



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 June 10, 2025

ATTENDING: Linda Jones, Chair
William McGovern, Vice-Chair
John Phelps, Director
Jeremy Boylan, Director
Timothy Elliott, Director
Brian Danforth, NYACD
Amanda Barber, District Manager
Melissa Rutter, Fiscal Officer
Russell Smith, NRC
Shawn Murphy, NRC
Molly Gallagher, Conservation Aide

A. MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER by Chair Jones – 1:00 p.m.

B. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Motion by Boylan to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting held on May 13, 2025 as written. Seconded and carried 5-0.

C. FINANCIAL REPORTS: Including income and expenses for May. Presented for payment Abstract 05-25 for Vouchers 74-25 to 100-25.

Motion by McGovern to accept the May 2025 financial reports and approve the payment of bills presented on Abstract 05-25 in the amount of \$148,053.46. Seconded and carried 5-0.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT: Brian Danforth, the NYACD Division IV Director, introduced himself and thanked the Board for inviting him to the meeting. He explained his experience as an Otsego County director, a Delaware County SWCD staff member, and his position with NYACD. He mentioned the joint NYACD/CDEA Division IV meeting being held on Nov. 13, 2025 in Binghamton – more details forthcoming and the Board members are invited to attend. He further explained the role of NYACD and the organization's activities and advocacy throughout the state.

**** Shawn Murphy entered the meeting at 1:31pm. ****

E. REPORTS:

- 1. SWCD-** Report was presented by Barber. Copy was distributed and is appended to minutes.
- 2. SLWAP** – No report submitted.
- 3. NRCS-** No report submitted.
- 4. NYACD** – Report was distributed and is appended to minutes.
- 5. SWCC** – June 2025 report was distributed and appended to minutes.
- 6. Board Member Reports** – None.
- 7. Staff Reports** – Smith shared detailed information regarding the projects in which he is involved. These projects included cover crop implementation, stormwater plan (SWPPP) reviews for new

construction and new solar sites, and weekly compliance checks on the new Pendleton Ave. solar site. He discussed his role in four new large farm-based projects and processes involved in advancing those projects. Additionally, he explained his involvement in BMP verification and data collection and what that entails. He then fielded questions from the Board regarding the information he presented.

8. Other Reports – None.

F. CORRESPONDENCE:

1. **NYSDAM**– Notification of cancellation of the Federal Climate Smart Commodities grant.
2. **SWCC** – Email from PJ regarding Performance Measures.
3. **211 Listserv** – Welcome email – District has signed up for the mailing list.
4. **Paddlethe607** – June 26, 2025 water trail ribbon cutting announcement.
5. **NYSDAM** – Announcement that the CFA application is open.
6. **NYSDAM** – Public comment period is open for DEC tree planting funding guidelines.
7. **NYSDEC Region 7** – Resource Fair information.
8. **NYACD** – Email explaining differences between NYSLRS Tiers 4 and 6.
9. **Oswego County SWCD** – Workplan for Oneida Lake Watershed Water Chestnut Control grant.

G. OLD BUSINESS:

1. **2025 Performance Measures Review** – Barber reviewed the Performance Measure Requirements standards worksheet, with emphasis on the portions that pertain to Board members.
2. **Hiring Update** – Barber reported that the two boat stewards, the buffer steward, and the two Skaneateles Lake boat stewards are all hired and working, as is the new Conservation Assistant. Barber introduced the Board to Molly Gallagher, one of the new Conservation Aides. Molly spoke about her duties as a boat steward and some of the outreach events she has attended.
3. **USDA-NRCS MOA** – Barber distributed copies of and explained the proposed MOA. The MOA establishes the relationship between USDA-NRCS, SWCC and each County SWCD. The MOA needs to be signed so that the USDA will continue to enter into agreements and provide potential funding for USC projects and activities.

Motion by Phelps to approve the USDA-NRCS MOA document as presented; and, further, to have Chair Jones sign the agreement on behalf of the District once it has been signed by the USDA-NRCS designated representative. Seconded and carried 5-0.

H. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **AEM Action Plan** – Murphy explained the AEM Program and the tier system within. Murphy then distributed copies of the proposed AEM Round 19 Action Plan. Murphy explained that Round 19 is now a three-year contracted program, the funding has been increased to \$120,000 per year for technical assistance and \$100,000 per year for project implementation. Murphy requested approval of the action plan and a resolution approving the District’s participation in the program.

