



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

8 May 2023

In attendance:

Directors – Meg Kennedy (Chair), Helene Kraham, Ed Lentz (left at 12:40PM), Jennifer Mickle, Doug Roberts

District Staff – Christos Galanopoulos, Dan Zimmerman

NYS A&M – Scott Fickbohm

Absent: Darin Hickling

Meeting was called to order by Meg at 10:00AM.

Motion by Ed, seconded by Jennifer, to approve the Meeting Minutes of 4/24/2023. Vote to approve 5-0.

Motion by Ed and seconded by Helene to approve Abstract 09-2023 for \$12,133.31 (including the addition of Epic Landscapes agreement of \$2698 and reducing another Epic Landscapes voucher by \$40 charged for sales tax). Vote to approve 5-0.

Treasurer's Report

Financial Report, including Jan – Mar 2023 bank reconciliations, was distributed and reviewed. Motion to approve made by Ed and seconded by Helene. Vote to approve 5-0.

A sub-committee will be formed to audit random financial records of the District. This sub-committee is initially comprised of Meg, Ed, and Jennifer. The first audit will follow this meeting at the District Offices.

The following project accounts may now be liquidated and closed: Tafel, McGrath, Buffer 3, and Buffer 2

District Manager Report

- Performance Report for April 2023 attached
- Hughes update – After review of close-out checklist, the Board is satisfied the requirements of the project have been properly accounted for and documented.
 - Motion by Ed and seconded by Jennifer to move \$26,415.80 from the general savings account to the Hughes account (after report is reviewed by Bethany Bzduch at NYS A&M) to make up the difference between the Hughes account balance (\$1,201.57) and the amount that will be returned to the State (\$27,617.37). Vote to approve transfer of funds 5-0.
 - Motion by Helene and seconded by Jennifer to submit close-out checklist to Bethany for approval before final submission to State.

Minutes and Order of Business

8 May 2023

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- Beecher money - \$3050 is owed to Mr. Beecher according to the document trail. However, he has been already overpaid. The Board decided to ask guidance from Ag & Markets on how to proceed.
- Round 29 – Jas-Mar Farms – Motion by Ed and seconded by Jennifer for Christos to develop an application for Board approval at the next meeting. Vote to approve 5-0.
- Karl Giroux gave 2-week's notice of his intent to resign on 10 May. A revised Technician job description will be ready for posting with a pay range of \$39,520-\$52,000.
- Otsego 9E planning – Christos and Chris A attended a session on 3 May. Christos will find out how the District can best serve the commission.
- The hydroseeder is ready for the season.

Report from Dan Zimmerman

The 2023 Envirothon was successful. There were 7 teams from 4 different school districts. Cooperstown was the overall winner of the day and will prepare for the State competition at Hobart & William Smith Colleges in Geneva later this month.

Dan is working with Otsego2000 to develop and maintain recreational trail systems on Otsego County properties.

Report from Scott Fickbohm attached

Old Business

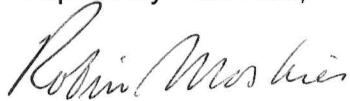
Requests for Quotes were solicited for both janitorial (six letters sent, one response received) and groundskeeping (four emails sent, two responses received) services.

- Groundskeeping: Epic Landscapes, Inc. \$2840 (5% discount if paid in full at signing) and Boss Landscape LLC \$5875. Motion by Helene and seconded by Jennifer to hire Epic as the lowest responsible offer and pay \$2698 in full at signing. Also approved at the same time to add as a claim to Abstract 09-2023. Vote to approve 5-0.
- Janitorial: After discussion leading to conditioned acceptance, motion to re-hire Michael D. Ross made by Ed and seconded by Doug for \$75 per visit, twice per week, with additional services to be paid hourly. Mr. Ross will
 - meet with Christos for a full review of all that is expected from the janitorial service and
 - be hired on a probationary basis for 3 months, after which, if the work is acceptable, he will continue for the remainder of the agreement term.

Motion by Jennifer and seconded by Helene to approve Cincinnati Insurance policy renewal (7/07/2023-7/07/2024) and premium (\$10,232). Vote to approve 4-0.

