

**ONTARIO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**June 19, 2024**  
**Minutes**

**Meeting held at the Cornell Cooperative Extension (District Office)**

**PRESENT**

**DIRECTORS:** Chairman Sam Casella, Vice Chairman Jim Malyj, Ken Livermore, Mark Venuti,  
Amanda Amadon, Dale Stell

**ABSENT:** Ed Jackson

**STAFF:** Megan Webster, Diana Thorn, Alaina Robarge

**USDA**

**FSA:** None

**NRCS:** None

**CALL TO ORDER REGULAR MEETING**

Chairman Casella called the regular meeting to order at 4:31pm and Jim led the pledge to the flag.

**MINUTES**

Chairman Casella asked for any comments, changes, or corrections to the minutes from May 15, 2024. The following motion was offered:

**Motion that the minutes of May 15, 2024 be accepted as submitted.**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20240619-01*

**BILLS**

A spreadsheet was provided that shows the bills that appear in the Abstract listed with more detail and in their current status.

**Motion to approve the bills as submitted and Abstract #6 in the amount of \$451,128.86**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Jim Malyj.**

**Ken Livermore reviewed and signed the bills earlier today.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20240619-02*

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Diana reviewed the Treasurer's Report with the Board, which includes the financial statements for May 31, 2024. Megan has reviewed and signed payrolls #10, #11, and #12; the May bank

statements; and the reconciliation reports from QuickBooks. All bank accounts are reconciled successfully through May 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Motion to approve the Treasurer's Report and the May financial statements.**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Amanda Amadon.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20240619-03*

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR**

**None**

**FSA**

*Report submitted via email by Joann Rogers*

**County Committee (COC):** The next COC meeting is on Tuesday, 06/25/2024 at 1PM; we will be having a COC election outreach event from 12:30PM to 1PM, Local Administrative Area (LAA)# 1: Naples-South Bristol, Bristol-Richmond-Canadice, East & West Bloomfield and Canandaigua is up for elections this year. FSA-669A, Nomination forms will be accepted from 06/17/24 to 08/01/24. For more information visit: [County Committee Elections \(usda.gov\)](#) or [2024 County Committee Elections - Nomination Packet \(usda.gov\)](#)

**Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):** Continuous CRP: is a voluntary program that contracts with agricultural producers so that environmentally sensitive agricultural land is devoted to conservation benefits; inquiries can be directed to Courtney Kautz or Joann Rogers; [Conservation Reserve Program \(usda.gov\)](#); Fact sheet: [Conservation Reserve Program: CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT PERIOD \(usda.gov\)](#)

**Farm Program Loans:**

- **Farm Storage Facility Loans (FSFL):** interest rates range from 4.500% to 4.750% for terms from 3 years to 12 years; the FSFL program has a variety of loan options from bulk tanks, hay barns, grain bins/dryers, telehandlers and storage coolers just to name a few; [farm storage facility loan programs fact sheet july 2022.pdf \(usda.gov\)](#)

**Farm Loan:** has a variety of loans available and funding is still available. **Farm Loan staff:** Abbey Combs, Farm Loan Officer; and Kim Weykman, Program Technician. Denise Buisch assists with new farm loan inquiries and can be reached by email at [denise.buisch@usda.gov](mailto:denise.buisch@usda.gov) or by telephone at 315-946-9912 ext. 112.

**Farm Record:** if the district is working with applicant that does not have FSA farm records set up please have them contact the office to make an appointment to get these established; here is a factsheet for your reference: [farmersgov-getstarted-factsheet-06-15-2021.pdf](#)

**Crop Reporting:** the office is very busy with crop reporting; the maps have been mailed to producers and appointments have been set up. [FSA: Crop Acreage Reporting \(usda.gov\)](#)

**Farm Bill:** The 2018 Farm Bill that expired on 09/30/2023 has been extended for 1 year; legislators are working on developing the next Farm Bill.

**Reminder to complete the AD-1026 form PRIOR to any clearing or tiling projects.**

**We wish staff member Alexis McDougal congratulations on her new position of County Executive Director Trainee (CEDT) that will be in the Orange County FSA office, Middletown, NY.**

Please feel free to refer any inquiries on any FSA programs or what programs we have to offer by contacting our office at 585-394-0525 ext. 2. In addition to myself there are Program Technicians: Courtney Kautz, and Sarah Potter. We encourage participation from all types and sizes of farm operations, whether you are an Urban or Rural producer/farmer.

