



Cortland County Soil and Water Conservation District

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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, January 10, 2023

ATTENDING:	Eugene Wright, Chairman	Beau Harbin, Legislator
	James Murphy, Treasurer	Tracey Evanick, Vice Chair
	Linda Jones, Director	Amanda Barber, Manager
	Emily Olsenwik, Secretary	Kim Cameron, Guest

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

B. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Motion by Murphy to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting held on December 13, 2022 as written. Seconded and carried 5-0.

C. FINANCIAL REPORTS: Including income and expenses for December. Presented for payment Abstract 12-22 for Vouchers 241-22 to 267-22.

Motion by Murphy to accept the December 2022 financial reports and approve the payment of bills presented on Abstract 12-22 in the amount of \$108,878.96. Seconded and carried 5-0.

D. ORGANIZATIONAL BUSINESS:

1. Election of Officers: Board members signed their reimbursement per diem paperwork.

Motion to re- elect officers in the positions currently held by Murphy. Wright as Chair, Evanick as Vice-chair, and Murphy as Treasurer. Seconded and carried 4-0-1: Eugene Wright abstained.

2. Designate Official Bank-Tompkins Community Bank

Barber commented that Tompkins has been good to us but we should look into what other banks have to offer. Harbin suggested contacting Dave Rutherford at CCE for advice as they recently conducted an extensive research.

Motion by Murphy to designate Tompkins Community Bank as the official bank. Seconded and carried 5-0.

3. Designate Official Newspaper- Cortland Standard.

Motion by Murphy to designate the Cortland Standard as the official newspaper. Seconded and carried 5-0.

4. Review and update existing policies (Code of Ethics, etc.)

Motion to table policy review by Murphy. Seconded and carried 5-0.

5. Approve Mileage Rate for 2023 (.655).

Motion by Evanick to approve .655 as 2023 mileage rate. Seconded and carried 5-0.

6. Set 2023 Meeting schedule – 2nd Tues. of month at 1 pm was agreed upon.

Motion by Murphy to approve the meeting dates for the year. Seconded and carried 5-0.

7. Set 30 day availability period for Accrual Basis of Accounting.

Motion by Evanick to set 30 day availability period for Accrual Basis of Accounting. Seconded and carried 5-0.

E. REPORTS:

1. **NRCS-** No report submitted.
2. **SWCD-** Report was presented by Barber and is appended to minutes.
3. **SLWAP** – No report submitted.
4. **SWCC-** No report submitted.
5. **Manager's Meeting:** Barber shared that there was a presentation about Ag Protection unit, soil health climate resiliency act and a discussion about employee management policies and retention. Barber said that we seem to be at an ok pay rate, but to mindful about operational policies. Harbin asked a question specific to proposed law changes and Barber stated NYACD is taking the lead. As state employees, the state committee staff couldn't discuss that bill. Linda Jones inquired about the 2 inquiries for the open conservation aide position yet none for the fiscal officer position.

F. CORRESPONDENCE:

1. USC: Retreat 1/31-2/1/23.
2. Cayuga Watershed Network News
3. Onondaga Conservation Society: Summer 2022 Quarterly
4. Onondaga Conservation Society: Fall 2022 Quarterly
6. Bay Journal: quarterly
7. Soil and Water Conservation Society: Annual Meeting agenda
8. Part B: Award Notice
9. State Fair: Outreach/education
10. Legislative Days: 2/27-2/28/2023 registration forms need to be filled out.

G. OLD BUSINESS:

1. 2023 Modified Budget- Barber said because of staff vacancies, there is a fair amount of carry over (approximately \$140,000.00). Year 2023 may have a slight increase in expenses. Items to note:
-Should probably budget for a new vehicle;
-Budgeted high for insurance but cost actually went down;
-Director travel/training increased tremendously in 2022 but may be because of how expenses are being organized in Quickbooks.

2. Salaries- Barber requested to elevate Jared Popoli, Conservation Assistant, to Step 6.

Motion by Murphy to elevate Jared Popoli, Conservation Assistant, to Step 6. Seconded and carried 5-0.

3. Approval of Health Insurance Rates- Barber proposed 2023 health insurance rates. She noted that they increased slightly.