Motion to adjourn by Jennifer and seconded by Helene at 1:10PM. Vote to adjourn 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,



Robin Moshier, District Secretary



Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District

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

Monday, 8 May 2023

10:00AM

Meadows Complex, Classroom A

Agenda

I. Call to order

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes - 24 April

III. Treasurer's report

- A. Approval of claims, Abstract 09-2023
- B. Approval of financial report – 1st quarter 2023

IV. District reports

- A. District Secretary/Assistant Treasurer
- B. District Manager
 - 1. Existing Projects
 - a) Hughes update
 - b) Beecher money
 - c) Climate resiliency
 - 2. Round 29 – Jasmar Farms
 - a) Consultations with Jeanine, Scott and (potentially) Christopher
 - 3. Envirothon final report
 - 4. Karl's two-week notice
 - 5. ~~Tree Sale final report~~ (not yet)
 - 6. AEM
 - 7. RFP – janitorial services, groundskeeping (updates)
 - 8. Otsego 9E planning
 - a) Hydroseeder

V. NRCS

VI. Other reports

- A. Old business
 - 1. Approve Cincinnati Insurance policy renewal (7/07/2023-7/07/2024) and premium (\$10,232)
 - 2. Review performance measures
 - a) Director's training worksheets
 - b) Effective Board meetings, Director responsibilities
 - c) Grants management

Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District

Agenda

24 April 2023

3. District policies review (2nd monthly meeting)
 - a) ~~Personnel Policy~~ revision complete and ready to adopt
 - b) Closeout Policy
 - c) Procurement Policy
 - d) Payments & Disbursements Policy
 - e) Financial Management of Grant Funded Projects Policy
 - f) Investment Policy
 - g) Public Employee Health Management Plan Policy
 - h) Pandemic Flu Policy
 - i) ~~Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy~~ revision unnecessary, follows NYS

B. New business

1. Network storage and backup

VII. Next Meeting

22 May 2023

1:00PM

Meadows Complex, Classroom A

VIII. Meeting adjourned

OCSWCD Abstract 09-2023

Voucher	Inv \$	Vendor	Brief Descr	Acct Code
92	\$794.63	Hummels	office supplies	8730.4430
	\$63.99	Hummels	tree sale supplies	8730.4050
93	\$5,880.00	Seedway	tree sale supplies	8730.4050
94	\$560.00	Mike Ross	Cleaning - April	8730.4041
95	\$440.00	Green Circle	consulting	8730.4040
96	\$17.29	Bruce Hall Home Center	blast horn	8730.4440
97	\$272.24	Gillee's Auto Truck & Marine	vehicle repair parts	8730.4610
98	\$500.00	Epic Landscape	Feb plowing	8730.9100
99	\$217.66	LEAF	service agreement	8730.4430
100	\$209.50	United Concordia	dental	8730.8000
101	\$480.00	Schenectady Co SWCD	compost, tree program	8730.4050
102	\$2,698.00	Epic Landscape	lawn mowing	8730.9100
Total	\$12,133.31			
11 claims	Approved for payment on _____ 2023.			

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee
May 2023

NYS SWCC News

SFY 2023-2024 Environmental Protection Fund: The Enacted SFY 2023-2024 Budget is now available at www.budget.ny.gov. In total, this year's approved EPF budget is yet another very strong showing of support for conservation programs. Overall appropriations for the FY 2023-2024 EPF were approved at level funding of \$400 million. Proposals of interest to SWCC/SWCDs in this budget include the following:

- \$19.5 million for Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Projects, including \$2 million for Cornell IPM, \$500,000 for the CCE of Suffolk County and \$250,000 for Cornell's Pesticide Management Program
- \$16 million for Soil and Water Conservation Districts (**\$1.5 million increase over last year's levels**)
- \$15.25 million for the Climate Resilient Farms Program, including \$500,000 to support Carbon Sequestration Projects and \$500,000 for the Cornell Soil Health Program
- \$22 million for Water Quality Improvement Program
- \$22.5 million for Oceans and Great Lakes (EBM Program funding)
- \$14.275 million for Waterfront Revitalization Program
- \$21 million for Farmland Protection

Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 7: \$15 million is available to support projects. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>. All questions related to the RFP and the required attachments shall be addressed to Jennifer Clifford jennifer.clifford@agriculture.ny.gov by **June 5th, 2023**. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **4:30 PM August 7, 2023**.

