



## **Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Directors Meeting Minutes and Order of Business**

14 April 2023

In attendance:

Directors – Meg Kennedy (Chair), Darrin Hickling, Helene Kraham, Ed Lentz, Jennifer Mickle  
District Staff – Christos Galanopoulos, via cell phone

Absent: Doug Roberts

Meeting was called to order by Meg at 1:00PM.

Motion made by Helene, seconded by Darrin, to approve the Meeting Minutes of 3/27/2023.  
Vote to approve 5-0.

Approval of previous meeting minutes led to discussion of best practices concerning the archiving of meeting minutes. The minutes are currently archived and viewable on the SWCD website. This then turned into consideration of best practice for digitally storing the approved minutes on the SWCD internal server, leading to another discussion on the current state of SWCD digital security. The conclusions of the Board are as follows:

- Meeting minutes will be presented in hard-copy for display and inspection at the District Office with digital display on the District website.
- Meeting minutes will be digitally-preserved on the District server.
- The District will be best served by a cloud-based server rather than the current physical external harddrive system. Information about Google OneDrive will be brought for discussion at the next meeting.

Abstract of claims was circulated for audit and approval. After pulling the NYSEG (Robin to trace payment history leading to current balance) and the Insero & Co (Meg to contact company and discuss the value of the services actually rendered) bills, Abstract 07-2023 was presented in the amount of \$159,334.93. Motion to approve made at the end of the meeting by Jennifer and seconded by Darrin. Vote to approve 5-0.

Ed submitted the most current bank balances found on-line at NBT Bank as the Treasurer's Report, with a full accounting to follow after Robin finishes catching up QuickBooks entries and bank reconciliations.

With payment to NYS Ag & Markets approved, the Buffer account will be liquidated and \$10,585.17 moved to the general checking account. The Buffer account will be closed at NBT Bank.

Christos reported and held discussion on the following items:

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Hughes project – Final signature should follow Board review with Christos next week and it can then be sent to Albany to close out the project.

Discussion to move a resolution to pursue Round 29 funding for Jazzmare grant application is tabled until Christos can be physically present with the Board.

The District/Landowner Agreement (Climate Resiliency) is still under review by the County Attorney.

The District needs to replace at least one vehicle. Christos is looking into purchasing one on the County bid.

Envirothon is on Wednesday, 1 May, and preparation is nearly complete with the exception of Google Classroom. The park is reserved; donations are arranged; and the tee-shirts have been delivered.

The annual tree sale is in progress. Christos led the discussion to offer overtime for Techs to be available on the Saturday pick-up day as well as for Karl when he goes to pick up the trees. Meg stated the pick-up schedule for this year is already published, the need to staff the day, at overtime rates, should be approved. However, Christos will try to plan future events to avoid the need for overtime staffing. Christos also asked for overtime pay to be approved for Chris Andreassen to cover the Earthday event at Milford on 15 April. Motion to approve overtime pay for tree pick-up, staff attending the Saturday tree sale distribution, and Milford Earthday event made by Helene and seconded by Darrin. Vote to approve 5-0.

Discussion on Personnel Policy concerning work-from-home schedules began with Christos and continued after he left the meeting. It was decided that there is no reason to deny Karl a work-from-home schedule since any history behind its being revoked is gone with the departure of the previous District Manager. It will be left to Christos and Karl to work out an agreeable schedule. Going forward, the Board assigned the task of developing a standardized remote work option as part of the District Personnel Policy.

The Board talked about options for advertising the RFP for Cleaning. The Daily Star advertisement would cost more than \$1000, so other more local advertising will be explored. Also, the Board agreed it is appropriate to present specifications to particular vendors and personally ask for proposals.

The Board had 3 questions to resolve before a decision to award Mini-Grants.

1. Is the Richfield Springs Community Center a not-for-profit entity? Yes
2. Should Cooperstown Composting LLC be awarded a grant since it is a for-profit entity? Yes. It applied for the monies to perform a service for Otsego2000 (a not-for-profit) at the Cooperstown Farmers' Market. Since the guidelines were unclear, it is decided to make the award this year but amend the grant qualifications to specify only not-for-profits may apply.
3. Is a landowner eligible for a project that benefits private property? No

A motion made by Ed and seconded by Jennifer approved the award of 9 Mini-Grants, a list appended to these minutes. Vote to approve 5-0.

