



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, February 14, 2023

ATTENDING: Eugene Wright, Chairman
James Murphy, Treasurer
Linda Jones, Director (entered 1:09pm)
Emily Olsenwik, Secretary

Beau Harbin, Legislator-Excused
Tracey Evanick, Vice Chair
Amanda Barber, Manager
Kim Cameron, Guest

Remote attendance: Gary Lawrence-LYL
Don Fisher-LYL

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

B. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Motion by Evanick to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting held on January 10, 2023 as written. Seconded and carried 3-0.

C. FINANCIAL REPORTS: Including income and expenses for January. Presented for payment Abstract 1-23 for Vouchers 1-23 to 20-23.

Motion by Murphy to accept the January 2023 financial reports and approve the payment of bills presented on Abstract 1-23 in the amount of \$100,840.07. Seconded and carried 3-0.

****Linda Jones entered the meeting at 1:09****

D. PUBLIC COMMENT-PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Kim Cameron encouraged the board to think about educating farmers about reducing their carbon footprint as well as educating the general public about their carbon footprint.

E. REPORTS:

- 1. NRCS-** No report submitted.
- 2. SWCD-** Report was presented by Barber and is appended to minutes. Barber noted there is a meeting scheduled for February 24th at 11:00am for the Little York Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District Advisory Board. Legislators at APE Committee asked Barber to include a line for LYL District in monthly report regardless if there are updates which prompted the consideration of giving a monthly report on all current projects. Barber also shared that annual reports are nearly ready and are due tomorrow.
- 3. SLWAP –** Report submitted and is appended to minutes.
- 4. SWCC-** Report submitted and is appended to minutes.

5. **USC-** Report submitted and is appended to minutes.

F. CORRESPONDENCE:

1. County Annual Reports: Schuyler, Broome, Erie, Delaware
2. USC Retreat: Discussed allocation of funds if additional state funding is granted.
3. Homer High School: Thank you note for fostering Molly Gallagher's work experience at SWCD. Currently Arthur Allen is assisting with annual reports and tree sale inventory.
4. Sam Casella: Letter expressing questions and concerns about booklet.

G. OLD BUSINESS:

1. **2023 Budget-** Rearranged some budget items to accommodate funding of computers, vehicles, etc. Less was spent on personnel which helped offset the difference of increased contractual expenses. Barber and Chairman Wright reviewed insurance policies and made some adjustments to hopefully keep costs down.

We do have a balanced budget, but revenue was a little more difficult to project as we're still waiting to get reimbursements from grants. Trying to transition the budget from cash based to modified accrual has had its challenges but we're making progress.

MOTION by Jones to approve modified 2023 budget with income and expenses of \$891,933. Seconded and carried 4-0.

2. **LYL Management and District Administration -** Don Fisher presented the Little York Lake Preservation Society Plan for 2023 lake management activities and budget. They are seeking funding from SWCD and the Lake District to support a management plan update and weed treatments focused on two main invasives:

-Milfoil Treatment: The amount of milfoil in the lake has decreased to a point where it's a matter of just controlling it in certain sections of the lake.

-Stonewort and Pond Weed hasn't been responsive to treatments so they will return back to mechanical harvesting. The potential to acquire the use of a weed harvester from Lake Como was discussed.

3. **Legislative Update- Draft Proposed Modifications to SWCD Law, Support for Hunger Free Campus Act-**

a. Arrangements have been made for Kathy McGrath, Kim Cameron, Tracey Evanick and Amanda Barber to attend Legislative Days on February 27th and 28th. Sam Casella's letter was shared with the proposed changes to District law. Supposedly meetings with legislators are scheduled at the end of the month but haven't heard further details. Barber has tried to reach out to county legislators but with the exception of Kelles, hasn't been successful in reaching them.

b. Support for Hunger Free Campus Act (Senate Bill 2913): One of our members asked if we (SWCD) could sign onto this. Board approval of bill attached (sent in email) to minutes would be needed, however the board felt it was a little too early to sign. The board is not comfortable at this point but may reconsider as more information comes available.

****Don Fisher and Gary Lawrence left the meeting at 1:40pm. ****

4. **Landfill Monitoring Update-** Lab analysis cost has increased. McGrath has prepared and advertised an RFP for services. The District saved the county considerable money by having our staff do the

collection, and Barber is hopeful that increased costs won't be as dramatic in actual bid versus what the current lab proposed. There should be a plan in place by next board meeting.