Agricultural Non-Point Source Program Round 29: \$13.5 million is available to support agricultural water quality conservation projects across the State. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>. All questions related to the RFP and the required attachments shall be addressed to Bethany Bzduch bethany.bzduch@agriculture.ny.gov by **May 22nd, 2023**. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **4:30 PM June 26, 2023**.

May SWCC Meeting: The next SWCC meeting is scheduled to convene at **10:00 AM on May 16th**. Further details and an agenda for this meeting will be sent out shortly. Reminder – participation at a SWCC meeting is eligible toward PM1, Part C of State Aid to Districts.

Spring Managers Meetings – Save the Date: The following dates have been set for regional manager's meetings this June! Meetings will be from 10am-2pm. Please participate in whichever date and location is most convenient but please RSVP to the AEA for that meeting. As always Directors are invited to attend as this meeting can count towards Performance Measures.

- **June 12th** - Region 3, Scott Fickbohm (scott.fickbohm@agriculture.ny.gov), Eastern NY – Montgomery County Emergency Services, 200 Clark Dr, Fultonville, NY
- **June 14th** – Region 2, PJ Emerick (patrickj.emerick@agriculture.ny.gov), Central NY – Cortland SWCD office, 100 Grange Pl., #205, Cortland, NY
- **June 15th** – Region 5, Ben Luskin (ben.luskin@agriculture.ny.gov), Southeast NY – Dutchess SWCD office, 2715 Route 44, Suite 3, Millbrook, NY
- **June 16th** – Region 1, Victor DiGiacomo (victor.digiacomio@agriculture.ny.gov), Western NY – Genesee County Office Building #2, 3837 West Main Street Road, Batavia, NY 14020
- **June 21st** - Region 4, Ryan Cunningham (ryan.cunningham@agriculture.ny.gov), Northern NY – Adirondack Park Agency office, 1133 NYS Route 86, Ray Brook, NY

AEM Leopold Conservation Award 2023: NYSAGM is partnering once again with the Sand County Foundation to present the AEM Leopold Conservation Award to recognize landowners who inspire others with their dedication to ethical land,

water, and wildlife habitat management on agricultural land. The deadline for applications is **May 27th, 2023**. More information for Districts can be found on the SWCC SharePoint site (<https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC/SitePages/Home.aspx>, then Resources for Districts > Agricultural Environmental Management > AEM Leopold Conservation Award > 2023) and for the public, here (www.sandcountyfoundation.org/uploads/NY-CFN-23.pdf).

Other Events

2023 Practical Pasture Management Training: This opportunity is advertised as a unique grazing training that will offer hands-on learning and strategies to help peers help farmers implement resilient grazing systems. Trainers will be addressing a multitude of pasture management topics in a light-hearted and hands-on manner. Hosted by the Bishopp Family Farm, Oneida and Madison SWCDs, convening on **May 18th, 10am to 3pm**, at 2809 Rt. 12-B, Deansboro, NY. To register for this training, email Troy Bishopp at troy-bishopp@verizon.net or contact Madison County SWCD at (315) 824-9849.

2023 Conservation Leadership Conference - Save the Date: NYSCDEA has announced that The 2023 Conservation Leadership Conference will commence from **July 18th – 21st**, at The Ranger School of the College of Environmental Science and Forestry located in Wanakena, New York. The program is open to all board members and staff of the sponsoring 4-way partnership and is geared towards: new managers or leaders, those with anticipated leadership responsibilities and those simply interested in personal development. Please save the date, more information will be available shortly.

2023 NACD Northeast Regional Conference - Save the Date: This year the conference will be held in Portland, ME at the Portland Sheraton at Sable Oaks on **September 17-20, 2023**. Further details will be available shortly.