Motion by Jones to accept Barber's insurance proposition for 2023. Seconded and carried 5-0.

G. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approval of SLWAP Agreement 2022-2023 – Barber presented the 2022-23 Agreement for SWCD support to Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program (SLWAP) for board for consideration.

Motion by Evanick to enter into agreement with Onondaga County SWCD for support to Skaneateles Lake Watershed Agricultural Program (SLWAP) from July 1, 2022- June 30, 2023 in an amount of \$5,500.00. Seconded and carried 5-0.

2. Recommend WAPRC Representative- Barber requested approval from the board to recommend appointing Mike McMahon to serve as a member on the WAPRC Board again.

Motion by Evanick to recommend appointing Mike McMahon as a member on the WAPRC board. Seconded and carried 5-0.

3. 2023 County Appropriation Contract- Authorize Barber to sign agreement.

Motion by Harbin to authorize Barber to execute the agreement with the county for the 2023 annual appropriation of \$221,344. Seconded and carried 5-0.

4. Cortlandville letter regarding SEQRA-978 NYS Rte 13 Mixed Use Development- Authorize Barber to sign and send letter regarding SEQRA.

Motion by Harbin to authorize Barber to sign and send letter response regarding SEQRA. Seconded and carried 5-0.

5. Computer upgrades- Barber mentioned that the office presently has 3 machines that need to be replaced. This cost will be factored in to budget modification.

Shawn Murphy entered at 2:15pm to discuss in more detail viable options to increase the capability of computer technology .

Motion by Harbin to purchase 3 machines as well as 3 memory sticks that are at least 16 G. Cost is not to exceed \$2,000.00. Seconded and carried 5-0.

Shawn Murphy left the meeting at 2:24pm.

6. Contract with USC '23 Data- Barber requested approval to enter into an agreement with USC for data verification in the amount of \$9,000 from 10/01/22 to 9/31/23.

Motion by Evanick to authorize Barber to enter into an agreement with USC for data verification in the amount of \$9,000 from 10/01/22 to 9/31/23. Seconded and carried 5-0.

7. Quickbooks Accounting Assistance- Barber requested approval to continue to receive training in accounting and Quickbooks.

Motion by Murphy to authorize Barber to spend \$1,000.00 for training in accounting. To be paid on an hourly basis up to \$1,000 as needed. Seconded and carried 5-0.

8. Legislative Days- Barber asked if any other persons would like to attend Legislative Days at the end of February. Barber suggested Kathy McGrath attend as she hasn't attended. Jim Murphy suggested Barber attend as well. Evanick said she'd attend. Kim Cameron would like to go as well.

Motion by Murphy to send McGrath, Barber, Evanick and Cameron to Legislative Days on February 27th and 28th as Cortland Soil and Water board representatives with expenses not to exceed \$750.00. Seconded and carried 4-0-1; Evanick abstained.

9. Conservation Skills Workshop/Water Quality Symposium- Barber requested to authorization to have staff attend the symposium.

Motion by Murphy to spend up to \$1,500.00 to cover expenses to send the rest of staff to the Water Quality Symposium. Seconded and carried 5-0.

10. Personnel- Barber would like to hire VanWagenen as a full time employee at 40 hours a week for the 2023 calendar year using the funding for Conservation Aid and Buffer Steward. There was a lengthy discussion about temporary employment definitions and health insurance.

Motion by Evanick to create a temporary one year conservation aide position and appoint Kollin VanWagenen to said position at \$15.00 per hour. Seconded and carried 5-0.

Barber would also like to extend and manage the terms of the position currently being held by Emily

Olsenwik for the year of 2023. Barber would like to be able to balance the hours and responsibility as she sees fit.

Motion by Harbin to authorize Barber to extend and manage the terms of the secretary position as she sees fit for the year of 2023. Seconded and carried 5-0.

Motion by Harbin that the board did approve Olsenwik to work through the end of 2022. Seconded and carried 5-0.

H. NEXT MEETING: February 14, 2023, 1:00 pm.

I. OTHER

Beau Harbin would like further discussion about personnel policies.

J. ADJOURNED at 2:53 pm.

Eugene E. Wright, Chairman of Board