

DRAFT

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
For May 19, 2022, 3:00 p.m.
(held at SLC PSB 2nd floor conference room)

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

Board Members Excused: Kevin Acres

Staff Present: Raeanne Dulanski (Manager), Liz Gallup (Secretary/Asst. Treasurer), and Jevonnah Foster (Technician), Aaron Barrigar (Forester), and Heidi Knaflec (Summer Intern)

Guests: Matilda Larson, SLC Planning, Ryan Cunningham, SWCC

I. Call to Order

II. Agenda (Attachment A)

III. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: *Motion* to approve the March 24, 2022 minutes, made by Burke, seconded by Cook **approved by all**

IV. Treasurer's Reports:

1. Gallup explained that the current AEM Grant banking account is no longer needed since a new one will have to be opened for the current year. She needs to transfer the money in the AEM account to the District's Money Market account and then close the AEM Account. *Motion* to approve transferring the \$19,497.99 remaining in the AEM grant bank account to the Money Market account and to close the AEM account when its balance is zero made by Cook, seconded by Burke **approved by all**.

Allen entered at 3:06 p.m.

2. *Motion* to approve a transfer from Money Market to Checking for June and July 2022 to cover operating costs up to \$25,000 for June and up to \$30,000 for July made by Cook, seconded by Burke **approved by all**.
3. Gallup announced that she is planning on retiring on July 29th and gave a brief overview on how the District plans on handling the transition to a new person in her position. She thanked the Board and said that she has enjoyed the ten years she has spent at the District.

V. Reports

A. BOL –John Burke

1. Burke informed the Board that talk on how to handle spending the COVID stimulus monies continue. It is over \$21,000,000 so there is a list of possible uses that will be looked at individually and decided if it is a good use of those funds.

2. Burke said that Public Health is looking into a new way of handling the sludge from sewage which utilizes dry beds. It will mean cheaper trucking costs and should result in a Class A type of sludge that could be used for fertilizer.

B. AFPB – Bob Andrews, Matilda Larson

1. Larson provided an explanation on how the eight year review of Ag Districts is handled and what that review entails. She explained that all farmlands are reviewed using aerial footage, ag value assessments and other input to determine if the land should be included. There is a public hearing next Tuesday for public comment on proposed changes to be made in Ag District # 2.
2. Larson provided an update on solar farm activity. The discussion about utilizing prime farmland for solar array sites continues.

C. SWCD Staff Strategic Planning Session Report – Matilda Larson

1. Larson presented her report (**Attachment B**) on the Strategic Planning Session she had with District staff about workloads, current duties and possible enhancements in the future. She went over time spent on a variety of tasks by staff member and talked about areas that may need to be reviewed. Much discussion followed. The Board concluded that they will continue to discuss where the District's time is being spent and where the most return for our efforts are to be found. One item that was determined to be important was that the Board meet with the NYS Snowmobile grant Oversight Committee of the Board of Legislators. This meeting would be to determine how the grant administration could be handled so it does not have such a big impact on the District.

Dulanski took a minute to introduce our summer intern, Heidi Knaflec, to the Board.

D. SWCC – Ryan Cunningham (Attachment C)

1. Cunningham went over items in the NYS Executive budget that has been approved and how it will impact funding for Districts. The Environmental Protection budget line has been increased around 25%. District funding comes from this line so Part C funding may see as much as a \$55,000 increase in 2023.
2. Cunningham gave an update on the various grants available and said he was glad to see that the District had applied for two Climate Resiliency Farming grants.
3. Cunningham said that a 4.2 billion Environmental Bond Act will be on the ballot in November.
4. Cunningham informed the Board that he plans on having training on different AEM topics and other areas as they come up throughout the rest of the year.

VI. SWCD Reports:

A. Secretary/Assistant Treasurer's Report – Liz Gallup

1. Gallup discussed items relevant to the financial information provided to the Board. *Motion to approve March and April 2022 Treasurer's report, made by Cook, seconded by Allen approved by all.*

B. Forester's Report – Aaron Barrigar

1. Barrigar said he is working on County Forest inventory and management plans.
2. Barrigar helped with North Adirondack Regional Envirothon (NARE) at Paul Smith's College and attended Early Successional Habitat Management training in Ellenburg. He also assisted with setting up the Game of Logging training held in March.

