for Reducing Outlier Populations of EAB and the Progression of Ash Mortality (**Attachment D**). **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 Matthews **approved by all.**
  - iii. Foster reported on the 2019 Conservation in the Schools grant. Dulanski said the District would like to repeat the Conservation in the Schools project which would allow a school to submit a grant proposal to help fund conservation and ag related activities. **Motion** to approve using Part C monies to fund the Conservation in the Schools Grant for \$5,000.00 made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

- iv. Dulanski said the Part C projects and WRP will provide enough work to justify a summer intern with a forestry background. A second intern may be needed but this will be determined later. ***Motion to authorize hiring a Forestry Summer Intern at \$15.00/hr. for up to 480 hours and to authorize Dulanski to complete all necessary paperwork and to dismiss intern if necessary*** made by Matthews, seconded by Cook **approved by all.**
- v. Dulanski has also been in discussion with the County's Planning Department. It looks like the DEC Septic System Grant may not happen this year since it is not included in the proposed NYS budget.

## **VII. Old and New Business:**

### **A. No Till agreement**

1. Dulanski said that before changes to the No-Till agreement were discussed, she would like to see what the Board thought about selling the No-Till. Usage has gone down steadily since our new insurance requirements and the program has been operating at a loss the last few years. The machine is getting older and we have been told it will need new tires. Dulanski proposed that the sale proceeds or Part C funds be used to develop a cost-share program for no-till or interseeding on smaller farms that would have rented our machine to help to offset the costs of renting another machine. After discussion, Board decided to sell the No-Till in time for the March board meeting. ***Motion to approve placing the 2009 Great Plains No-Till on Auctions International for sale approval at the March 26, 2020 board meeting and to authorize Dulanski to complete all necessary paperwork,*** made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

**B.** Burke mentioned the upcoming Federal Census and the importance of ensuring every person is included. There is a possibility to lose \$2,000.00 - \$2,500.00 per person per year for County residents that are overlooked. The County is doing an outreach program to minimize this from happening.

**C.** Strength based evaluations were explained by Burke and how it might be used by the District.

## **VIII. Executive Session:**

*Motion to enter Executive session to complete personnel evaluations* made by Matthews, seconded by Cook **approved by all.**

Entered at 3:35 PM to discuss Dulanski's personnel evaluation and to hear a report of personnel evaluations for staff. Exited at 4:18 PM. Dulanski's review was completed and was very positive. Gallup was thanked for her efforts during Dulanski's maternity leave.

**IX. Correspondence:** Mail was available for the Board's review. (List of items in **Attachment E**)

**X. Announcements:** None

**XI. Time and Date of Next Meeting:** March 26, 2020, 7:30 PM at the SWCD Office.

**XII. Meeting Adjourned:** 4:22 PM

\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Elizabeth J. Gallup, Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Attachments: A-E**