



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 November 12, 2025

ATTENDING: Linda Jones, Chair
William McGovern, Vice-Chair
John Phelps, Director
Jeremy Boylan, Director
Timothy Elliott, Director
Amanda Barber, District Manager
Melissa Rutter, Fiscal Officer
Scott Fickbohm, AEA, NYS SWCC
Jake Lynch, Conservation Assistant

A. MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER by Chair Jones – 1:29 p.m.

B. REVIEW OF MINUTES:

Motion by Boylan to approve the minutes of the regular board meeting held on October 14, 2025 as written. Seconded and carried 5-0.

C. FINANCIAL REPORTS: Including income and expenses for October. Presented for payment Abstract 10-25 for Vouchers 195-25 to 226-25.

Motion by Elliott to accept the October 2025 financial reports and approve the payment of bills presented on Abstract 10-25 in the amount of \$290,029.91. Seconded and carried 5-0.

E. REPORTS:

1. **SWCD-** Copy was distributed and is appended to minutes.
2. **USC** – Report was distributed.
3. **SLWAP** – No report submitted.
4. **NRCS-** No report submitted.
5. **NYACD** – No report submitted.
6. **SWCC** – November 2025 report was distributed and appended to minutes.
7. **Board Member Reports** – Jones thanked Barber and Shawn Murphy for the 11/7 field trip to District project sites. McGovern concurred that it was very informative, and they both recommended that the other Board members consider future field trips to get a first-hand view of the various District projects.
8. **Staff Reports** – Lynch delivered a presentation regarding the District's NAACC stream and culvert assessment projects that he is completing. Assessments are being conducted in the Grout Brook watershed and the headwaters of the east branch of Owego Creek to evaluate aquatic and terrestrial passage. He explained the assessment protocol and shared copies of the reporting forms. He then fielded questions from the Board regarding the assessments.
9. **LYLPRD Update** – None.
10. **Other Reports** – None.

**** Lynch left the meeting at 2:01 p.m. ****

F. CORRESPONDENCE:

1. **NYACD** – NACD updates on the federal government shutdown.
2. **Broome-Tioga Stormwater Coalition** – Winter Training Series schedule.
3. **SWCC** – 2026 Performance Measures released.
4. **CDEA** – RFP for CDEA News creation/publication.
5. **NYACD** – Agenda for 11/19/25 meeting.
6. **USC** – Email regarding Hemlock Woolly Adelgid training.
7. **John Stortecky** – Letters regarding NYACD.

G. OLD BUSINESS:

1. **2026 Budget Update** – Jones and McGovern reported that there is a full Legislative meeting tomorrow at 3 p.m. wherein the County Administrator will present the tentative 2026 budget. They anticipate flat funding for the District.

H. NEW BUSINESS:

1. **Equipment Disposal** – Rutter requested approval to dispose of an obsolete/nonfunctional Acer computer monitor, inventory # OE143. Item will go to the recycling center.

Motion by Phelps to authorize the disposal of obsolete/nonfunctional Acer monitor, inventory #OE143. Seconded and carried 5-0.

2. **Personnel** – Barber requested approval to extend Jurgielewicz’s employment to 12/31/25. Funding for the position is available, and she is currently involved in several projects.

Motion by Phelps to extend Jurgielewicz’s Conservation Aide position until 12/31/25. Seconded and carried 5-0.

Engineer Update – An applicant was interviewed and Barber extended an offer of employment. He is considering the offer and Barber is awaiting his decision.

3. **Grant Applications** – Barber mentioned that the CRF grant applications are due this Monday, there are four potential projects, nothing definite at this time.

Motion by Phelps to approve **Resolution 2025-03** (attached) authorizing the District to participate in the CRF Round 9 program and authorizing Barber to act as the District’s representative regarding the CRF Round 9 program. Seconded and carried 5-0.

4. **District Law Training** – Barber mentioned that Jones, Boylan, and Elliott were due for District Law training. Training was scheduled for 12/09/25 at 12 p.m., with the December Board meeting commencing directly afterwards at 1 p.m.

**** Boylan left the meeting at 2:22 p.m. ****

5. **State Budget and EPF** – Barber informed the Board that she received a request from Caitlin Stewart, Hamilton County SWCD District Manager, requesting that each District compose a letter to the Governor supporting the EPF and advocating for the preservation of its funding, as it is facing risks of significant cuts in the 2026 budget. The EPF funds Districts and many of the grants that the Districts utilize. It was the consensus of the Board to have Barber and Jones compose a letter to the Governor supporting the EPF and its continued funding, and have Jones sign the letter on behalf of the Board and the District.
6. **Project Discussions** – Barber expressed her concerns regarding some of the District’s projects that are being cost-shared by USDA, and the effect the federal government shutdown may have on those project payments and/or contracts. Barber mentioned that contracts may have to be extended and/or other contract modifications may have to be made in order for payments to be processed. Since the District makes payments last in the cost-share arrangement, it is essential to wait until all the necessary contract changes and administrative items are finalized before the District makes payment.

Barber reported that the cover crop figures are still being tabulated. If there are funds unallocated after timely registrants have been paid, Barber may request that the Board discuss potential payment to those that registered for the program after the enrollment deadline.

7. Subcontract Approval – New Hope View, Mikochik

New Hope View – Barber reported that this contract was not ready for Board approval at this time.

Motion by Phelps to approve the Mikochik CRF8 deer exclusion and tree/shrub establishment project contract in the amount of \$15,828.92. Seconded and carried 4-0.

I. NEXT MEETING: December 9, 2025, 1:00 pm.

J. ADJOURNED at 2:43 pm.

Melissa Rutter, Board Secretary