Motion to approve a letter in support of the Upper Susquehanna Coalition grant submission to NFWF Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense Grants Program for

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their project entitled, "Expanding Butternut Valley Alliance's Capacity for Habitat Restoration and Watershed Awareness" made by Jennifer and seconded by Darrin. Vote to approve 4-0 with Ed abstaining.

The search to fill the Board vacancy continues. Meg has a prospect in mind and will reach out. She will also reach out to Scott Fickbohm for Board training suggestions.

Since the last meeting, Holohan CPA has given notice they will no longer provide payroll services to the District. A lengthy discussion about in-house vs outsourced payroll processing followed. With several options presented, the Board agreed to outsource payroll to PayChex as a means to insure reliable payroll processing and complete Federal/State withholding, reporting, and depositing of employment taxes. Motion to approve made by Ed and seconded by Darrin. Vote to approve 5-0.

There being no further business for this Board to undertake, motion to adjourn made by Helene and seconded by Jennifer. Vote to adjourn 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Moshier  
District Secretary



OCSWCD Abstract 7-2023

Inv #	Inv \$	Vendor	Brief Descr	Acct Code
66	\$131.88	Otsego County Highway Dept	March fuel	8730.4630
67	\$87.00	OCX - Otsego Computer eXperts	Onsite visit - R Moshier	8730.4430
68	\$217.66	LEAF	Copier	8730.4430
69	\$1,080.00	Epic Landscapes, Inc.	Snow removal Main Office	8730.9100
70	\$810.00	Epic Landscapes, Inc.	Snow removal Cabin	8730.9100
71	\$660.00	Mike Ross	Cleaning - March	8730.4041
72		Insero & Co.	(Prior year exp) Progress billings	8730.4000
73	\$118.87	Green Circle Consulting	March consulting	8730.4040
74	\$1,455.00	Custom Shirts and Apparel	t-shirt printing	8730.4440
75	\$376.92	Verizon	cell phones	8730.4420
76	\$209.50	United Concordia	dental coverage	8730.8000
77		NYSEG	967 Co Hwy	8730.4410
78	\$702.88	Ed & Ed Business Technology	plotter ink	8730.4040
79	\$17.00	Russ Smith	trash removal	8730.4040
80	\$481.33	Country Club Chevrolet	repair and inspect	8730.4040
81	\$60.06	NBT Bank	deposit tickets	8730.4430
82	\$147,193.33	NYS A&M	liquidate account	Grant Acct 250
83	\$5,733.50	Meadowview Tree Farm and Nursery, LLC	tree order	8730.4050
<b>Total</b>	\$159,334.93			
18 claims		Approved for payment on _____ 2023.		





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**Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District**

967 CO HWY 33 – RIVER ROAD – COOPERSTOWN, NEW YORK 13326-9222 – PHONE (607) 547-8337 ext. 4

April 7, 23

Jake Reilly  
Program Director  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund  
113 15<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Suite 1100  
Washington, DC 20005-2710

Dear Mr. Reilly:

RE: Upper Susquehanna Coalition Project: *“Expanding Butternut Valley Alliance’s Capacity for Habitat Restoration and Watershed Awareness”*

The Otsego County Soil and Water Conservation District supports the Upper Susquehanna Coalition’s (USC) grant submission to the NFWF Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense Grants Program for their project entitled, *“Expanding Butternut Valley Alliance’s Capacity for Habitat Restoration and Watershed Awareness.”*

The Butternut Valley Alliance (BVA) has partnered with the District on numerous projects over the years including, among others, the physical assessment of the Butternut Creek channel and its tributaries (the “I-4 Project”), riparian plantings, and educational programs. They were also instrumental in developing the Butternut Creek Watershed Management Plan.

The project for which USC is presently seeking funding will increase the capacity of the BVA, enabling it to become an even better partner to USC and to the District as we strive to achieve our common goals with respect to improvement and conservation of our natural resources.

Very truly yours,

