

St. Lawrence County
Soil and Water Conservation District

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
For
January 18, 2007

Board Members Present: Robert G. Andrews, Jr., Edwin Hadlock, David Martin, Frederick Morrill, Thomas Nichols, Clark Decker, Mary Rutley.

Staff Present: Dawn Howard, Katie Maloney, and James Pullano, NRCS

The meeting was called to order by Robert G. Andrews, Jr. at 7:35 PM.

Clark Decker made a motion to accepted minutes of the November 16, 2006 meeting as written. David Martin seconded the motion and all were in favor.

Frederick Morrill, the new BOL representative, was introduced to the SWCD Board. Fred is a Clarkson graduate and worked for Champion Paper Co. among others. Dawn Howard and Robert Andrews, Jr. did a quick introduction to the SWCD program.

Dawn Howard reported that SWCD received \$48,640 from the county. *Thomas Nichols made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Reports for November and December 2006. Mary Rutley seconded the motion and all were in favor.*

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – James Pullano

- James Pullano reported that the construction season had ended and it was a very productive one going well into December.
- James Pullano discussed two Farm Bill Programs, EQIP and WRP; SLC's are the biggest in NYS. January 26, 2007 is the cut off date for the first round of applications. There are currently about 45 applicants for EQIP. Of those 45, about 10 are probably not eligible for structural practices because they lack CNMP's but would be eligible for the CNMP incentive provided they could procure the services of a certified planner.
- Kent Frary is in Jefferson County as the Acting District Conservationist and there is a possibility he will stay on as Acting DC until the new DC assumes the responsibility sometime in early March.
- James Pullano and Greg Hayes are efficiently keeping up with program sign-ups and maintaining all deadlines.
- NRCS is operating on a continuing resolution.
- Kent Frary and Greg Hayes were recognized at the December NRCS all-employees meeting for their performance during FY 2006

Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) – David Martin

- Dave Martin did not attend the meeting today. Aaron Earl did, but no report available.

- Dawn Howard asked for permissions for Aaron Earl to go to the RC&D Leadership Forum in Washington, DC. February 26-28. All expenses are paid by RC&D. Brain Wohnsiedler and Neil Cheney are also attending this forum.
 - *Edwin Hadlock made a motion to send Aaron Earl. Clark Decker seconded the motion and all were in favor.*
- Dawn Howard mentioned that Leslie Wilson was elected chair of the Ag. Committee today.
- Robert G. Andrews, Jr. talked about meeting with Fred Morrill and the new legislators and also the State of the Forest Address to the BOL.

Organizational Meeting

- It was agreed that the meeting night for the board will be the third Thursday of every other month, with the exception of March. March's meeting will be conducted March 8th, because of the WQ symposium.
 - *Thomas Nichols made a motion to accept the meeting night. Clark Decker seconded and all were in favor.*
- Personnel Policy – June '04 version currently being used with Mary Rutley reviewing a new policy. Also mentioned new procurement and financial policies from office manual to review at a later date.
 - Procurement Policy – with \$250 ceiling change noted.
 - Financial Policy – with extra insurance on deposits over \$100,000 explained.
 - *Thomas Nichols made a motion to accept these three policies. Clark Decker seconded and all were in favor.*
- The official bank for SWCD is Community Bank and Newspapers are the Watertown Times and Advance News. Use St. Lawrence papers if we can.
 - *Thomas Nichols made a motion to accept. Mary Rutley seconded and all were in favor.*
- Authorization was made for Dawn Howard to pay bills: payroll, postage, telephone, tree programs, fish programs, fuel, and health insurance, plus up to \$250 for grants, WQCC, and equipment.
 - *David Martins made the motion to authorize Dawn Howard, Fred Morrill seconded and all were in favor.*
- Board elections; Robert G. Andrews, Jr. – chair, Edwin Hadlock – vice chairman, and Mary Rutley – secretary.
 - *Clark Decker made a motion to keep the current slate, Fred Morrill seconded and all were in favor.*
- It was discussed by the board that the IRS mileage rate is used (which changed from 44.5 cents to 48.5 cents) and a per diem of \$20.
 - *Thomas Nichols made a motion to accept these rates, Fred Morrill seconded and all were in favor.*

Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) – Dawn Howard (In addition to written report)

- Katie Maloney, Conservation District Technician reported:
 - Year 2 AEM Strategy on the Upper Grass River - A second mailing has been sent out and she has been scheduling the Tier II appointments.
 - The Raquette River Watershed is complete.
 - Work is continuously moving ahead on the different components of the nutrient management plans for AEM to EQIP and AEM to EQIP TOO.