## **NRCS**

*No Report.*

## **STAFF REPORT**

*Alaina Robarge*

Alaina shared what she has been working on, and highlighted some of her accomplishments.

### **Overview of 2024:**

- Successful Western Finger Lakes Regional Envirothon- 12 teams
- 3 rain barrel workshops
- Lots of outreach in schools, libraries, events, etc.
- 2 newsletters completed so far for the District
- Completed 1 newsletter for HLWTF
- Managing 3 websites
- New watershed model arrived

### **Working on:**

- Upcoming events and newsletters
- Website updates
- Planning Conservation Field Days at Bristol Hills 4-H Camp September 24, 25 and 26
- Helping on Advanced Soil Training with American Farmland Trust for August
- Working with the American Dairy Association on a fall farm tour/training as well as a soil education/Ag BMP training for the NYS Outdoor Education Association
- Water Workshop for November- realtors, planning boards, pumpers, etc.
- Aquatic Ecology Topic for NCF Envirothon

### **Past Events:**

- ✓ January-February, went to Victor Intermediate to teach 5<sup>th</sup> graders about watershed model, OWSC info and stormwater BMPs (~218 students/teachers)
- ✓ February/Winter Newsletter & Annual Report
- ✓ Coordinated NYSCDEA booth at the NY Farm Show at State Fair Grounds; set-up on 02/21/2024
- ✓ 02/23/24- Muller Field Station Wander and Wonder Hike, was special guest with nature activity- 12 attendees
- ✓ 2/27/24- Soil Health Workshop at Benton Fire Hall with partners CLWA and Yates SWCD; helped with coordinating event- 125 attendees

- ✓ 02/28/24-Eric Fuchs/Resource Partner Breakfast/Wrap-up of SHW Topics- Alaina, Megan, Tucker, Katie and Jenny- 16 attendees
- ✓ 02/29/24- Attended Jacob Maslyn/CCE's Ag Agency Meeting at Bonna Terra- Alaina and Megan- 12 attendees
- ✓ 3/13/24- Water Quality Symposium- How to Manage Difficult People and Projects- 35 attendees
- ✓ 3/14/24- Conservation Career Day at FLCC, had an OCSWCD table at fair- 50 attendees
- ✓ 3/22/24- Muller Field Station Wander and Wonder Hike, Alaina and Tad, 15 attendees
- ✓ 4/10/24- Midlakes High School Presentation on soil health, ag BMPs, and watershed model, 2 classes- Alaina
- ✓ 4/11/24- A Water Workshop for Real Estate Professionals- Alaina, Tad, Tyler, Katie- 6 attendees
- ✓ 4/13/24- Naples Green Festival, soil painting, soil health info and OCSWCD table, 45 people
- ✓ 4/22/24- Wayne Central School Earth Day Event, watershed model
- ✓ 4/25/24- Western Finger Lakes Regional Envirothon at FLCC- we had 12 teams, overall winner was a Victor team; 12 volunteers to help
- ✓ 4/27/24- Rain Barrel Workshop at Geneva Green Committee's Mission Zero 3 Event
- ✓ May 2024- Spring Newsletter sent
- ✓ 5/3/24- North Street School in Geneva, they bought a barrel for their class, I had the class help build the barrel and then did the watershed model with the class
- ✓ 5/15/24- Seneca County's Outdoor Education Field Days with watershed model- paid for by Seneca County SWCD
- ✓ 5/18/24- Rain Barrel Workshop with Town of Farmington
- ✓ 5/23/24- Rain Barrel Workshop with CLWA at The Woods with Naples Brewing Company
- ✓ 6/4/24-6/5/24: 2 Victor 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes, soil sampling/soil health lesson, ~50 students total
- ✓ 6/5/24- New York State Invasive Species Awareness Week (NYSISAW)- SLPWA organized an invasive species outreach table at Seneca Lake/Finger Lakes Welcome Center, I set-up the table and covered it for ~2 hours on June 5 (in addition, for NYSISAW, we did a Facebook post promoting several invasive species events)
- ✓ 6/6/24- Lincoln Hill Farms with Marcus Whitman 5<sup>th</sup> graders, tree ID and tree aging lesson, 4 classes, about 85 students/teachers
- ✓ 6/7/24- Canandaigua Botanical Society's Sesquicentennial (150<sup>th</sup>) celebrate, had an OCSWCD table with info and talked about HWA/treatment at their plant/geology walk up Barnes Gully (~100 people)
- ✓ 6/18/24- Marcus Whitman Soil Health lessons (85 students/teachers)

