

DRAFT

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
For September 21st, 2023

Board Members Present: Robert Andrews, Jr. (Chairperson), Adam Cook (Vice-Chair), Becky Allen (Treasurer), John Burke, Kaitlyn Kulp, and Margaret Haggard

Board Members Excused: *Patrick Smith*

Guest Present: *none*

Staff Present: Cayce Salvino (Manager), Heidi Knafelc (Technician), and Jevonnah Foster (Technician)

Staff Absent: Aaron Barrigar (Forester), Melissa Woods (Secretary/Assistant Treasurer)

I. **Call to Order** at 3:31pm

II. **Agenda** (Attachment A)

III. **Introduction**

IV. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting(s):** *Motion to approve the August 17th, 2023, minutes, made by Cook, seconded by Allen* **approved by all**

V. **Treasurer's Reports:** presented by Cayce Salvino

Motion to approve all financial reports in the August 2023 folder, made by Cook, seconded by Allen **approved by all**

Kulp entered at 3:57pm

VI. **Reports**

A. **Board of Legislators** –John Burke and Margaret Haggard

1. Updated us on the status of board of legislators. County budget is still in progress. Monday 9/25 is the Legislator Finance meeting.

B. **Ag and Farmland Protection Board** – Bob Andrews

1. Ag tour – 9 legislators and Sen. Stec present. Next AFPB meeting first week of October. Kudos to Dan Huntley (Farm Bureau) and Dan Parker for writing up the North Country Now Article.
2. Discussion about Farm Safety with the addition of Methane, Hydrogen, and similar digestors. What are the potential hazards of the renewable energy programs coming to the area (methane digestors, solar arrays)? Board consensus for Jevonnah Foster to reach out to St. Lawrence County Emergency Services to find out more about the hazards and how they are being assessed and managed.

VII. **SWCD Reports:**

A. **Secretary/Assistant Treasurer's Report** – Cayce Salvino

1. *Motion to allow Salvino to transfer up to \$30,000 from Money Market Saving account to the Checking account to pay for October expenses, made by Cook, seconded by Allen* **approved by all.**

B. **Technician Report-** Jevonnah Foster

1. Working on Cover Crops and AEM work.
 - a. **Motion** to increase Part C acreage by 80 acres to include 3 extra farms for the Cover Crop program made by Cook, second by Haggard, **approved by all**
2. Working on CNMPs – first review with Ag and Markets completed. 2 more and then will be AEM Planner certified.
3. Described updates for the Round 18 of AEM. Annual Plan will be presented in October board meeting.
4. AgNPS Round 29 grant awards were presented. No St. Lawrence County project was awarded, will submit for next round. Debriefing will be requested.

C. Technician/Forester Report- Heidi Knafalc

1. Part B – worked on removing undesirable vegetation and creating brush piles.
2. Conservation Skills Workshop – good event. Learned about implementation of Golden Winged Warbler – St. Lawrence County has a dense population. AEM Forestry Class – learned about how we can use AEM monies for forestry work.
3. Silvo-pasture training in Watkins Glen next week – Aaron attending.

D. Manager Report- Cayce Salvino

1. Presented and reviewed the bids received for the ARPA Ash tree removal in ROWs. Bid opening was Tuesday September 19th - 4 bids total, however, one bid packet was incomplete (missing insurance documentation and did not completely fill out pricing page per instructions). BOD agreed to not include incomplete bid.
2. **Motion** to accept the lowest acceptable bid and begin contracting process made by Cook, seconded by Allen, **approved by all**.
3. Cayce attended outreach event at Gouverneur, NY Farmers market with FSA. Talked to many of the vendors about High Tunnels and NRCS Programs.
4. Attended Conservation Desktop training (through NRCS) to prepare for upcoming EQIP projects (6 applicants for 2024)
5. Attended an EMC (Environmental Management Council) meeting.
6. Received AgNPS Round 28 Contract.
7. **Motion** to open new checking account for AgNPS Round 28 contract made by Haggard, seconded by Allen, **approved by all**.
8. Cayce will attend and do a demo for Day At the Farm.
9. Proposed Part C Updates for 2024 – all set for 2023 performance measures.
 - a. Discussion regarding upcoming trainings for staff and board members. Possible planning with Ryan Cunningham for Open Meeting Law training this coming February.
 - b. Discussion regarding partnerships and outreach opportunities to meet benchmarks for 2024 Part C.
10. Discussion of employee scheduling, office hours, and phone coverage.

VIII. Old and New Business

1. Discussion on potential Government shutdown. Plan is in place to be able to work elsewhere if we not allowed to work from our office.
2. Discussion of Grassy Grove solar project being implemented in Canton on prime farmland. A lack of information about the project.
 - a. **Motion** to not sign document sent by Grassy Grove Solar Project made by Allen, second by Haggard, **approved by all**
3. Discussion of the history of the North County Agricultural Development (\$500,000 a year). Concern of dropping Regional Agricultural Team (a CCE decision discussed at previous board meeting) – and potential loss of state funding from the the Agricultural Development Program (as has occurred in other states).

4. Board agreed that Andrews can attend CCE Board meeting to represent SLCSWCD and express concerns about CCE dropping the North Country Regional AgTeam.

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

X. Announcements: None

XI. Next Meeting: October 19th, 2023 at 3:30pm

XII. Meeting Adjourned: *Motion to adjourn at 5:30 p.m.* made by Cook seconded by Kulp approved **by all.**

Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

Date

Melissa Woods, Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

Date

Attachments: A – C

These minutes have not been approved by the SLC SWCD Board of Directors