

Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District

Board of Directors Meeting – Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Directors present at the District Office, 25451 State Route 12, Watertown, NY: Tom Boxberger, Jim Nabywaniec, and Dick Campany; *Mike Kiechle and Chuck Eastman joined by videoconference at their respective locations. Others: Justin Bach, Executive Director, and Katie Spaulding, Office Manager. Absent: Dan McBride and Jason Bast.

Following the Grants, Programs, & Projects presentation by Justin Bach, Director Boxberger called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM. ***Director Campany moved to approve the December meeting minutes; seconded by Director Nabywaniec. Unanimous vote - carried.***

I REPORTS

Financial: December financial reports were reviewed; claims and bank statements were available. Open invoices total: \$42,284.82. Active Grants and Profit and Loss Prevention Comparison were reviewed for the fourth quarter. ***Director Campany moved to approve the financial reports and to sign the Itemized Disbursements Report of \$140,260.23; seconded by Director Nabywaniec. Unanimous vote - carried.***

Cooperating Agencies:

SWCC – Ryan Cunningham’s written report was provided to board members.
No reports for: NYACD, CCE, FSA, JCADC, NRC

Director Reports:

Kiechle: The Farm Bureau has lobby days in Albany next week. The Taste of NY starts on Monday.

Nabywaniec: Justin and Sam Anderson, Forester, presented to the Jefferson County General Services Committee last week. The County will utilize \$150,000 of the white ash sales to go toward improving county property.

Bach: The spring 2026 tree plantings with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) are all set and there will be approximately 60 acres of planting. Continues to meet virtually with a committee to discuss how to expand tree plantings across NYS. Attended Jefferson County Stormwater Coalition meeting in December, in which the funding cap was increased from \$35,000 to \$70,000 to allow for more individualized support to each municipality. We received the \$400,000 mapping grant for MS4s.

AEM 18 closeout has been submitted and under state committee review. AEM 19 Technical Assistance was increased to \$420,000 over 3 years, which is a \$10,000/year increase from AEM 18. Will be reviewing applications to determine AEM 19 projects.

2 grants for CRF 9 (50 acres cover crop and 5 acres tree planting) were submitted and are still waiting for the award notifications. AgNPS30 contracts were just received. AgNPS31 applications are due by April 17, 2026, in which we are anticipating 9 applications.

Staff Reports: N/A

II CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Letters of Support (2)*
- B. 2026 Local Government Conference
- C. FLOWPA BMP Grant (7)*
- D. County Administration: 2026 Vouchers*
- E. WSB: ACH Users

*Outgoing

- F. NYS DEC
- G. Agri Consulting Services, Inc.
- H. NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets
- I. SGW*

III OLD BUSINESS

- A. Slack Lot – No update.
- B. CRF 8 Tree Plantings – We have an agreement with Williams Forestry & Associates to plant 73 acres for CRF 8, in addition to the 60 acres for TNC. It is anticipated that the tree planting will begin at the end of April or beginning of May.

IV NEW BUSINESS

- A. AEM Strategic Plan: *Director Nabywaniec moved to approve the 2026-2030 AEM Strategic Plan; seconded by Director Campany. Unanimous vote – carried.*
- B. AEM Cost-Share: In order to reduce the cost to landowners for AEM 19, *Director Boxberger moved to approve the reduction of the landowner's contribution to 10%, while the District contributes 5%, and the remaining 85% is billed to AEM; seconded by Director Campany. Unanimous vote – carried.*
- C. Policy Renewals: *Director Nabywaniec moved to approve the existing policies as unchanged: Availability Period & Best Value, Code of Ethics, District Complaints, Employee Training & Development, and Procurement; while amending the following existing policies: Accounts Receivable, Advance Expenditures, Advance Payment Requests & Transfer of Grant Funds, Board of Directors Responsibilities and Attendance, Breach Notification, Credit Card, Freedom of Information Law, Grant Application, Investment, Mileage, Sexual Harassment Prevention, and Soil Group Worksheet. Motion seconded by Director Campany. Unanimous vote – carried.*
- D. AgNPS30: *Director Nabywaniec moved to approve the transfer of funds into their own interest-bearing account for a waste storage and transfer system for farm #045-5086 and a compost bedded pack for farm #045-3027; seconded by Director Campany. Unanimous vote – carried.*
- E. Service Rates: *Director Campany moved to maintain the rates for Soil Group Worksheets, 4-Hour Erosion and Sediment Control Training, equipment maintenance fees for services rendered outside of Jefferson County, and adjusting the mileage to the current IRS rate; seconded by Director Nabywaniec. Unanimous vote – carried.*
- F. 2026 BOD Meeting Date/Time: Due to a conflict with the third Wednesday previously set for the 2026 Board of Directors meetings, *Director Boxberger moved to change the 2026 Board of Directors meeting date and time to the fourth Monday of every month, at 5:30 PM; seconded by Director Nabywaniec. Unanimous vote – carried.*
- G. Newspaper: *Director Campany moved to maintain Watertown Daily Times as the official newspaper; seconded by Director Nabywaniec. Unanimous vote – carried.*

H. Officers: Justin Bach began to preside over the meeting at 6:06 PM. **Director Nabywaniec moved to maintain the current slate of officers (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer); seconded by Director Kiechle. Unanimous vote – carried.** Director Boxberger continued to preside over the meeting at 6:07 PM.

I. Employee Handbook: **Director Nabywaniec moved to approve the following modifications to the Employee Handbook: add a lunch break policy with the corresponding waiver form, amend the work clothes & boots policy to be applicable to all staff, and to remove the Sexual Harassment policy from the Employee Handbook as it is its own policy and is referenced in the handbook as such. Motion seconded by Director Campany. Unanimous vote – carried.**

Meeting adjourned at 6:12 PM.

Next meeting: Monday, February 23, 2026, at 5:30 PM. A brief staff presentation may be provided at 5:15 PM.

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**The Board of Directors meeting was originally scheduled for 1/21/2026, rescheduled to 1/26/26, and rescheduled again to 1/28/2026 due to an ongoing severe winter storm. This meeting was held on 1/28/2026 in person at the District office while 2 board members joined virtually via Microsoft Teams with the use of videoconferencing due to extenuating circumstances with the ongoing severe weather conditions. A 'no unnecessary travel advisory' had been issued by the Jefferson County Sheriff's office for all the above dates due to dangerous winter weather conditions, including blizzard conditions and flash freezes.*