Motion by Boylan to approve the AEM Action Plan – Option B as presented by Murphy. Seconded and carried 5-0.

Motion by Boylan to approve **Resolution 2025-02** (attached) authorizing the District to participate in the AEM Round 19 program and authorizing Barber to act as the District's representative regarding the AEM Round 19 program. Seconded and carried 5-0.

- 2. USC Agreements** – Barber presented three agreements for the Board to approve. All three are between the District and Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Motion by Elliott to approve Barber to sign the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Technical Assistance Agreement. Contract is for technical assistance provided by Cortland County from January 1, 2025 to August 31, 2025. Contract amount is \$56,700. Seconded and carried 5-0.

Motion by Phelps to approve Barber to sign the Irish Hill Road Culvert Replacement Project Agreement. Contract term is May 19, 2025 to August 31, 2025, contract amount is \$45,000. Seconded and carried 5-0.

Motion by Elliott to approve Barber to sign the Allen/McGivern Wetlands Enhancement and Buffer Project Agreement. Contract is for technical assistance/implementation provided by the Tioga County/USC wetland team to Cortland County, in an amount not to exceed \$13,280.86. Seconded and carried 5-0.

- 3. Weed Harvester Billing Rates** – Barber distributed an analysis of harvester operations and investment repayment plan. She discussed the assumptions and calculations as presented. Barber then requested approval, based on the figures presented, to set the hourly rate for harvesting at \$200/hour.

****Phelps left the meeting at 2:36 pm. ****

Motion by Boylan to set the billing rate for harvester operations at \$200/hr. Seconded and carried 4-0.

- 4. Mowing Rate** – Barber distributed information on herbaceous weed mowing and the benefits to riparian forest buffers when mowing competing vegetation. Barber provided examples of current cost share rates based on other programs, and recommended that the District establish the 2025 riparian buffer mowing rate at \$189/acre, resulting in a cost-share to landowners of \$141.75/acre. The USC buffer steward contract provides funding up to \$4,500 for this practice.

Motion by McGovern to set the 2025 flat rate for riparian forest buffer mowing at \$189.00/acre, with the subsequent landowner cost-share rate set at \$141.75/acre. Seconded and carried 4-0.

- 5. Equipment Disposal** – Rutter request approval to dispose of an obsolete/nonfunctional HP Color LaserJet printer. Item will be disposed of at the County recycling center.

Motion by McGovern to approve disposal of an obsolete/nonfunctional HP Color LaserJet printer CP5225, inventory item OE227. Seconded and carried 4-0.

- 6. Appointment of Board Treasurer** – Barber explained that, since Tim Elliott is the newly appointed Farm Bureau representative to the Board, Tracy Evanick, the previous Farm Bureau representative,

is therefore no longer the Board Treasurer. Therefore, the Board needs to appoint a new Board Treasurer.

Motion by McGovern to appoint Jeremy Boylan as the Board Treasurer. Seconded and carried 4-0.

Barber reported that the current Board-approved bank signatories need to be updated due to Board member changes.

Motion by Elliott to make changes to the authorized Tompkins Trust account signatories as follows: add Linda Jones and Jeremy Boylan as authorized signers; remove James Murphy and remove Tracy Evanick. Seconded and carried 4-0.

7. **Computer Purchase** – Barber presented the Board with a quote for 8 new computers to replace existing computers that are becoming obsolete in October (units are not upgradable to Windows 11). The cost will be approximately \$6,000 through NY OGS State contract.

Motion by Boylan to approve purchase of 8 new computers as presented in the quote. Seconded and carried 4-0.

8. **Landowner Subcontract Approval** –

Motion by Elliott to extend the Ullrich project contract end date from 06/30/25 to 12/31/25. Seconded and carried 4-0.

Motion by McGovern to approve the Whey St. Dairy/Marty Young AEM contract for a vegetated treatment area. Contract is for up to \$75,000, not to exceed 75% of the total project cost, with an end date of 09/30/25. Seconded and carried 4-0.

I. **NEXT MEETING:** July 8, 2025, 1:00 pm.

J. **ADJOURNED at 3:00 pm.**

Melissa Rutter, Board Secretary