#### **Upcoming events on calendar:**

- ✓ 6/21/24- Red Jacket Elementary (pre-k through 5<sup>th</sup> grade), soil lesson
- ✓ 6/28/24- Twilight at Tamberlane- pasture walk (Nancy Glazier), dinner, and SWCD presentation at Tamberlane Farm partnering with CCE and Farm Bureau
- ✓ 7/12/24- Red Jacket Library- soil painting/soil lesson
- ✓ 7/17/24- Grimes Glen Hike with Canandaigua Botanical Society/Ontario County/FLLT
- ✓ 7/20/24- Town of Richmond Town Hall Tire Recycling Event
- ✓ July 23-27, 2024: Ontario County Fair- we will set-up a SWCD table; staff booth occasionally throughout week
- ✓ 7/24/24- Bloomfield Library- reading soil health book with lesson
- ✓ 7/29/24- NCF Envirothon, review/training sessions

- ✓ 7/31/24- NCF Envirothon, testing day
- ✓ 8/9/24- Red Jacket Library- importance of trees/tree ID class
- ✓ 8/9/24- Naples Library lesson for community, soil health lesson
- ✓ 8/27/24-8/28/24- Advanced Soil Training with American Farmland Trust, partnering with us for local farm, coordination of event and dinner, etc.- Alaina and Tucker
- ✓ 8/16/24- set up NYSCDEA booth at New York State Fair
- ✓ 8/29/24- New York State Fair Shift
- ✓ 9/4/24- Take down NYSCDEA booth at New York State Fair
- ✓ 9/7/24-9/8/24- Macedon Lumberjack Festival
- ✓ 9/24/24-9/26/24- Conservation Field Days
- ✓ 9/27/24-9/28/24- Fun on the Farm at Hemdale Farms- soil health lesson and OCSWCD table

Megan thanked Alaina for being an amazing ambassador for the District.

Chairman Casella, on behalf of the Board, thanked Alaina for her good work.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

Correspondence was shared.

## **GENERAL BUSINESS**

*Megan Webster, District Manager Report*

### **Voluntary Reduction in Work Schedule**

The Policy Committee submitted a draft policy and application form for the Board to review. This policy was drafted by modifying the State's policy and was created at the request of staff. There was no discussion.

**Motion to approve the Voluntary Reduction in Work Schedule Policy as submitted.**

**Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Amanda Amadon.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

*Resolution #20240619-04*

### **2024 Board of Supervisors Tour**

The Board of Supervisors Tour done last fall was very successful. We would like to repeat this event. Megan will propose a tentative date of October 3<sup>rd</sup> to PEQ. This fall we would like to focus on manure management and transfer, and methane reduction projects because more and more of these systems are being installed. Towns will need to be aware and to have processes in place for these installations.

### **Fish Sale**

We will be discontinuing the District's fish sale due to the retirement of the delivery driver and the scaling back of services at the hatchery we use for stock. We will refer any inquiries directly to the hatchery.

## **University of Rochester**

Megan is working with a UR Hydrology and Water Resources class to develop student research projects for the Fall 2024 semester. She is considering projects related to off line retention, vernal pools, and educational signage.

## **FLCC Interns**

Megan has been contacted by an FLCC student regarding a possible internship. Megan will speak with staff at FLCC and the student to determine what requirements would need to be met so that she can consider this further.

## **Canandaigua Lake Watershed Commission**

The Canandaigua Lake Watershed Inspection Program 2025 budget was approved at their recent meeting. Tyler presented information on ongoing violation issues and issues with soil identification at this meeting. He also reported that he is working to develop the narrative and engineering details to submit with his application to NYS DOH for a specific waiver which allows him to approve raised fill systems for new construction.

