



## 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

Wednesday, March 18, 2026

**ATTENDING:** Linda Jones, Chair  
William McGovern - Excused  
John Phelps, Director  
Jeremy Boylan, Director  
Timothy Elliott, Director  
Amanda Barber, District Manager  
Melissa Rutter, Fiscal Officer

**A. MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER by Chair Jones – 1:04 p.m.**

**B. REVIEW OF MINUTES:**

**Motion** by Elliott to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting held on February 12, 2026 as written. Seconded and carried 4-0.

**C. FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Including income and expenses for February. Presented for payment Abstract 02-26 for Vouchers 17-26 to 34-26.

**Motion** by Boylan to accept the February 2026 financial reports and approve the payment of bills presented on Abstract 02-26 in the amount of \$781,112.02. Seconded and carried 4-0.

**D. REPORTS:**

1. **SWCD-** Report was presented by Barber. Copy was distributed and is appended to minutes.
2. **SLWAP** – February 2026 report distributed and appended to minutes.
3. **NRCS-** No report submitted.
4. **NYACD** – February 2026 report was distributed and appended to minutes.
5. **SWCC** – March 2026 report submitted and appended to minutes.
6. **Board Member Reports** –Boylan has now been appointed to NYACD's By-Laws Review Committee. Annual NYACD meeting is scheduled for October.
7. **Staff Reports** – None.
8. **LYLPRD Update** – None.

**E. CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. **NYSDAM** – Part C award memo.
2. **Comp Alliance** – Loyalty check received.
3. **USDA** – Regenerative pilot program info.
4. **NYS Envirothon** – Letter calling for volunteers.
5. **NYS DEC** – Stream general permit comment period information.

**F. OLD BUSINESS:**

1. **Personnel** – Barber reported that there are good candidates for the open Conservation Assistant positions, and she would like to schedule interviews. Discussion ensued regarding available dates and times of the Board members so that they may participate in the interview(s) with Barber.

Barber requested approval to appoint Jurgielewicz to the full-time, permanent position of Conservation Aide. This is a one-year appointment commencing March 30, 2026 (beginning of pay period), with an increase in pay to \$22/hr.

**Motion** by Phelps to approve the appointment of Jurgielewicz to a one-year, permanent full-time Conservation Aide position, starting March 30, at a pay rate of \$22/hr. Seconded and carried 4-0.

2. **Budget Modification** – Barber presented the revised 2026 expense budget for review. She explained which edits were made to some of the line items. It was noted that these edits did not affect the initial 2026 total operating expenses budget.

**Motion** by Boylan to approve the 2026 expense budget as presented. Seconded and carried 4-0.

## G. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **2026 Buffer Steward Contract** – Barber requested approval to sign the 2026 USC Skilled Services Agreement.

**Motion** by Boylan to authorize Barber to sign the 2026 USC Skilled Services (Buffer Steward) contract in the amount of \$21,000, effective term of April 1, 2026 through October 31, 2026. Seconded and carried 4-0.

2. **Cortland SWCD 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** – Barber requested input from the Board regarding ideas/thoughts to commemorate the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the District. She discussed some of the events that are currently underway, and is open to further suggestions.

3. **Conservation Aide/Boat Steward** – Barber requested approval to hire one full-time, seasonal boat steward to begin sometime prior to Memorial Day and working through Labor Day (or shortly thereafter). The boat steward's wages would be funded by the AIS grant and their responsibilities would include boat stewarding, education and outreach.

Barber requested approval to hire two additional part-time, seasonal boat stewards to be stationed at the Scott boat launch, start date TBD. Staffing of the launch is done in conjunction with the Skaneateles Lake Association.

**Motion** by Phelps to approve the hire of one full-time, seasonal boat steward under the AIS grant, and two part-time, seasonal boat stewards for the Scott boat launch. Seconded and carried 4-0.

4. **Engineering Assistance** – Barber reported that she has been in discussions with Larson Design Group for assistance regarding compiling a scope of work for the modeling and design of the Trout Brook project. Discussions are ongoing regarding the best course of action for both parties (RFQ creation vs. retainer agreement). Barber has preemptively sent a copy of their retainer agreement to the county attorney for review in case a retainer is decided upon. No action needed by the Board at this time.

- 5. Ag Project Discussion** – Barber reported that there is an issue with the new pump that was installed at the Murray farm (AGNP 29) - there is nothing wrong with the pump itself, it is not able to manage the ag waste as expected/designed. The pump cannot be resold, as it is custom-made for the site. Barber reported that she is awaiting recommendations to remedy the situation, such as adding a chopping mechanism to the existing pump or possibly replacing the pump with a more suitable model (new pump quotes are currently being obtained). Barber reported that there is adequate funding in the grant for a new pump, if needed. Until further information is collected in order to determine the best solution, no action is needed by the Board at this time.
  
- 6. Waterfront Revitalization Grants** – Boylan inquired about the availability of waterfront revitalization grants for improved river access along the Tioughnioga River. Barber said there were grants available, more research and feedback on potential locations needs to be conducted first. Boylan stated that he would begin research and report back to the Board.

**H. NEXT MEETING:** April 14, 2026 1:00 pm.

**I. ADJOURNED at 2:35 pm.**

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**Melissa Rutter, Board Secretary**