- Katie Maloney passed her examination and is now a Certified Professional in Erosion and Sediment Control – In Training.
- NYS DEC requested visitation of stormwater construction sites throughout the county to note if the work was complete, if all temporary practices had been removed, and if final stabilization had been done. Katie Maloney has been to 18.
- Stormwater and the new sawmill facility in Fowler was discussed by the board.
- Forester – Dawn Howard reported for Aaron Earl:
 - The two interns from BOCES have completed their time.
 - Sale #1 – 2006 is being cut and will be done in a couple of weeks. Sale #3 is not being cut yet. Sales for 2007 have been started. Working on management plans.
 - Aaron needs permission to attend and teach Forestry at the Water Quality Symposium in March.
 - More garbage issues on county property.
 - Looking for new forestry software.
- State Soil and Water Conservation Committee (SWCC) – Dawn Howard reported for Steve Lanthier:
 - Plans of work are due for last round of grants. The limit for the grant extensions is now five years. Engineering remains a problem, and Albany has finally realized this. There is now a \$225 cost share for each of two people for every SWCD at WQS.
 - There will be a statewide manager meeting held in April where a draft of the new reimbursement policy will be discussed.
- Farm Service Agency (FSA) – Dawn Howard reported for Clark Putman:
 - Patty Burkum was hired December 26th. She is half farm loan and half farm program.
 - DCP signup is from now to June 1. The advance payment has decreased from 50 to 40 to 22%.
 - Jim Pitcher won election for county committee. Irene Hongrave is the alternate. Jim Pitcher, Joe teRiele and George Wright are still on the committee. There was no change to the committee.
 - MILC payment for January is only going to be 3.4 cents. December was 4.2 cents.
 - CRP sign-up is on-going.
- Dawn Howard gave her Manager Report
 - The board passed around the Steve Teele plaque which will be presented at the 50th Anniversary celebration.
 - WQS – Dawn Howard, Katie Maloney and Aaron Earl would like to attend March 13-16 in Auburn. \$500 each - \$450 back = \$1050 the total for SWCD.
 - *Mary Rutley made the motion to send the staff, Clark Decker seconded it and all were in favor.*
 - *Tom Nichols made a motion to authorize Dawn Howard to hire a temporary secretary if needed (with a call to the Executive Committee), Fred Morrill seconded, and all were in favor.*
 - *Mary Rutley made a motion for Myrna Barney of SLC Public Health to attend the WQS with \$500 from WQCC. Edwin Hadlock seconded, all were in favor.*

- Tom asked about public health funds.
 - Fred Morrill was shown the WQCC Aquatic Invasive sign.
 - Legislative Day
 - Rooms will be \$89 each.
 - Dates February 12th and 13th.
 - Edwin Hadlock can not attend. Thomas Nichols will already be attending as a NYS board representative so another representative is needed. There will be a lot of new people and many new changes are coming. The board discussed having Robert G. Andrews, Jr. attend. If he can't David Martin will be contacted.
 - Discussion on Dawn Howard also attending.
 - *Thomas Nichols made a motion for Robert G. Andrews, Jr. and Dawn Howard to go, Fred Morrill seconded, and all were in favor.*
 - Financial Disclosure –
 - Robert G. Andrews, Jr. as chair needs to complete.
 - Robert G. Andrews, Jr. didn't get the information, so Dawn Howard will share.
 - New York Association of Conservation Districts(NYACD) – Thomas Nichols
 - AEM – Dawn Howard is working on obtaining amount of funds needed for engineering and hours from Ron Youngs.
 - Draft for NYS funding in mail folder.
 - NRCS changes – The NRCS State Conservationist asked NYACD to send two representatives, including Tom, to a meeting today in Syracuse. Other USDA agencies changing too. Employee training plays a key role for new plan in three years.
 - Tom had a map of office locations and a 25 mile radius. Opportunities and challenges to deliver services. More information will be provided in the future. Funding will continue to deteriorate.
 - Rent - SLC is a model for the NRCS partnership in NYS.
 - Engineering Assistance – need people on the ground to do the work. We need money out there. Move money from special projects to Technical Assistance.
 - Thomas Nichols does not see the position in RC&D being filled.
- Intern - Drinking Water Brochure is in the mail folder.
- ATV and Trucks from Sherriff - There are no new vehicles available. Share the ATV's the sheriff has. Staff needs to have safety training.
- ACUB
 - SWCD and Cooperative Extension can not hold easements, but RC&D can.
 - Marc Usher (RC&D) had been talking to Dave Cutter at Army. Dave is no longer there, but we were given a new contact.
 - Fred discussed the need for economic development money for giving up easements. Tom talked about what the EPF money can be used for.
- DEC Grassland Program information is in the mail folder.
- Snowmobile and ATV Grant Trail updates were given by Dawn Howard.
- Truck - There is no NYS contract yet, possibly in 6-8 weeks. We can spend exact amount of vehicle only, up to \$20,000.
 - *Thomas Nichols made a motion for permission to order the truck, Clark Decker seconded it, all were in favor.*

