

St. Lawrence County
Soil and Water Conservation District

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

For

June 19, 2008

Board Members Present: Robert G. Andrews, Jr., Edwin Hadlock, David Martin, Frederick Morrill, Clark Decker, and Thomas Nichols arriving at 8:40 PM.

Staff and Guests Present: Dawn Howard, Katie Maloney, Raeanne Dulanski, Aaron Earl, James Pullano, NRCS, Chanda Lindsay, RC&D.

Robert Andrews, Jr. called the meeting to order at 7:36 PM at the Soil and Water Conservation District office.

Fred Morrill made a motion to accept the minutes as written. Edwin Hadlock seconded and all were in favor.

Clark Decker made a motion to accept the May Treasurer Report. Fred Morrill seconded and all were in favor.

RC&D – Chanda Lindsey

- Introductions were made to the Board. Chanda Lindsey is the new RC&D Coordinator. Chanda has an Animal Science background and has been working with grazing the last few years. She was a Central NY RC&D Council member before being hired for this position.
- St. Lawrence County is very active in RC&D. There are three RC&D Committees.
 - Forestry – which is very active.
 - Chainsaw safety workshops are helpful for BOCES. RC&D would like to do more and have them open for the general public.
 - Invasives Species work is being done with Steve VanderMark from CCE.
 - Lumber grading workshops are being worked on.
 - Forestry placemats are a very successful project.
 - Recreation
 - Rails to Trails project.
 - They have been working on it for the last 3-4 years. Hoping to finish the project up right off, one way or another.
 - Looking at ATV trails connecting and forming a network and a multiple use trail in Lewis County.
 - Agriculture
 - Recycling agriculture plastics project
 - Jefferson, St. Lawrence and Lewis Counties
 - Looking at making plastic lumber with the plastics. There is a market for plastic lumber. In the past the problem with agriculture plastic recycling projects was that there was not a product or market for the end product.

- Grass Pelletizing Project
 - Group wants to purchase a grass pelletizer and get a group of farmers together to be grass suppliers.
 - Trying to make a model that can be reproduced.
 - Grazing workshop project is the new idea that was just presented.
- Chanda asked the Board to please let the RC&D know if they can think of any other projects that would be good for them and would benefit the communities.
- Robert Andrews asked how the Agriculture Plastics Meeting went. Both Dawn Howard and Chanda thought that the meeting went well.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) – Jim Pullano

- Jim Pullano distributed packets to the Board that contained copies of the Mutual Agreement, the Cooperative Working Agreement, and the new Operational Agreement.
- Jim Pullano discussed each document with the Board.
 - Mutual Agreement - 1996
 - Statement of purpose was read.
 - Statements that were highlighted:
 - Recognizes cooperation and the partnership.
 - States that SWCD will be compliant with civil rights provisions.
 - Signed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Governor of NY and SWCD Chair, David Fisher.
 - Cooperative Working Agreement – 1998
 - The purpose of the agreement was read.
 - Statements that were referred to:
 - Each party is responsible for hiring and management, supervision, development and evaluation of its own personnel, including creating an environment that supports a diverse workforce.
 - Parties encouraged to offer training opportunities to each other.
 - Parties will coordinate with public and private resource groups, other resource agencies, and interested parties to share information and resources in developing comprehensive natural resource plans.
 - The parties agree to identify, define, and coordinate the collection and use of resource inventory data.
 - The parties will agree on common boundaries for program delivery.
 - The parties will adopt the NRCS Field Office Technical Guide and other science-based technical standards, as appropriate.
 - The parties will work together to provide office space within funding limits, operating guidelines, and authorities. The parties will develop a policy and strategy to share common space, whenever possible.
 - The parties will agree to share equipment for common use within established guidelines and procedures.
 - The parties will work together to maximize available resources and actively seek funding to accomplish natural resource priorities and programs.
 - The parties recognize that non-federal signatories may establish procedures to collect fees, where permissible, for delivery of such

services which are not provided through federal financial or technical assistance

