

DRAFT

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
For February 23, 2022, 10:00 AM

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

Board Members Excused: None

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

Guests Present: Ryan Cunningham - NYS SWCC, Glenn Bullock – FSA, and Kent Frary – NRCS.

- I. Call to Order: Agenda (Attachment A)**
- II. Amendment to Agenda:** Add Executive Session after SWCD Reports *Motion to approve addition of Executive Session after SWCD Reports to the meeting’s agenda*, made by Acres, seconded by Cook **approved by all.**
- III. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** *Motion to approve the January 20, 2022 minutes*, made by Acres, seconded by Cook **approved by all.**
- IV. Treasurer’s Reports:** Gallup related details on deposits received and other financial items. *Motion to approve January 2022 Treasurer’s report*, made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**
- V. Reports**
 - A. FSA – Glen Bullock**
 1. Bullock provided an update on personnel changes in FSA.
 2. A general update on programs, deadlines, and information on participation in FSA programs was provided.
 - B. NRCS – Kent Frary**
 1. Frary provided a COVID update on the status of the office and what might be expected in the near future.
 2. Frary reported that he also had new staff that started last December.
 3. Frary updated the status of the existing programs and expressed how pleased he is with the success of the contribution agreement. Dulanski and Foster have been instrumental in getting all of the programs serviced and completed on time. He wouldn’t have been able to get everything done without their assistance. Andrews said he is pleased with it also.

4. Frary reported that NRCS has chosen the 20% of the WRP sites they are required to monitor. The District will complete the remaining 80% and have agreed to train his new employee on how to monitor sites.

C. SWCC – Ryan Cunningham

1. Cunningham provided an update on AEM Year 16 & 17. The due date to submit projects is May 1st.
2. Ag NPS Round 28 and Climate Resilient Farming Round 6 are open for applications.
3. The draft NYS budget was very encouraging with an increase in the Environmental Protection Fund. It may have a significant impact on State Aid to Districts. Andrews asked if the Performance Measures for Part C monies will change much this year. Cunningham said he expected them to stay close to the same as there are now.
4. Cunningham said the blackout period for processing payments starts March 4th. Staff is working hard to get everything processed before then.

V. Reports

A. BOL – John Burke, Kevin Acres

1. Burke reported that the County has submitted two resolutions to Governor Hochul; one which stated their opposition to the ban of wood burning proposed and another was to support keeping the correction facilities open in St. Lawrence County.
2. Candidates for the Department of Social Services Commissioner position have been narrowed down and recommendations will be presented next Monday to the Board of Legislators.
3. Acres provided an update on the timber theft issue and said that the Sheriff's office is looking into it. There have been similar thefts on private property in the area.
4. Acres said he was pleased that the County Planning Board recommended denying a proposed solar project because it was on prime agricultural land.
5. Acres and Allen shared information and personal views on the COVID pandemic's impacts and lessons learned. Discussion followed.

B. AFPB – Robert Andrews

1. Andrews reported on the meeting that took place at the beginning of February. Updates on current and potential solar projects were provided. Over 6,000 acres in the County may soon be used for solar. One square mile in SLC is already being used for this purpose.
2. The AFPB is working on the concern that requests to remove land from the Ag district to simplify regulation for implementing solar project. A document to gather information, if an application is received, was developed to help review the parcel and allow the AFPB to make a recommendation on if the parcel should be allowed to be removed.

VI. SWCD Reports

A. District Technician – Jevonnah Foster

1. AEM planning is ongoing.
2. Foster has been assisting on EQIP projects and is starting to prepare for WRP.
3. Foster is studying for her CCA exam and has been doing quite a few ag values. Forty six requests from the same producer were received today.

B. Secretary/Treasurer – Elizabeth Gallup

1. Gallup explained that the transfer for March was larger because of additional costs expected to be paid in that month. **Motion** to authorize a transfer from the Money Market Account to the Checking Account to cover operational costs in an amount not to exceed \$25,000 for March 2022 made by Cook, seconded by Acres **approved by all.**

C. Manager's Report – Raeanne Dulanski (**Attachment B**)

1. Dulanski said that her laptop has been ordered and she expects it to be built by the end of March.
2. Part C monies have not been awarded yet so she will have Part C project motions next month, once we know the funding level.
3. Dulanski provided an update on the NYS Snowmobile Grant. 70% grant monies should be received soon. She met with the Board of Legislator's Grant Oversight Committee and discussed the division of the SWCD administration time between the two TMEs. Due to issues at the state level, she expects Phase Three to be difficult.
4. EQIP is going well and WRP workload is determined. Foster will start addressing this and will train the new NRCS employee.
5. Dulanski provided an update on the Climate Resilient Farming Grant and informed the Board that there has been some interest in this grant and the new NYS Ag NPS Round 28 grant. She needs two resolutions approved:
 1. **Motion** to approve Resolution # 2022 - 1 for NYS Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 6 (**Attachment C**) made by Acres, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**
 2. **Motion** to approve Resolution # 2022 -2 for NYS Ag NPS Grant, Round 28 (**Attachment D**) made by Cook, seconded by Acres **approved by all.**
6. Dulanski said that the Town of Madrid Highway Superintendent has reached out for assistance on a possible grant for sand and salt storage through the WQIP grant. She has provided them with some information on their water resources, as WQIP is a water quality based grant.
7. Dulanski informed the Board that it looks like it would be best if the District hired only one intern for Forestry this year. We would like to advertise it at two levels; Entry level at \$15.50/hour and Experienced (must have a specific knowledge and experience similar to the work that they will be completing during the internship) at \$17.50/hour. Interns must work less than six months so we would like to hire someone for twenty weeks to start in April/early May. **Motion** to authorize Dulanski to advertise, hire and do all related paperwork for a summer intern made by Burke, seconded by Cook **approved by all.**

8. District Board training: Dulanski asked what the Board would like to do about the required Director training and said that Cunningham has said he would be available whenever it worked best for them. The Board prefers to complete the training in person. It was determined to do it at a regularly scheduled board meeting, rather than scheduling a special meeting, to be determined.
9. The District would still like to do a trial run of a flyover above Black Lake when the weather and algae growth is conducive.

VII. Executive Session – entered at 11:39 a.m.

Motion to enter Executive session to discuss personnel issues by Acres, seconded by Allen approved by all.

Exited Executive Session at 12:01 p.m. Motion to exit Executive session by Cook, seconded by Acres approved by all.

VIII. Old and New Business:

- A. Allen asked if the District should do some strategic planning to best direct the District’s resources and time due to increased demand for our services. Discussion took place and it was decided that Dulanski would look into arranging some assistance to help the District to come up with plan to move forward with this task.
- B. Drone insurance coverage was discussed after Gallup shared additional information received from the District’s insurance broker. It was decided that more discussion was needed for the liability portion of the insurance but the damage coverage was acceptable.

IX. Correspondence: None

X. Announcements: None

XI. Time and Date of Next Meeting: March 24, 2022, 7:00 PM.

XII. Meeting Adjourned: 1:00 p.m.

Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

Date

Elizabeth J. Gallup, Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

Date

Attachments: A-D