5. Personnel/ Staffing Discussion-

a. Fiscal Officer- Barber, Murphy, Evanick, and Wright interviewed the Fiscal Officer candidate and would like approval to make reference calls with the intention to hire. Offer would start at Step 1 and be negotiated within advertised range of \$20-30/hr. to stay within budgeted amount of \$30/hr for 40 weeks. Barber will communicate results of references and next steps with participating board members.

MOTION by Murphy to authorize Barber to make reference calls, negotiate salary within advertised range and step/grade, and hire candidate for Fiscal Officer within budgeted amount. Seconded and carried 4-0.

b. USC - Barber noted additional funding is available from USC for staffing. There will also be new funding coming through the EPF and DEC which may be offered to Districts to support staffing. Barber would like to hire an additional Conservation Assistant to be a designated Chesapeake Bay WS Technician. It is the consensus of the board to request funding from USC to pay for a new position for work related to Chesapeake Bay watershed planning and implementation. Barber will consider two positions when reviewing applicants. Interviews for our summer Conservation Aide and Conservation Assistant are scheduled to begin next week.

H. NEW BUSINESS:

1. USC Contract Approvals

a. USC Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and Buffer Planning: Barber requested approval to sign USC Skilled Services agreement in the amount of \$7,840.00 for tasks completed from March 1, 2021 thru November 31, 2022 for buffer planning of the USC.

MOTION by Murphy approving Barber to sign USC Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and buffer planning contract in the amount of \$7,840.00 for tasks completed from 3/1/2021-11/31/2022. Seconded and carried 4-0.

b. USC Watershed Approach to Stream Corridor Restoration in the Headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay: Barber requested approval to enter into agreement with Tioga County SWCD and sign USC Brackel contract for the Brackel, Zogg, and Merrill stream restoration project. There is potential CRF and ARP funding will be providing match funding of \$164,334.00 from 1/1/2022 through 11/30/2023.

MOTION by Evanick approving Barber enter into agreement with Tioga County SWCD and sign the USC Brackel contract in the amount of \$164,334.00 through November 30, 2023. Seconded and carried 4-0.

2. 2022-23 FLOWPA Contract Approval- Barber requested approval of Resolution# 2023-1 authorizing signature of 2022-23 FLOWPA contract with Oswego County commencing on 4/1/23 thru 12/31/24, in the amount of \$97,200, with eligible expenditures beginning 1/1/2023.

MOTION by Murphy to prove Resolution# 2023-1 authorizing Barber to sign 2022-23 Fllowpa contract with Oswego County and act as the SWCD representative regarding said FLOWPA contract commencing on 4/1/23 thru 12/31/24, in the amount of \$97,200. Seconded and carried 4-0. Full Resolution#2023-1 is

appended to the minutes.

3. Annual Reports- Barber brought the reports to the meeting and reported that all reports are completed and ready for submission, pending a final review of the Treasurer's Report by the auditor.

MOTION by Murphy to authorize Barber to submit all annual reports including the Report of the Treasurer for the year ending December 31, 2022. Seconded and carried 4-0.

4. CDs – Barber reported that a couple of CDs have a very low interest rate (1.2, .61 and .2) and would like to reinvest them into CDs with a higher interest rate of around 4%. There will be a penalty if accounts are closed, but the fee would be nominal compared to the increased interest earnings.

MOTION by Jones to authorize Barber to reinvest CDs with low interest rates, and pay the penalties, in order to increase interest earnings with higher interest rate CDs. Seconded and carried 4-0

5. Melody Lake- Barber requested to authorization to spend up to \$500.00 to help the Lake Association address invasive species in Melody Lake, particularly their snail issue.

MOTION by Evanick to authorize Barber to spend up to \$500.00 for expenses associated with invasive species management in Melody Lake. Seconded and carried 4-0.

H. NEXT MEETING: March 22, 2023, 1:00 pm.

I. OTHER

Murphy commented and thanked the Legislature for his re-appointment. He, Harbin, and Jones were reappointed to the Board at January session.

J. ADJOURNED at 2:31 pm.

Eugene E. Wright, Chairman of Board