- The parties will each assume responsibility for the actions of their officials or employees acting within the scope of their employment to the extent provided by federal, tribal, and state laws.
 - Parties will maintain compliance with civil rights provisions.
 - This agreement can be modified or terminated at any time by mutual consent of all parties or can be terminated by any party's giving 60 days written notice to the other parties.
 - Agreement was signed by NRCS NY and SLC SWCD chair, David Fisher.
- Operational Agreement – For 2009
- The operational agreement further defines the roles and responsibilities of NRCS and the SWCD.
 - Statements that the Board was asked to look at:
 - NRCS and SWCD acknowledge that only through combined efforts will common natural resource goals be accomplished. Parties pledge cooperation.
 - The parties will meet at least quarterly during the period of this agreement to review progress and to ensure correlation with Exhibit A, if appropriate.
 - NRCS will provide office space and the SWCD will reimburse NRCS the SWCD share of the actual annual rent expense as of the date the agreement is signed. This reimbursement may be in the form of cash or in-kind service.
 - NRCS will accept responsibility for their share of the lease and will provide 150 sf for SWCD staff as well as the corresponding portion of other expenses defined above for a total of \$19,899.00 annually.
 - The SWCD will be responsible for their share of the rent and other expense which currently amounts to \$24,562.20 annually. This reimbursement will be phased in over three years beginning in January 2009. For example, at current lease rates, in January 2009, 1/3 of the rent and other expenses will be reimbursed (\$8,187.40). In January 2010, 2/3 of the rent and other expenses will be reimbursed (\$16,374.80), and then in January 2011 and thereafter the District will be responsible directly to the lessor for its entire rent obligation.
 - Subject to the USDA OCIO (Office of the Chief Information Officer) Information Technology (IT) policies, NRCS will provide high speed internet services from service center locations, using USDA licensed software and USDA approved system platforms.
 - If available, NRCS vehicles assigned to the Canton field office may be used by the SWCD employees covered by this agreement for purposes of official NRCS business. Vehicle usage for SWCD or other non-NRCS business is not provided under this agreement.
 - On December 17, 2004, the President signed the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (Act). Section 3001 (3)(e)(1) of the Act provides for the creation of an “*integrated, secure, database into which appropriate data relevant to the granting, denial or*

revocation of a security clearance or access pertaining to military, civilian, or government contractor personnel shall be entered from all authorized investigative and adjudicative agencies.” Pursuant to this law, all District employees who will access the USDA computer system must comply with the background investigation process set forth in Exhibit 5 hereto. The costs (NTE \$200.00 per investigation) will be covered by NRCS as a part of the Operational Agreement for SWCD employees and directors needing access to the USDA Network.

- Agreement will be reviewed annually and can be amended as necessary, to reflect changes in roles and responsibilities. This agreement may also be amended as a result of new lease agreements.
 - This agreement may be amended at any time as agreed to by the parties. Any amendments must be made in writing. All modifications, extensions, or amendments must be made prior to the expiration date of this agreement.
 - This agreement may be terminated at any time by mutual consent of all parties, or may be terminated by any party giving 60 days written notice to the other parties.
 - Parties will maintain compliance with civil rights provisions.
 - Signatories will include NY NRCS State Conservationist and SWCD Chair.
- Robert Andrews stated that with the budget coming due, we need to get working on this agreement and make our decision.
 - The question was raised if we could do both time and money for the agreement. At this point it does not look like that is an option.
 - Discussion on the Secretary time. Documentation and record keeping are going to be challenging.
 - Robert Andrews asked if St. Lawrence County is getting what they need? Jim Pullano told the Board that he has the team helping him/St. Lawrence County.
 - The Board decided that they would make a determination in July.

New York Associations of Conservation Districts (NYACD) – Tom Nichols

- Tom Nichols reported that they just had a state meeting. They are trying to get a head start on the 2009 Budget. They would like to get included in the Governors Budget early.