3. Barrigar reported that he worked at the District's tree and shrub sale handout day, assisted with a tree planting with the Green Team from Canton Middle School and continues to assist landowners with technical questions.
4. Allen said that she is impressed with the Buckthorn and Honeysuckle inventorying project and is looking forward to working on it.
5. Burke inquired if it made sense to do a limited sale of timber from County lands since hardwood prices are currently at a high price level. Barrigar explained that County parcels don't have hardwoods, and while prices are high, stumpage prices aren't.

C. Technician's Report – Jevonnah Foster

1. Foster has been working on projects for EQIP, and has assisted Dulanski with NYS Ag NPS & Climate Resiliency grant applications. WRP monitoring, both onsite and off, has started.
2. Foster continues to work on CNMP plans and handling soil samples for AEM. She has started a new CNMP plan. She is working on getting familiar with the District's new Cropware program. She has an AEM Tier 4 implementation site visit tomorrow.
3. Foster assisted with hand out for the tree and shrub sale, worked NARE at Paul Smith's College and gathered information for the strategic planning meeting.
4. Ag values have slowed down but Foster is still getting some to complete. She is also working on her CCA training when she can.

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

1. Dulanski reported that she has been busy working on the grant applications for both NYS Ag NPS and Climate Resiliency. The District is applying for one Ag NPS and two Climate Resiliency grants.
2. Approval is needed to pay the Morse Agronomic invoice of \$2,112.00 for work on two Nutrient Management plan updates completed. ***Motion to authorize the payment \$2,112 for AEM work to Morse Agronomic made by Cook, seconded by Allen approved by all.***
3. Dulanski and Barrigar met with Patrick Ames and Cornell Cooperative Extension staff prior to the strategic planning meeting to discuss landowner assistance requests. She is hopeful things will improve.
4. Dulanski said she asked for bids on a replacement Equinox again. ***Motion to accept lowest bid received for the purchase of a 4WD Equinox meeting specifications, complete necessary paperwork and to pay up to the budgeted amount of \$34,000 before year end, made by Cook, seconded by Allen approved by all***
5. Dulanski reported on this year's North Adirondack Regional Envirothon which was May 12th at Paul Smith's College. Eleven schools attended with a total of 17 teams. Colton-Pierpont won for St. Lawrence County but is not going to NYS Envirothon.
6. Dulanski provided a update on EQIP and said there is an Ag energy, Four high tunnels and one Forestry that have all been accepted for funding.
7. NYS Snow Grant update: Phase 3 is complete and has been submitted. The voucher has been received and forwarded to the County. Phase 1 has been problematic due to changes at New York State and late notice of those changes. She is working on getting more guidance.
8. Dulanski reported that she has a possible candidate for our board vacancy that she spoke with and is waiting for a response.
9. Dulanski discussed Gallup's retirement with the Board and talked about how she is suggesting that the District proceed with filling the vacancy.
 - i. She feels it would be best if the new position was for forty hours a week. She has been talking to the County and others to determine a reasonable salary

and feels that \$42,000 is competitive. **Motion** to hire a 40 hour/week Secretary/Treasurer starting at a salary of \$42,000 going to \$45,000 if the person's experience warrants it made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

- ii. An interview committee will be needed and she would like Gallup involved and asked if any board member would want to participate. **Motion** to set the interview committee to include Andrews, Allen, Dulanski and Gallup and to authorize Dulanski to sign all forms and to hire the best candidate made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**
- iii. Dulanski explained that Gallup has agreed to increase her hours worked from 24 hours/week to 30 hours/week to help facilitate the transition and to allow time for her to train the new employee **Motion** to increase Gallup's hours from 24 hours to 30 hours per week for the month of July made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

VII. Old and New Business: None

VIII. Executive Session – entered at 5:24 p.m.

Motion to enter Executive session to discuss personnel issues made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

Exited Executive Session at 5:36 p.m. Motion to exit Executive session by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

Personnel evaluations for Barrigar, Foster and Gallup were discussed. The Board was pleased with all of them.

- IX. Correspondence:** Mail was available for the Board's review. (List of items in Attachment E)
- X. Announcements: None**
- XI. Next Meeting: July 21, 2022**
- XII. Meeting Adjourned: Motion** to adjourn at 5:38 p.m. made by Cook seconded by Allen **approved by all**

Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

Date

Elizabeth J. Gallup, Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

Date

Attachments: A – E