## **Vehicle Update**

The new Silverado will be delivered Friday morning. Unfortunately, the Colorado order was cancelled by Chevrolet. Mohawk Chevrolet is looking for a replacement but hasn't found an equivalent vehicle in stock yet. We will keep the 2020 Chevy Silverado until we resolve the issue with the cancelled order. If they are unable to locate a comparable truck, we can look at other options in pre-existing inventory for 2024 or wait until 2025.

## **Grant and Project Updates**

### **Septic System Replacement Fund Round 4**

Megan reported that the letters to qualifying properties will go out from the County next week. We will handle phone calls and applications. Megan thanked Sheri Norton at County IT for all of her help with this round.

### **Base AEM**

Megan reported that Jenny is sending outreach letters to new farms with information about the AEM program. She continues to work on Tiers 1 and 2 as well as recently completing a Tier 3A. Jenny and Tucker have been working through a complaint in the Town of Bristol using the AEM program.

*Megan shared the most updated Grants Spreadsheet with the Board. We have more than 35 active projects at this time.*

### **AEM Implementation Round 18**

Many projects in this round will be starting soon.

### **AgNPS 24**

F & W Farms has completed the agreed upon work. We are waiting on the paperwork.

### **Ag NPS 25**

The closeout package for the Northern Watersheds Waste Storage Project has been submitted to the State for this grant.

### **Ag NPS 27**

This grant is held by Yates County. The Brahms project should be starting soon and the Reifsteck project just needs a buffer reestablished for closeout.

### **Ag NPS 28**

Construction is ongoing for the J Minns Waste Storage Project with this project being on schedule. The project at Tamberlane is completed and the engineering certification and as-builts have been received. We are waiting on final paperwork to begin the close out.

### **Ag NPS 29**

We have received the executed contract from NYS Ag & Markets. We have vouchered for the initial funds.

### **NYS Grown and Certified**

B & M Cattle is moving forward. The engineering is complete and we will now work on collecting bids. FA-BA Farms has finished the manure transfer system and staff is working on closing out this grant.

### **GLC Cover Crops**

Yates County holds this grant. The deadline has been extended to March 2025. Jenny is working on planning the remaining 66 acres for the program.

### **FLX Cover Crops**

We have about 285 acres remaining in this grant. Jenny is working on contracting the acreage.

### **CAFO Enhanced Nutrient and Methane Management Program**

This program is a combination of funds remaining from the CAFO Rounds 1-3 grants that focused on waste storages and federal funds. The RFP has been released and there is an informational webinar next week. This grant will prioritize Cover & Flare systems and projects will need to follow federal funding requirements. Applications will be due October 28<sup>th</sup>. We have been told that the awards for CRF Round 8 will be announced prior to this deadline.

### **Motion to approve participation in the CAFO ENMP Grant Program.**

**Motion made by Jim Malyj, seconded by Amanda Amadon.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

*Resolution #20240619-05*

### **CRF Round 7**

We continue to await contracts from the State.

### **CRF Round 8**

Staff are diligently working on applications for this round. The due date is Monday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. We will be submitting 4 applications:

- Cover & Flare Systems
- Upland Water Retention
- Composting Barnyards
- Forestry

### **NFWF SOGL**

We are waiting on the contract. Tucker continues to work through the federal requirements for NEPA.

## **GLC SNRP**

The Rockefeller project on Middle Rd is complete. This project is to be paid out at the NRCS per unit rate. The total project cost is \$17,500.00. We have been asked to do an assignment of payment to Eugene Zimmerman with Rockefellers paying the rest.

**Motion to approve assignment of payment of \$17,359.80 to Eugene Zimmerman for contracting work and \$140.20 to Rockefeller Bros LLC for the remaining work.**

**Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Amanda Amadon.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

*Resolution #20240619-06*

This grant includes Seneca and Yates Counties as subrecipients. Seneca County has submitted closeout paperwork and documentation for the Austic project.

**Motion to approve payment to Seneca County SWCD for the Austic Project.**

**Motion made by Ken Livermore, seconded by Mark Venuti.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

*Resolution #20240619-07*

## **NYSDEC Watershed Grant**

The Wallace Jensen retention project is waiting on the final design from MRB Group. We also continue to wait for the contract for this grant.

