



Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District

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www.cortlandswcd.org

SWCD...established to promote the conservation and wise use of our county's natural resources

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Tuesday, August 8, 2023

ATTENDING:

Eugene Wright, Chair	Linda Jones- Excused
James Murphy, Treasurer	Beau Harbin, Director
Tracey Evanick, Excused	Emily Olsenwik, Secretary
Amanda Barber, Manager	Stacy Russell, Natural Resource Specialist
Melissa Rutter, Fiscal Officer	Don Fisher, LYLPRD Representative
Erin Kurtz, NRCS	Melanie Vilardi, Deputy County Administrator
Shawn Murphy, Nat. Res. Cons.	Laurie Leonard, Cortland County Personnel Officer
Russ Smith, Nat. Res. Cons.	Chad Hill, Conservation Assistant

A. MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER by Chairman Wright- 1:02 p.m.

B. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Motion by Murphy to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting held on July 11, 2023 as written. Seconded and carried 3-0.

C. FINANCIAL REPORTS: Including income and expenses for July. Presented for payment Abstract 7-23 for Vouchers 145-23 to 161-23.

Motion by Murphy to accept the July 2023 financial reports and approve the payment of bills presented on Abstract 7-23 in the amount of \$84,928.64. Seconded and carried 3-0.

D. REPORTS:

- 1. NRCS-** Erin Kurtz mentioned that they are currently low on staff and have 2 positions they are looking to hire for. Kurtz mentioned that they have a lot of funding coming in which she is hopeful means a lot of opportunity. EQIP CSP Contracts are on tight deadlines.
- 2. SWCD-** Report was presented by Barber and is appended to minutes. Barber mentioned that now that the harvester repairs are complete, the Little York Lake weed harvesting has begun and will continue this week (weather-dependent). For efficiency purposes, District employees are performing the work in pairs.
- 3. SLWAP –** No report submitted.
- 4. State Committee Report-** Report was presented by Barber and is appended to minutes. Barber mentioned there are a lot of grants open and she would like to take on more once some of the current grants have been closed out.

****Stacy Russell entered the meeting at 1:30pm****

E. CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Conservation Skills Workshop is to be held in Auburn. Registration fee is \$100/person.
2. State Aid to Districts
3. FL Coalition

G. OLD BUSINESS:

1. **AEM BASE Signatory-** Barber suggested changing the delegation of authority to allow any board member who doesn't have a conflict of interest the ability to sign contracts. This provides flexibility to staff when board member availability changes.

Motion by Murphy to authorize any board member who doesn't have a conflict of interest to act as the District representative for AEM Base contracts. Seconded and carried 3-0.

2. **Little York Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District (LYLPRD) Administration-** Barber presented the 2024 work plan and budget approved by the LYLPRD Advisory Board. Don Fisher remarked that the Little York Lake Preservation Society supports the proposed \$18,114.20 for weed harvesting and treatment. Fisher also mentioned that the Society has expanded their board as well as their volunteer team. See the attached proposal for Little York Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District budget.

Motion by Murphy to accept the 2024 proposed work plan and budget of \$18,114.20 as presented. Seconded and carried 3-0.

3. **Weed Harvesting/AIS Update-** Due to some unforeseen circumstances, a contractor will need to be hired to finish up the weed harvesting this year at Little York. Barber also would like authorization to pay up to \$5,500 for CNY Harvesting to perform the work on Tully Lake.

Motion by Murphy to authorize up to \$5,500 to hire CNY Harvesting to perform the weed harvesting on Tully Lake.

3. **Personnel/ Staffing Update-** Barber needs to finalize the New Position Duty Statement for the engineering position. Barber would like to see what funding looks like by the end of September. Cody Wilks's last day will be in the last week of August.

4. **SWCD Budget 2024-** Increase in budget is not as significant as expected. Barber is confident in status for next year. The proposed request to the county will be an increase of approximately \$44,000 or 20%. Barber mentioned there is still opportunity for additional funding to come in, but doesn't want to count on it in case it doesn't come through. Beau Harbin said budget will be a challenge this year due to a three million dollar deficit.

Motion by Murphy to approve draft budget to be submitted to county as presented. Seconded and carried 3-0.

H. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Health Insurance Changes for Retirees-

Laurie Leonard discussed changes to health insurance coverage for retirees with the Board. The county is proposing a new plan for retirees and a meeting is being held September 15th to discuss with retirees. Under the current plan, she suggested the District should follow the same guidelines as the county regarding integration with Medicare and premium compensation. A retiree will pay for Medicare, but the county offsets the cost. If the District follows and makes this change, the overall premium expense would remain the same for the retiree, but the District would be responsible for a larger contribution toward the insurance. Though she did not know the monthly amount, Leonard indicated the cost to the District would not be significant. However, long term, if the new plan is adopted, some cost relief may occur.

Motion by Murphy to follow the same guidelines for retirees as the county detailed in Health Plan Amendment 2 effective 1/1/2023 regarding Medicare integration. Seconded and carried 3-0.

Vilardi introduced herself and thanked the District for allowing her to attend. She and Leonard left the meeting.

2. Annual Report-

Barber mentioned that the Annual Report for 2022 was making progress. It will be distributed to legislators and the board.

I. NEXT MEETING: September 12, 2023, 1:00 pm.

J. ADJOURNED at 2:08pm.

Eugene E. Wright, Chairman of Board