

Draft

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
For July 9, 2009, 7:30 PM

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

Staff Present: Dawn Howard (Manager), Katie Maloney (Technician), and Raeanne Dulanski (Secretary).

Guests Present: Jim Pullano, NRCS DC.

I. Call to Order

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

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

A. Funding – It was reported that the District received the \$30,000 Part A reimbursement, \$15,463.58 Part C money, and \$8,288.50 Ag Complaint reimbursement from New York State earlier this week.

IV. Reports

A. NYACD – Decker

1. Last NYACD meeting was July 10. There is \$475 million for grants with the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (The St. Lawrence is part of the watershed).
2. St. Lawrence County was one of 23 counties that received the full Part C reimbursement. The major problem that other counties have is making the required number of meetings.
3. Next Division 3 meeting will be another teleconference on July 23rd.
4. NYACD resolutions are due August 1.
5. Nichols reported that his six month probation with the County is ending and hopes to start increasing meeting attendance and involvement. He is also very excited about all the money coming through grants for Water Quality.

B. NRCS – Jim Pullano (Appendix A)

1. Pullano presented his report to the Board.
2. Andrews asked for clarification on the new Biologist's area. Pullano stated that Kathleen Donna will be housed in the Canton field office and working with two watershed teams, the St. Lawrence – Lake Champlain and the Hudson – Mohawk.

C. AFPB – Andrews

1. Anita Morrill from Cooperative Extension is taking reservations for the Ag Tour until July 20.

2. Ag District public comment took place last night. Andrews is happy with the revisions to the list that took place.
3. AFPB budget review is on August 22. AFPB hopes to continue having funding for Betsy Hodge of Cooperative Extension to extend her Ag In The Classroom program. They are also hoping to receive funding to hold hearings about agriculture in order to find out what the public's concerns and needs are, thus setting goals to work towards. The AFPB feels that they have successfully worked on the issues that were brought up the last time that these hearings took place.

V. SWCD Reports

A. Forestry – Howard, Earl not present

1. Earl is in Syracuse today taking the Society of American Forester's Certified Forester Exam. Pullano reported that while Howard was out of the office this afternoon, Earl called and reported that he passed the exam.
2. Earl was quoted regarding Emerald Ash Borer for an article in the Watertown Daily Times recently.
3. The second of five Forest Management plans has been started. These must be completed by the end of the year.

B. Technician's Report – Maloney (Appendix B)

1. Discussion on Wetland Delineation training. Howard reported that two different classes were examined and the Albany class that was recommended by the DEC seems to be the better of the two. Blanche Town from the DEC has stated that there is a need for delineators in the county. Town is only allowed to perform delineations for State wetlands. Howard stated that she has received many requests for wetland delineations recently. Wetland delineations would be a service that the District could charge landowners for. Howard also stated that although the cost may seem high, she believes that we can easily make up the expense with the workload that is present in the county.
2. Authorization to send Maloney to Plant Identification and Wetland Delineation courses in Albany at the end of July **approved.**

C. Secretary/Assistant Treasurer – Dulanski

1. Dulanski reported that she has been working on the budgets.
2. The County audit seems to be complete. The only concern that the Auditor brought up was the authorization to open and close bank accounts as they relate to the grants. A motion should be made when a new account is opened or closed at the end of a grant.

D. Manager's Report – Howard

1. RIBS reimbursement was authorized for this year's sampling.
2. Received notice that Year 5 AEM was authorized. No word on AEM Year 6.
3. Howard discussed the Water Quality grants that have been coming through in the last few days. Maloney and Howard attended a brainstorming and information session in Watertown earlier this afternoon about the Great Lake Restoration Initiative money that will be coming through.
4. Howard reported that the District was awarded the Great Lakes Commission grant from February to purchase a no-till grain drill. Authorization for Howard to accept

the grant, sign on the Board's behalf and open an account for the funds for this grant **approved.**

5. DEC's LIP (Landowner Incentive Program) applications were available here. We are currently out of the applications; however, more are on the way.

6. Have been in discussion with Oswego County Soil and Water. They are on a committee in their county that is having discussions with BION. BION is now interested in setting up there.

7. Howard shared an email from Astor Boozer expressing his gratitude for the invitation to the last meeting and interest in attending a future meeting.

8. Morrill reported that the Board of Legislators passed the resolution, co-sponsored by Grow and Morrill, about decreasing the amount of timber sales required and setting up the forest improvement fund.