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

- Forestry Report – Aaron Earl.
 - Aaron started going out and assessing storm damage.
 - Area 6 and Area 16 in the Town of Pitcairn have no significant damage observed. There were small sections where 3-10 trees were topped or blown over in a patch.
 - Areas 30, 31, 32, 35 in Colton on the River Road were okay, but there were a few trees down across the road in several locations. The damage appears to be in rows, so in most spots there are only one or two trees blocking the road.
 - Areas 19, 26, 27, and 28 in Colton on the Lenny Road are a little more damaged on the south end. Single trees are down across nearly every trail.

- Area 33, Parishville/Colton has the most damage observed so far. A swathe of merchantable white pine was leveled. It is about 5-7 acres worth of damage that is blocking the Stone Valley trail.
 - Area 13, Parishville has minimal damage along the trail.
 - Area 9, Parishville has just been harvested, but many of the residual trees were damaged. The residual trees are small hardwoods.
 - Area 21, Parishville has a lot of clean-up to do. All three roads were blocked.
 - Areas 12 & 14, Parishville have no damage, but there are a few trees that blew down last winter. It has yet to be graded by Seaway Timber, as they are waiting for it to dry up.
 - General discussion on the storm damage followed.
 - Forest Management plans are 76% complete. Eight parcels left, six to be inventoried.
 - Sales will be ready to be put out for bid in the next month on Area 11, Stockholm-Sheldon Rd and Area 10, Hermon-Trout Lake Rd. Now there will also be salvage sales in order to clean up damage due to the storm. Aaron is working on getting a new contract for salvage sales.
 - Crystal Decker has started as a once a week volunteer and things are going well.
 - *Fred Morrill made a motion for the purchase of a larger chainsaw, keeping the one that SWCD currently owns, but not spending over \$350.00. Clark Decker seconded and all were in favor.*
- Technician Report – Katie Maloney, District Technician gave her report.
 - NRCS Conservation Planner Certification- 10/5/2008 deadline.
 - Katie has completed the first of three plans. It has been submitted and approved.
 - The second plan is about 60% completed.
 - AEM to EQIP
 - The last producer has contacted Jim Pullano and is still interested in moving forward with their plan.
 - The plan will have to be completed by the August 31st deadline.
 - Stormwater
 - Katie will be attending an Erosion and Sediment Control workshop with DEC and Oneida County SWCD representative on Tuesday, June 24th at Fort Drum. After the training, hopefully, they will allow Katie to begin doing construction site inspections by herself.
 - AEM Strategic Plan
 - The 5-year plan will need to be updated by December 1.
 - The first workshops are scheduled during July in various locations in New York. Katie is planning on attending either the Albany or Binghamton area workshops in mid July.
 - SWCC has placed an incentive to finish the update by December 1, an additional \$2,000 on top of the AEM Strategy money.
 - Proper Strategy update will involve cooperation and input from SWCD's Staff and Board, NRCS partners and the WQCC. Our AEM program is transitioning and it is important that our strategy accurately reflects this transition.
 - General discussion on Dam regulations took place.

