

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
For March 19, 2009, 7:30 PM

Board Members Present: Robert Andrews, Jr. (Chairperson), Ed Hadlock (Vice-Chair), Dave Martin (Treasurer), Clark Decker, and Fred Morrill.

Board Members Not Present: Tom Nichols and Tom Grow.

Staff Present: Katie Maloney (Technician), Aaron Earl (Forester), and Raeanne Dulanski (Secretary).

Staff Excused Absent: Dawn Howard (Manager)

Guests Present: Jim Pullano, NRCS DC and Emily Decker, FSA Farm Loan Officer.

I. Call to Order & Introductions

II. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: February minutes were **approved**.

III. Treasurer's Reports: February Treasurer's report was **approved**.

IV. Reports

A. FSA Farm Loan Program – Emily Decker

1. Decker asked the Board to pass this information along to anyone in the County that may benefit. The Farm Loan Program wants to let farmers know that they are here to help them through this hard time.
2. Loan Programs available:
 - a. Operating Loans
 - i. Eligible items include livestock, machinery and crop expenses
 - ii. Limit has increased from \$200,000 to \$300,000
 - b. Farm Ownership Loans
 - i. Eligible items include new real estate purchases and capital improvements to real estate. This loan can not refinance existing debt.
 - ii. Limit has increased from \$200,000 to \$300,000
 - iii. Experience requirement has changed in that the experience does not have to be within the past 10 years.
 - c. Beginning Farmer Loans
 - i. Eligibility is less than 10 years of farming experience
3. Interest Rates
 - a. 2% for Operating Loans in March. Term up to 7 years.
 - b. 3.5% for Farm Ownership Loans in March. Term is up to 40 years.
4. There is an increase in the number of people interested in loans. There is no funding currently. People that are qualifying and are accepted are placed on a first-come-first-serve waiting list for when the funding comes through. Decker currently has three people that she has worked with that are on the list.

5. Guaranteed Loans

- a. The number of requests from commercial banks that are asking for guaranteed loans is also increasing.
- b. They can guarantee loans up to 90%.
- c. Limit for a guaranteed loan is one million-ninety-four dollars.

6. FarmNet

- a. Decker informed the Board that there is a free and confidential service available for farmers to receive assistance with the many trying situations that farmers can face. FarmNet helps with issues such as Financial Analysis, Business Planning, Retirement, and Personal Wellbeing.
- b. When you call into FarmNet, you call the central office and explain your situation and location, and they will then put you in contact with a consultant that is knowledgeable and extensively trained. Many of the consultants are former FSA and Extension employees.
- c. Pamphlets were given to the Board members.

7. Foreclosure Sale – FSA has a foreclosure sale in Ogdensburg that was announced on their website. Sale will be 4/24/09.

8. The Board thanked Emily Decker for attending the meeting and informing them of the programs that are available through the Farm Loan Program. The information that she shared with the Board will be distributed to their communities.

B. NRCS – Jim Pullano (Appendix A)

1. The Board thanked Jim for his presentation.

C. NYACD – Clark Decker

1. Judy Littrell, NYACD Executive Director, has been doing a wonderful job in Albany lobbying for the EPF. She has been working with Farm Bureau on this issue as well.
2. NYACD is working to make sure that every Division has a representative on the Board, and they are also trying to get an alternate as well. Nationally, states that do not have an active association have lost funding, and we do not want that to happen to NY. Participation is extremely important.

D. AFPB – Robert Andrews

1. Informational farm tour for the Board of Legislators has been set up for August 24, 2009.
 - a. Stops will include Poulin Grain, Bourdeau Brothers, Ray Burns and Greenwood Farm.
 - b. Motion for the Soil and Water Conservation District to support the efforts of the Ag and Farmland Protection Board **approved**.
2. June is Dairy month. Andrews has been asked to speak to the Board of Legislators and invite them to the farm tour.
3. A SARE grant was written and received for \$9,600 for ag plastic recycling.

V. SWCD Reports

A. Manager's Report – Howard not present (Appendix B)

B. Forester's Report – Earl

1. Work on the master County forestland plan continues.
2. Earl has been able to go out in the field with the nicer weather. Has cleared trees from the trails and worked on some boundary lines.
3. Trail Committee
 - a. County-wide trail system route is being worked on.
 - b. Committee member has been appointed to research how to join the inter-county trail system that connects local county trails with trails from neighboring counties.
4. Part B Forestry Project – Hopes to get out and meet with private forest owner participants and do preliminary work soon.

C. Secretary/Assistant Treasurer's Report – Dulanski

1. Tree Program order form has been placed in the Free Trader. Today was the first day in print and calls about ad have been received.
2. 20 Ag Value Assessments have come in the last two days.
3. WRP 50/50 work has been moved up the priority list.
4. Carp orders have started coming in.
5. Work on Farm Safety has also started. For Agway Foundation Grant, we may be partnering with Cornell Cooperative Extension this year.

D. Technician's Report – Maloney (Appendix C)

1. The Board suggested that Maloney advertise in the Gouvernuer Tribune for AEM participants.
2. Maloney's awards were passed around for the Board to view. Congratulations were given from the Board.
3. C. Decker thanked Maloney for the NMP that she developed for his farm through AEM. He shared it with his professional crop advisor who was very impressed with the plan that she created.

VI. Old and New Business

A. Investment Policy – Still has not been received from the County Attorney.

B. Insurance Policies – No further quotes have been received. Board would like to wait until a decision on our office location has been made before moving forward with changes to the policy.

C. Rent – General discussion about the pros and cons of the Martin House at Cooperative Extension Learning Farm as possible office location. Board would like to hold a meeting at this location before 4/16/09.

D. Manure Spill – Board was updated about a local manure spill that had taken place on the Cruickshank Farm.

VII. Correspondence: None.

VIII. Announcements: None.

IX. Time and Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday or Thursday the Week of April 6th at Cooperative Extension's Martin House.

X. Meeting Adjourned: 9:48 PM

Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

Date

Raeanne Dulanski, Secretary/ Assistant Treasurer

Date

Attachments: Appendices A-C