

DRAFT

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
For February 15th, 2024, at 10:00am

Board Members Present: Robert Andrews, Jr. (Chairperson), Becky Allen, Patrick Smith (Treasurer), Kaitlyn Kulp, John Burke, Adam Cook (Vice Chair) via phone

Board Members Excused: Margaret Haggard

Guest Present: Ryan Cunningham NYS SWCC, Erica LaFountain CCE

Staff Present: Cayce Salvino (Manager), Melissa Woods (Secretary/Assistant Treasurer), Heidi Knafelc (Technician), Jevonnah Foster (Technician) and Aaron Barrigar (Forester)

I. Call to Order: at 10:04 am

II. Agenda (Attachment A)

III. Part C fund Request Presentation: Erica LaFountain

*Motion to approve using Part C monies (\$22K) to purchase a new High Tunnel for CCE contingent on a letter from the CCE Board clearly identifying a partnership with SWCD with access to the HT, made by Allen, seconded by Smith, **Opposition**-Burke.*

Allen stated it may be a good idea to get a status report back from CCE stating how they are meeting their goals, and also SWCD being able to use the HT for education.

IV. Ryan Cunningham Training Presentation: Director Responsibilities

1. After training, discussion on Strategic Plan for the District, good way to track progress. Contact Matilda with the County Planning Department.

4 Steps in Strategic Plan

Where are you now?

Where do you want to be?

How will you get there?

How will you know when you've arrived?

*Motion to start steps to create a Strategic Plan with help from the County Planning Department, made by Burke, seconded by Allen, **approved by all.***

V. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: *Motion to approve the January 25, 2024 minutes, made by Burke, seconded by Allen **approved by all.***

*Motion to pay half dues for NYACD and pay for NYSCDEA Fair Booth invoice, made by Allen, seconded by Burke **approved by all.***

*Motion to approve the January 2024 Treasurers Report, made by Smith, seconded by Cook **approved by all.***

VI. Reports

A. Board of Legislators –John Burke

1. Burke stated the renovation project at the 911 building is underway.
2. Burke stated the county is spending an extra 1 million dollars in paving roads which is an additional 10 miles of road.
3. The county is talking about moving the highway department facility to Route 11 instead of in town by the railroad tracks.

B. Ag and Farmland Protection Board – Bob Andrews

1. Andrews stated they got a tour of the DMV Building where the Planning board is while not being able to be in the 911 building during renovations.
2. Andrews discussed combining the 2 Ag districts in SLC into 1 district.
3. FPB reviewed the Rich Road Solar project, its over 1,700 acres, using sheep, gating and water system, battery storage facility is under the powerlines in NYPA right of way, right next to our facility.
4. Waddington has a moratorium for no new proposal for solar.
5. The definition of Prime Soil isn't the same across the county and we need to find a good way to come up with a good definition and take it to the county BOL to have their stamp of approval on and it and get certified by the county attorney.

C. NYS SWCC – Ryan Cunningham

1. Cunningham reported on CRF grant round 8 comes out in mid-March. Climate Smart Commodities Money Combines federal and state. Almost \$30 Million for this round, will have 4 tracts. Do have to part of FSA to take part in the full program.
2. Agri-forest will have 3 or 4 months to apply, AgNPS has been pushed to the fall, CAFO is coming with a 4th round this summer.
3. State program subcommittee February 20th (every other month) is the next meeting on Policy, Board Meeting is Feb. 27th, both count towards performance measures for the BOD.
4. There will be an increase to Part C for next year, discuss where our money for Part C goes and plan what percent you want to allocate to difference organizations in our strategic plan.

Broke for lunch at 11:32, Cook left meeting.

Resume from lunch at 11:50

VII. SWCD Reports:

A. Treasurer's Reports: Melissa Woods

1. Woods talked about not getting the Annual OSC Treasures Report done because of the turnover of staff and numbers not matching in the report. We have reached out to OSC and received help from them and will help out more if we can't figure out where our numbers are off.
2. **Motion to authorize filing a 60-day extension for the 2023 Treasures Report** made by Smith, seconded by Allen, **approved by all.**
3. Woods stated we received our county appropriations and our Forestry appropriation for the first quarter.
4. Woods stated our client discount for paychex is corrected, but still waiting for refunds for the invoices we were over charged for.
5. Woods went over tree sales up to date for this year compared to last year.
6. Wrote check to Kravitz for ARPA trees, so that's paid for 2023.