- Tom Nichols would like to see a letter written reflecting the position of our Board on the new regulations. Robert Andrews asked Tom Nichols to create a rough draft letter of the Board's position and to present it to the Board at the next meeting. Tom Nichols agreed to do so.
 - The Board's position is that it is a good idea to have some regulations, but there needs to be some kind of funding available to help small municipalities and private owners with the new regulations that the DEC is asking for.
- Secretary Report – Raeanne Dulanski gave her report.
 - Raeanne Dulanski reported the successful completion of two Farm Safety Days, June 10th and 12th.
 - 412 fifth grade students from around St. Lawrence County attended. From the information gathered before the Safety Days, it was discovered that 17 of the students live and work on farms, 104 visit a farm and 291 have nothing to do with farms.
 - Robert Andrews and the Board thought that this information was interesting and asked Raeanne to share it with Cornell Cooperative Extension.
 - There were about 35 volunteers at each of the Safety Days, including Ed Hadlock.
 - The Auditor has requested information, but the last correspondence indicated that everything looked good and the SWCD should be all set.
 - The snowmobile grant was completed. Verifying the documentation for the grant this year took a lot of time. There were many mistakes made in the paperwork submitted to the SWCD.
 - Work on the budget has just started.
 - Black Lake Invasive Weed Committee bookkeeping
 - Money keeps coming in.
 - The Board had asked to be kept aware of how much time handling this account was taking.
 - The last two deposits have been about 22 checks. Each deposit took 1.5 hours to complete. Each check has to have a hand written receipt, customers have to be entered into the computer system, a computer receipt has to be created, and a deposit slip created.
 - Raeanne wanted to make the Board aware that we are using our own hand written receipts for Black Lake checks. We have used 57 of our own receipts so far. They cost about \$0.14 each. Would the Board like to ask Black Lake to replace a book of receipts which is about \$21.00 for 150?
 - Tom Nichols said he didn't see any problem with the Weed Committee giving SWCD money towards that expense. He will bring that to their attention at the next meeting.
- Manager Report – Dawn Howard
 - Dawn Howard showed the Board the 50th Anniversary plaque from NYACD that finally was delivered.
 - Dawn Howard asked for approval to pay \$125 for the 2008 SWCD TV commercial.

- *Tom Nichols made a motion to pay \$125 for the 2008 SWCD TV commercial. Fred Morrill seconded, and all were in favor.*
- Dawn Howard asked for approval to pay \$532 for 50 boat launch signs. 40 are for Black Lake and will be reimbursed, and the rest are for the WQCC (50 were cheaper than 40).
 - *Fred Morrill made a motion to pay \$532 for the Aquatic Invasive signs. Ed Hadlock seconded, and all were in favor.*
- Dawn Howard reported that the last list from the County about which Boards will have to comply with the new Ethics Law, does not include the SWCD.
 - Tom Nichols said that he thought that that would change. He thinks that the SWCD Board was over looked.
 - Dawn Howard also stated that she heard from Tedra Cobb that relatives outside of St. Lawrence County would not have to be listed. Fred Morrill said that nothing has been added to the Law that states that yet.
 - Disclosure of personal information was discussed.
- The County is looking at a \$1.4 million budget shortfall this year. Discussion followed.
- Dawn has attended trainings.
 - Department Head Communication
 - Working with a Diverse Community

General Discussion

- Robert Andrews handed out a copy of the new DEC regulations regarding Open Burning and asked the Board to look it over and send in any comments that they may have on it.

New Business

- Bion – Robert Andrews reported on the last Integrated Ag Task Force meeting that was held. Skip Shoemaker and Steve Botsford of the DEC were there and did a presentation and fielded questions from the committee. Robert thought that they did a wonderful presentation. They talked about CAFOs and it was very enlightening. Robert would like the SWCD to sponsor a training session for volunteers on committees such as Farmland Protection, EMC, WQCC, Cooperative Extension, etc. Fred Morrill added IDA. Robert asked Jim Pullano to help. Water Quality was a big issue and Skip and Steve were answering all the questions that were asked. They also stated that the DEC has yet to have any specific contact from Bion
 - *Fred Morrill made a motion to set up a training session with DEC, NRCS, and SWCD and to invite all organizations listed above. Clark Decker seconded and all were in favor.*

Old Business

- RC&D Representatives – Dawn Howard reported that there was another name brought forward to be contacted and one name was being processed by the BOL.
- Tom Nichols said that the NYACD Division 3 Representative position is still open and asked if any Board members would be interested.

Next meeting is July 17, 2008 at 7:30 PM at the St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District office, unless the budget is due before that and then members will be called.

Tom Nichols made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40 PM. Dave Martin seconded and all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Raeanne Dulanski
Secretary/Assistant Treasurer