

DRAFT

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
For November 16th, 2023, at 3:30 p.m.

Board Members Present: Robert Andrews, Jr. (Chairperson), Patrick Smith, Becky Allen (Treasurer), Kaitlyn Kulp, John Burke

Board Members Excused: Adam Cook (Vice-chair), Margaret Haggard

Guests Present: N/A

Staff Present: Cayce Salvino (Manager), Melissa Woods (Secretary/Asst. Treasurer), Heidi Knafelc (Technician), Jevonnah Foster (Technician)

Staff Absent: Aaron Barrigar (Forester)

- I. **Call to Order at:** 3:33pm
- II. **Agenda** (Attachment A)
- III. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** *Motion to approve October 19th, 2023, board minutes with corrections made to the Part C cover crop payments from \$12,530 to \$19,500 and correction to #7 under Old and New Business from Regional Ag team to SLC Ag team approved by consensus of the board.*
- IV. **Treasures Report:** *Motion to approve the October 2023 treasures report, made by Smith seconded by Allen approved by all.*
- V. **Reports:**
 - A. **Board of Legislators Report:**
 1. Burke stated that Ruth proposed the full asked amount for SWCD – 20K increase. Vote will be held in December.
 2. Burke discussed the county getting a commercial appraiser for big stores to evaluate big commercial lots to ensure shared tax burden onto the local taxpayers.
 - B. **AFPB Report:**
 1. Andrews stated the discussions on solar facilities are still taking place.
 2. Ag Value Assessments have been a big discussion and Ag district reviews are coming up in 2024. You can add acreage or take away acreage to your ag district.
 - C. **Technician Report-** Jevonnah Foster
 1. Foster has been working on closing out AEM Rnd 17 contracts and turned in end of year paperwork.
Motion to reimburse Huntley for \$20,603 for Tier 4 implementation project made by Allen seconded by Kulp approved by all.
 2. She has been continuing her soil sampling.
 3. Has been doing site visits, Kitty from CCE ag team has gone on a few visits with her as well.
 4. Foster states AEM round 18 funding has been approved.
 5. SLC SWCD has been approved for 3 out of 4 applications for the CRF grants.
 6. Working with CNMP planners to obtain info for EQIP projects
 7. Still working on researching survey equipment and will purchase before the end of the year.
 8. American Farmland Trust Senior Ag Specialist reached out and looking for a farm to add to their proposal for planting green for Cover Crops, will know by

December if this will get funded. Foster found the farm that would fit his parameters for this project. Could boost new research for the future.

D. Technician Report- Heidi Knafelc

1. Knafelc reported her and Barrigar have cleared more on Parcel 33 (part B).
2. Continuing to mark boundaries for Parcel 21.
3. Marked trees to be kept by LO for firewood.
4. Partnered with Franklin County SWCD to help with AEM project.
5. Started on boundary markings for forest trails.
6. Made trail signs for Parcel 33 and 8.
7. Continuing to work on Ag Values.

E. Secretary/Assistant Treasurer's Reports: Secretary/Assistant Treasurer Woods

1. Woods has been working on Board member mileage reports for end of year.
Motion to pay Board Members Mileage for meeting attendance made by Burke, seconded by Allen **approved by all.**
2. Discussion on January and February Board meetings decided on January 25th at 3:30pm and arrange for Ryan Cunningham to be here for the February 15th meeting at 10am.
3. Went to the bank to open new accounts for our new grants and to add Woods to the accounts.
Motion to allow Salvino/Woods to transfer up to \$35,000 from Money Market Savings account to Checking account to pay for December expenses and \$30,000 for January expenses made by Allen seconded by Smith **approved by all.**
4. Woods has also worked on figuring out NYS retirement for 2023-2024.
Motion to pay NYS Retirement bill for \$31,374 from Money Market account, if we pay after Dec 15th it will be \$31,600 made by Allen seconded by Kulp **approved by all.**
5. Woods also got the new paperwork for our Health, Dental, and Vision insurance, they have all come in within the budget for 2024. We reviewed other potential plans, but we're still getting a good deal.
Motion to accept and renew Health, Vision, and Dental insurance plans made by Kulp seconded by Allen **approved by all.**

F. Manager Report- Cayce Salvino

1. Salvino and Knafelc attended the Farm Bureau dinner on 10/24, Met Ag commissioner Richard Ball.
2. Salvino and Woods attended the Admin Conference and took a few different classes, one on NY CLASS accounts, discussion on diversifying our personal accounts and keeping things spread between CBNA and NY CLASS accounts.
3. Discussion on CRF grants, the state accepted some USDA money for the grants and that could require all farms to maintain eligibility with USDA and follow government guidelines.
4. Woods took a social media class at the Admin conference about reaching out to our younger demographics, also took a class on applying for a grant for record retention and help on being more organized with our files.
5. Salvino is working on close out for previous Contribution Agreement with NRCS – 20K for reimbursement expenses.
6. Ruth Doyle called to discuss SWCD and forestry appropriations. Ruth would like to have a sit down with Salvino and Barrigar to discuss the Forestry appropriations.
7. Discussion on harassment issues associated with Ash tree removal. Salvino already notified county attorney to make him aware and let contractor know of the potential issue. Allen iterated the board will not tolerate harassment. Also discussed firewood

MOU and agreed no exceptions be made when considering firewood requests. (Requirements are laid out in the MOU and landowner signs to agree to those specific terms. Staff was directed to send the public to County Highway Dept. or their legislator if they are upset with the project.

8. Modified 2023 budget will be ready for January meeting.

*Motion to modify budget increase to Gas/Oil for machinery budget to \$2,000 (+300) made by Allen, seconded by Smith **approved by all.***

VI. Old and New Business:

1. Andrews stated the new president of the Farm Bureau would like to have someone come and do a presentation at each meeting, Andrews offered Salvino to attend future meeting and present on SWCD.
2. Discussion on mosquito tablets to supply to our county residents. Pair our giveaway with a pamphlet of good practices to help keep mosquitos away.
3. Salvino pursuing new potential partnership with CCE and BOCES.
4. Salvino talked to county planning department about the future of the septic grant. They may ask SWCD again to help cover admin costs of the grant.
5. Woods brought up a tire disposal day, has been done in the past, may look into doing this again. Outreach to our senators about this.
6. Make the information sheet Jevonnah made for aquatic invasive species available to Lake Associations, make a cover sheet and mail to them. Also put on our website.
7. District responsibility review of Board and Board Members will be done in January.
8. Salvino is considering making a holiday/end of year post card to send to legislatures, farmers we have worked with and others in the county for a way to get our name out there. Have a QR code to direct them to the website to show more of what we do. Board approves of idea.
9. February meeting training will potentially be open meeting law. Sexual harassment training will be emailed to the board before February for training and quiz.

VII. Executive Session:

A. Motion to enter executive session to discuss staff employment history at 5:00pm made by Kulp seconded by Allen **approved by all.** Exited executive session at 5:55pm.

Motion to adjust staffing salaries effective January 1, 2024; Salvino to \$71,000, Barrigar and Foster to \$61,000, Knafelc to \$49,000, and Woods to \$44,000 made by Smith, seconded by Kulp **approved by all.**

IX. Correspondence: Mail was available for the Board's review.

X. Announcements:

XI. Next Meeting: January 25, 2024 at 3:30.

XII. Meeting Adjourned: *Andrews adjourned the meeting at 6:02pm*

Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

Date

Melissa Woods, Secretary/ Asst. Treasurer

Date