- New computers were obtained for \$287.80 over budget of \$2,000. Computers are here and need to be installed.
 - *Fred Morrill made a resolution to pay for the computers, Thomas Nichols seconded, all were in favor*
- Retirement – Fee of \$138 for unused sick leave to go toward service time at retirement, for all four employees.
 - *Mary Rutley made the motion, “Be It Resolved: that the Board of Directors of the St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District does hereby elect to provide the additional pension benefits of Section 41 (j) of the Retirement and Social Security Law, as presently or hereafter amended. Be It Further Resolved: that the effective date of such shall be the fifteenth day of March, 2007.” Fred Morrill seconded, all were in favor.*
- Staff questioned a \$3,414 Retirement charge in 2007, but it was for SWCD to enter the plan in the 1980’s. Fee for 25 years at 3% total payroll min.
- Dawn told about Sole Source Aquifer determination and designation for the village of Locona by EPA.
- Thomas Nichols talked about water withdrawals from Great Lakes.
- Fred Morrill needs an Oath of Office form.
- Letters to do include: Beaver Dams, DEC Private Lands Forester, and Dry Hydrant Maintenance information.
- Break was held and a group photo was taken.

Old and New Business

- The Annual Plan was discussed.
 - *Mary Rutley made a motion to accept, David Martin seconded, and all were in favor*
- *Fred Morrill made a motion for the Annual Report to be mailed to the board for review. Board members will call in and if all are in favor, Mary Rutley is authorized to approve and sign the two forms. Clark Decker seconded, and all were in favor.*
- RC&D representation was discussed. Dave Martin resigned as SWCD representative
 - *Thomas Nichols made the motion to forward Leslie Wilson’s name to the BOL. Fred Morrill seconded and all were in favor.*
 - Judy Aldrich will be contacted about continuing as SWCD alternate.
 - A new BOL alternate will be discussed at the next meeting.
- Working Agreement with NRCS. James Pullano, Dawn Howard and Steve Teele all reviewed and approved the current agreement.
 - *Edwin Hadlock motioned, Mary Rutley seconded and all were in favor, that Robert G. Andrews, Jr. sign the agreement once it is all typed with address correction.*
- NACD Information - Robert G. Andrews, Jr. liked the energy information. There are opportunities in SLC. Thomas Nichols said that we need involvement for monies that may become available. There was discussion about wind energy.
 - *David Martin made the motion to join NACD for \$775, Fred Morrill seconded and all were in favor.*
- SWCD 50th Anniversary
 - Hat designs and prices were reviewed. Pens were also discussed along with mugs and folders. Robert G. Andrews, Jr. lead a brainstorming session on what should be done for Clinton Thompson. He is 86 years old. Ideas

discussed were to present him with a plaque or have a luncheon in the Gouverneur area.

- Dawn Howard said the Times will run an article on Sunday 1/21 and there will be BOL & NYS resolutions to recognize the SWCD.
- *Thomas Nichols made a motion to purchase 500 pens at \$207 and two dozen hats (without a cord and with dates) at \$7.95 each, Fred Morrill seconded and all were in favor.*
- *Fred Morrill made a motion to purchase Clinton Thompson a nice plaque with appropriate wording, Mary Rutley seconded and all were in favor.*

Robert G. Andrews, Jr., made a motion to go into Executive Session at 10:30PM.

The board came out of Executive Session at 11:05PM

- *Motion was made to increase Dawn Howard's salary to \$43,200 per year by Clark Decker, Fred Morrill seconded it, and all were in favor.*
- *Mary Rutley has Dawn Howard's evaluation sheet and will return it once it's typed.*

Clark Decker made a motion to adjourned the meeting at 11:15PM, David Martin seconded the motion and all were in favor.

The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, March 8, 2007 at 7:30 PM at the St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District office.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn C. Howard, Conservation District Manager