

Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District

Board of Directors Meeting – Monday, September 9, 2024

Ryan Cunningham presented “OSC: Audit of Otsego County SWCD – Lessons Learned”.

Directors present at the District office, 25451 State Route 12, Watertown, NY: Tom Boxberger, Dick Company, Mike Kiechle, Dan McBride, and Jim Nabywaniec. Others: SWCC AEA, Ryan Cunningham; CCE, Abigail Jantzi and Isaac Matlock; CNMP, Justin Bach; Executive Director, Patrick Crast; Administrative Assistant, Rhonda Redder. Absent: Jason Bast and Chuck Eastman

Secretary Kiechle called the meeting to order at 5:34 pm. ***Director Boxberger moved to approve the minutes of the August meeting. Motion seconded by Director Company. Carried.***

I REPORTS

Financial: August financial reports were reviewed; claims and bank statements were available. Open invoices total: \$ 65,000. ***Director Nabywaniec moved to approve the financial reports and sign the Itemized Disbursements Report of \$66,991.22; seconded by Director McBride. Carried.***

Cooperating Agencies

SWCC - Ryan: Next SWCC meeting is scheduled for 9/17; we are seeking an at-large urban, suburban, rural non-farm interest voting member. Annual Plan of Work is due 11/1. Conservation Skills Workshop will be held 9/23-26 in Auburn. Administrative Forum is scheduled for 11/18-19 in Saratoga. CAFO Enhanced Nutrient and Methane Management applications are due 10/28. Bond Act funds are being utilized; qualifying bondable acts within that are different than we normally see, and prevailing wage is being negotiated. Ecosystem Based Management opportunities for small streams, culverts, etc. \$2 million will be available this fall targeting non-ag erosion projects.

NYACD: Annual meeting will be held on Friday, September 13, 2024.

CCE – Abbey: Introduced their new Ag Program Manager, Isaac Matlock. There will be a meeting on 9/18 at the Hilton for the community to provide input into large scale solar; dinner is provided, but registration is required. This session will focus on land use and environmental implications. The next Fast Track to Farming series will be held at the St. Lawrence CCE 9/27-28. Beef Cattle Management for Beginners will be held 10/1 at CCE Jefferson. Fast Track will conduct a meat processing class and tour on 10/5 at Red Barn Meats in Lewis County. 4-H Animal Science 101 will provide classes for youth (ages 8-12) 10/22-12/3 at CCE Jefferson. Beef and dairy producers are invited to the Stockmanship & Stewardship event at the end of October in Hamburg, NY. This event will cover topics such as: bio security, live handling demonstrations, and provide an opportunity to become beef quality assurance certified.

FSA, JCADC, NRCS: No reports

Director Reports:

Kiechle: Farm Bureau’s annual meeting will be held on October 9, 2024; the new State Executive Director is the guest speaker.

Nabywaniec: Dylan Soper, Acting County Administrator, will follow up regarding the Slack Lot.

Staff Reports:

Sarah is working on stormwater and working with Justin on AEM. The next Stormwater Coalition meeting is scheduled for 9/26. Working on SC 9E and BRAM.

George is busy with design work for several upcoming projects and one design for St. Lawrence County. A SWPPP was dropped off today from the Town of Watertown for his review.

Jonathan is working with the loggers harvesting white ash, \$100-\$120k is expected. A second herbicide application will be done this week to complete the NRCS project. We are working with The Nature Conservancy on the upcoming reforestation projects, it will roll out with our newsletter and a mailing to residents in the Sandy Creek watershed. A deer fence will be constructed by Deer Creek.

Justin plans to finish two CNMPS within the next 2 weeks. AEM Tier 4 projects should be completed this fall. He is doing some moisture tests for farms, and he will be collecting soil samples this fall with a focus on Tier 3 projects. We will be applying for the next round of funding.

A bridge was constructed last week on a goat farm. Material and labor costs were approximately \$21,000. FLOWPA funds for this BMP were utilized to keep animals and farm equipment out of the creek. It was originally intended as an AEM project. A nearly identical bridge, but slightly narrower, was estimated to cost \$56,000 by a local contractor. The cost-share of 25% is more difficult to administer; it would cost landowners \$14,000 versus \$5250. Normally Districts are the preferred contractor, and we are an obvious choice since the work can be done for much less. Unfortunately, AEM doesn't provide an option for Districts to bill their time for the work. Other Districts may not have the equipment, so they pay subcontractors; however, we can utilize our equipment and implement projects. Utilizing the opportunities to complete projects ourselves enables us to earn funds and offsets our County appropriation. We hope Ag and Markets will revise AEM in the future.

II CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Jefferson County: Forest Management
- B. Jefferson County: White Ash Harvest
- C. New Executive Director*
- D. WEX*
- E. Village of Black River*
- F. Jefferson County Treasurer: Timber harvest funds*
- G. NYSACC Conference on the Environment (THC)
- H. Fort Drum: Email
- I. FLOWPA

*Outgoing

III NEW BUSINESS

- A. Positive Pay: Another District recently shared that they were impacted by fraud; a check they issued was altered to increase the amount and change the payee. WSB confirmed this type of fraud is increasing. ***Director Company moved to enter into a service agreement with Watertown Savings Bank to utilize Positive Pay to reduce the likelihood of fraud. Motion seconded by Director Boxberger. Carried.***
- B. Auctions International agreement: ***Director Boxberger moved to renew the agreement with Auctions International to sell our surplus equipment as directed by the Board. Motion seconded by Director Nabywaniec. Carried.***
- C. Annual Plan of Work: After the updates were reviewed ***Director Boxberger moved to approve the Annual Plan of Work for 2025. Motion seconded by Director Company. Carried.***

III NEW BUSINESS - Continued

- D. Equipment Policy: We are anticipating award letters for the Climate Resilient Farming grant applications submitted for 4 farms. Each farm has requested a piece of equipment to plant cover crops. This type of grant has not been administered previously. A certain number of acres must be planted for at least three of five years. To reduce the District's liability, we are weighing options and anticipating how to proceed with this unique grant so the District isn't left with a liability to NYS if a farm does not complete the grant requirements. A policy will be prepared and reviewed by the County Attorney. No action.
- E. County Forest: The agreement expired, and the County passed Resolution #227 to extend the agreement through 12/31/28. **Director Boxberger moved to enter into an agreement with Jefferson County for the management of and recreation in County forestlands for the period of 8/1/24-12/31/28 for \$90,000 per year and \$10,000 annually for trail development and professional services. Motion seconded by Director Company. Carried.**
- F. County Forest: White ash: Due to the impacts from the emerald ash borer, **Director Boxberger moved to enter into an agreement with Jefferson County to harvest white ash trees on County forestlands for the period of 8/1/24-12/31/27 for harvesting, bucking, forwarding, and sale of salvaged logs and proceeds above \$300 board feet will go to Jefferson County. Motion seconded by Director Company. Carried.**
- G. FLOWPA: **Director Nabywaniec moved to adopt the resolution below to administer \$137,200 in FLOWPA 2024-2025 funds. Motion seconded by Director Boxberger. Carried.**

2024-6 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SIGNING OF A CONTRACT WITH THE FINGER LAKES ASSOCIATION FOR TRANSFER OF FUNDING FOR FINGER LAKES-LAKE ONTARIO WATERSHED PROTECTION ALLIANCE SFY 2024-2025 FUNDING

WHEREAS, Jefferson County Soil & Water Conservation District, as one of the twenty-five (25) voting members of the Water Resources Board of the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance, has been allocated NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) funds for its water quality program under the Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance (FL-LOWPA); and **WHEREAS**, NYSDEC has agreed to transfer funding for the twenty-five (25) member Programs to the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District via a single contract between NYSDEC and the District; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that Patrick Crast be, and hereby is, authorized and directed to sign a contract between Jefferson County Soil & Water Conservation District and the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District for the Finger Lakes - Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance as specified in said contracts; and to act as the official representative of Jefferson County Soil & Water Conservation District in connection with any and all contracts between Jefferson County Soil & Water Conservation District and the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District for FL-LOWPA funds, **AND FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED**, that a signed, certified copy of this resolution to Mr. Joe Chairvolotti, District Manager of the Oswego County Soil and Water Conservation District, along with said contract, **AND FURTHER BE IT RESOLVED**, that this resolution take effect immediately.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 6:59 pm. Next meeting: October 7, 2024, at 5:30 pm due to the Columbus Day holiday.

Director

Date

Director

Date