## **FLLOWPA**

The Town of Canandaigua is sending the paperwork to close out the Wells Curtice Rd project from this past winter. Arrangements for a contractor are being made for the work on Armstrong Rd. Lastly, \$5,000 has been set aside for hydroseeding.

## **WQIP 19**

We are still waiting for contracts for this round.

The Naples Creek project bid package went out and the legal notice was published. Unfortunately, no bids were received. Katie has contacted several contractors to see if there was a particular issue with the project. She learned that several contractors would have bid but didn't have time. Two contractors expressed interest in looking at the project with Katie. We may have to re-bid the project.

The County Rd 6 project is underway with the County doing the construction for the Wilson Creek culvert repair.

## **Eastern Finger Lakes Coalition**

The State will be releasing a press release regarding the Coalition and the related funding. The Coalition continues to work on hiring a Coordinator. The State budget also includes funds for engineering.

## **Cornell Local Roads Programs**

Megan will submit the reimbursement paperwork to CDEA for the Local Roads Training held at OCSWCD recently.

Megan presented at the Annual School for Highway Superintendents in Ithaca on June 5<sup>th</sup>.



Megan and Katie will be looking into hosting and/or supporting an upcoming Snow School event as part of both our collaboration with Cornell, and the requirements of the WQIP Road Salt Reduction grant we are applying for in Round 20.

## **WQIP Round 20**

Katie is working on several applications for this round. She will do a Roadside Stabilization application and she will do at least one Road Salt Reduction application depending on how many municipalities are interested. The Road Salt Reduction grant will be for plowing equipment and weather stations. Many highway departments are supportive and interested. Katie will continue to work on these applications as they are due at the end of July.

## **Upcoming events:**

Twilight at Tamberlane Pasture Walk – June 28<sup>th</sup> at Tamberlane Farm (we will be partnering with CCE, Beef Producers and Farm Bureau). Dinner will be provided by the Farm Bureau and Tamberlane.

**Motion to approve purchase of consumables for the Twilight at Tamberlane event not to exceed \$100.00.**

**Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded Jim Malyj.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

*Resolution #20240619- 08*

Ag BMP Training Workshop – This event is in the planning stage. This will be a collaborative event involving Yates, Seneca, and Ontario Counties SWCDs. Senior Technical Staff will be highlighting construction projects covering design, layout, and install of agricultural BMPs for less experienced technical staff. Megan will be applying to CDEA (and/or Division 2) for financial support for this event. Depending on whether or not that support is received, the District may have to cover the cost of some consumables for the training.

**Motion to approve purchase of consumables for the Ag BMP Training Workshop if CDEA support is not received.**

**Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded Dale Stell.**

**All in favor, motion carried.**

*Resolution #20240619- 09*

## Wetlands

Megan reported that we are working with partners at USACE and NYSDEC to clarify their wetland regulations and enforcement plans. We hope to gain information that we can share to educate the community. FSA and NRCS will also be involved. Dale Stell reported that the Town of Gorham has sent complaints that were not followed up on by Army Corps. NYSDEC is taking more jurisdiction however they are moving away from maps.

## Tire Recycling

We continue to work on the issue of tires being rejected after the Town of Seneca event. Based on information gathered from Seneca Meadows, we will be reducing the size of tires accepted at events. This change will be included in the advertising and online registration screens. The maximum size

tires we will now accept is 19 inches. Additionally, the District has completed the paperwork to be eligible to haul tires to Seneca Meadows so that we can deliver the rejected tires that are still at the Town of Seneca's highway facility.

The next event is July 20<sup>th</sup> at the Town of Richmond.

Vice Chairman Malyj reported that the Kentucky Farm Bureau is sending representatives to tour small beef producing operations in New York State and they will be ending in Geneva. It is an honor for New York to host this tour.

Finger Lakes Regional Watershed Alliance

Dale Stell and Megan attended this event and Megan gave a presentation. Dale shared that there were some anti-ag sentiments during the presentations and Megan handled them very well by explaining how Districts can help with how things are going and with shaping future legislation.

Next meeting: July 17, 2024

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion to adjourn at 5:56pm.**

**Motion made by Mark Venuti, seconded by Ken Livermore.**

**All in favor, motion approved.**

*Resolution #20240619-10*

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**Diana Thorn Secretary-Treasurer**