7. Woods sent in an application to the Frank Bratt Scholarship for a QuickBooks class. The class is \$799 and the scholarship is for \$500.00. States the class would be very beneficial for day to day tasks. Discussion on importance of QB class ensued Woods stated the scholarship can be a reimbursement for a previously taken class. Board suggested taking the class sooner than later.
8. **Motion** to allow Woods to take QuickBooks class for \$799 made by Burke, seconded by Smith, **approved by all**.
9. **Motion** to allow Salvino/Woods to transfer up to \$30,000 from money market to Checking account to pay for March expenses made by Allen, seconded by Kulp, **approved by all**.

B. Technician Report- Jevonnah Foster

1. Foster discussed CRF grant round 6, and the steps left to finish this off. Met with applicant on farm so he could sign documentation. Foster saw the before area, and will return to do drone photos.
2. CRF round 7 all plan of works are done and in waiting for state contract will probably come in this summer.
3. Been working on CAFO round 3 grant and met with applicants to figure out their plan. Foster and Cunningham believe they are at the right point to allow them an extension. They already signed an updated commitment letter and have been notified that, if approved, this is their last extension.
4. **Motion** to support a final one-year extension for CAFO round 3 grant, made by Burke, seconded by Smith, **approved by all**.
5. Working on AEM round 18 plans, grazing, pasture and farmstead plans.
6. Almost done with crop management course, about 2 weeks left. Also applied for Frank Bratt Scholarship to potentially reimburse for crop management course.

C. Forester's Report – Aaron Barrigar

1. Barrigar continues boundary marking and county forest management plan.
2. Also working on land owner assistance.
3. Working at Jacque Cartier state park with APHIS on EAB.
4. Nature conservative program discussion.
5. County forest land discussion

D. Technician Report- Heidi Knafelc

1. Knafelc reported that she's been working on Ag Values.
2. Attended an online webinar for Ag Value qualifications.
3. AEM work on soil maps.
4. Marking tree's, and boundary marking.

E. Manager Report- Cayce Salvino

1. Salvino reported that we have received the audit letter.
2. **Motion** for chair to sign Audit Engagement letter, made by Allen, seconded by Burke, **approved by all**.
3. Salvino discussed the trucks we are looking at to replace our current truck that is up for replacement. Would like to bid out a Silverado and Colorado and see what we get for bids.
4. **Motion** to complete NYS Vehicle Marketplace bid process to replace Fosters truck and have results available for the March BOD meeting, made by Smith, seconded by Kulp, **approve by all**.
5. Salvino has been very busy with NRCS work with EQIP. ACTNOW is a new process they are dealing with. Assessment and ranking of applications, also talked about WRE work and who will be doing which sites.

6. Salvino went on a tour of the Great Lakes Cheese plant. Got a lot of interesting facts about how much cheese and milk are produced there. Was a good way to meet other people in the ag business.

VIII. Old and New Business:

- A. Discussion of Prime Soil definition and verbiage and we need a resolution and letter of understanding from County Planning Department, AFPB, and SWCD, to agree we all need to use the same definition for Soil Groups.
- B. Based on discussions BOD wants Salvino to start letter of comments for the Rich Road Solar open comment period to include: our mission statement, safety concerns, impact on agriculture, battery storage, soil displacement, environmental bond, containment system, monitoring, maintenance schedule, and emergency services. Do they have an emergency management plan? Vote and sign letter at March meeting.
- C. Discussion of performance reviews, need to revisit this after we do strategic plan.
- D. Woods read Allen's letter about resigning from the BOD. She has enjoyed and will miss her time on the SWCD BOD.
- E. Remind the BOD that the office won't be staffed the week before our next meeting because the staff will be at WQS.

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

X. Announcements: None

XI. Next Meeting: March 21st, 2024 4:15 p.m.

XII. Meeting Adjourned: *Motion to adjourn at 1:30 p.m.*, made by Allen seconded by Smith approved by all.

Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

Date

Melissa Woods, Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

Date