9. Round 15 NPS grant money still has not been released, but Howard has heard that it may be released by fall. This grant was for \$600,000.

VI. Old and New Business

A. Rent

1. Andrews stated that Astor Boozer attended the last meeting and Andrews thought that it was a very good meeting. He stated that we need to make a decision tonight regarding a move and the rest of the board agreed.

2. Pullano relayed the following statements:

a. The NRCS has accepted the SWCD offer to occupy 354 square feet of space that is 118 square feet per staff person (3).

b. The NRCS is offering 150 square feet of space for clerical staff.

c. The shared space is not part of the calculation. The SWCD will only be responsible for the space that they occupy.

d. The NRCS is requesting to work with the SWCD to revise the Operational Agreement. This agreement would go into effect on October 1, 2009. The NRCS is also requesting that the district provide in-kind technical assistance to the NRCS workload in lieu of a cash payment to offset rent.

e. Pullano requested the Board refer any questions to Marilyn Stephenson.

3. Andrews reminded the Board that the District cannot sign a long term agreement.

4. Discussion on computers followed. It was the consensus of the Board that computer service costs are not a factor at this time. In the future, if we have to start paying \$3,000 per computer per year, the District will look at installing its own server.

5. The Board expressed concern regarding the clerical time only covering 150 square feet. They would like to see more value assessed to this time.

6. The Board also expressed a desire for something formally written stating that the NRCS has accepted 354 square feet for the District to be responsible for and the amount covered by entering into an operational agreement. Pullano offered the Board a copy of the email from Marilyn Stephenson that stated the NRCS's position. The Board stated that an email to Jim is not formal enough.

7. If amount of the rent was figured using the current square foot rate of \$23.50, the District's portion would be \$8,319.00. The current Operational Agreement's rate per hour is \$25.00/hour. It would take the District 332.76 hours to earn the rent.

8. Morrill and Nichols agree in principle to what was presented, but will feel more comfortable once it is received in writing.
9. Howard is to email Stephenson and request clarification on the clerk's time and request a formally written offer.
10. Decker requested the staff's opinion on office space.
 - a. Maloney – Agreed with the Board that staying collocated is probably the best option. She is looking at it as an opportunity to learn from the NRCS staff as work is being completed. She feels that the watershed staff has a considerable amount of knowledge, and working with them on whatever is put into the Operational Agreement will help her expand her own knowledge for the District.
 - b. Dulanski – Now that the rent amount has decreased to a more reasonable figure and a comparable amount to moving to the Martin House, she feels that the public would be better served by staying collocated.
 - c. Howard – Happy to try and stay collocated with the NRCS, but also glad that if it is discovered that staying collocated is not going to benefit the District, the option of moving is still available.
11. Morrill made a motion to tentatively stay collocated with NRCS, agreeing in principal with what Pullano presented for Stephenson. Nichols seconded.
 - a. Morrill – in favor
 - b. Decker – in favor
 - c. Nichols – in favor
 - d. Grow – in favor
 - e. Martin – in favor
 - f. Hadlock – in favor. Noted that this is tentatively in favor because there are still questions that need to be answered before the confidence is there.
 - g. Andrews – in favor
 - h. **Approved.**

B. Budget

1. The Board was handed a copy of the budget that was prepared for staying collocated. Dulanski stated that this budget is not completely prepared because a budget to move had been the priority, and this was completed at the last minute. She would like to go through the amounts again and make sure that they are truly reflecting what is expected to stay collocated.
2. Discussion on the budget followed. The Board reviewed the budget and Nichols requested that money be kept aside for computer service with NRCS. \$12,000 was suggested as an appropriate amount.
3. Motion to accept the draft budget and have budget with corrections made available to the Board **approved.**

VII. Executive Session:

1. Entered into at 9:36 PM. Exited 9:53 PM. Salaries were discussed.
2. The Board is very pleased with the work that the staff continues to do and would like to include the following salaries in the 2010 budget. Manager: \$50,500, Technician: \$38,500, Forester: \$35,500 and Secretary: \$33,500.

VIII. Correspondence: Mail Folder available for Board review.

IX. Announcements: None.

X. Time and Date of Next Meeting: August 13, 2009.

XI. Meeting Adjourned: 10:00 P.M.

Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

Date

Raeanne Dulanski, Secretary/ Assistant Treasurer

Date

Attachments: Appendix A – B

These minutes have not been approved by the Board of Directors.