The Riparian Opportunity Assessment Tool webinar took place last month and the recording is available at: [Webinar: Using the Riparian Opportunity Assessment Tool - YouTube](#) The link to the NY Natural Heritage Program Riparian Opportunity Assessment tool is <https://www.nynhp.org/projects/statewide-riparian-assessment/> For questions and comments about using the tools in project and resiliency planning, or to participate in the needs assessment for updating the tool, please reach out to Emily Fell at Emily.fell@dec.ny.gov or Kristen Hychka at kch235@cornell.edu

Other Funding

Federal Funding Available for Urban and Community Forestry: The USDA Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry Program is a technical, financial, and educational assistance program assists State Forestry agencies and partner organizations in addressing and applying nature-based solutions to chronic and emergent economic, social, and environmental challenges in communities. **Approximately \$1 Billion** is expected to be awarded under this program nationally. All proposals must be received by **June 1, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. EDT**. For more information and to apply, visit: <https://iraucfgrants.urbanandcommunityforests.org/>



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Christos Galanopoulos
Conservation District Manager
05/05/2023

Performance Report for April 2023

I hope that this review finds the board members well and in good health and standing. As the Conservation District Manager, I am submitting my monthly report to the board. The following is a summation of said activities done during that timeframe.

A respectable amount of this month was spent in preparation for two of the most important events, the Envirothon and the annual tree sale. A respectable amount of that work was delegated and executed by the two technicians, Daniel Zimmerman and Karl Giroux. As the manager I aided in the material acquisition for the various schools and the procurement of t-shirts and the subsequent design for them during this year. In tandem, I was responsible for the coordination of the various items the technicians gathered for the events and a weekly meeting to touch base with them. Beyond these items, I also contributed in the cleaning and reorganization of the garage and even the oil change of one of the vehicles. Both of these events were executed without any major complications on our side, sans the grading of the Envirothon. For that situation, our department delivered to the judges the scoring rules as required by our side. As for any spare trees from the tree sale, they were given to our partner organizations as a gesture of goodwill.

April was also the month that the Ag non-point grant season opened. For said grants two applications were filled out, with their submission pending. The most immediate is the Mumford project (alternatively called JazMar) and it concerns a manure storage pit to abate pollution and runoff into the Susquehanna River. The NRCS has signed a contract for EQIP grants, the engineering work has already been done and accounted for and the CNMP has been done by our resident planner, Christopher Andreassen. Both the application and SW forms have been filled out and are pending board approval. Talking to the various stakeholders involved, the SWCD's role will be more of a financial one, with the primary duty being the cutting of the checks and the bidding of the contractual work. With most of the planning of the project already done, it is my belief that moving forward with the grant application would be a good gesture to both our community and partners as to our standing. As for the second application (Satchel) said application can wait for 2024 the earliest.

Progress has been performed with the closeouts too. After a brief talk, I was able to obtain a receipt from the contractor showing that said work for Hughes was paid by the landowner. This is a positive development, since farmer's proof of payment is required for us to close said project out. As for payment regarding the engineering work, talking to said engineering company states that the SWCD paid for said services, though our checks have Hughes signature, making me conclude that he endorsed our checks to them instead of cashing them in and cutting his own for the company. It is my belief that this should be the narrative for us to follow when sending the packet to Albany for closure. I also got a response from Albany that our banking statements were indeed correct and that the 65% RFP was \$72,733.21. This is great news since now we don't have to return as much back to the State.



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As for the Beecher situation, we owe the landowner \$3050 after looking at the checks and confiding to Alan Zimmerman.

In other good news, I got a response back from Denise regarding the SWCD-Landowner contract from the CRF. Said contract is in good standing and ready for us to use for said project. I will have a meeting with the landowners this month to get the paper signed and the 65% RFP in our account.

Progress has been accounted for the Water Quality Coordinating Committee, especially regarding the creation of a 9 Element Plan for Otsego Lake. For this month, I was able to get members of the Village of Cooperstown, the SUNY Oneonta Biological Field Station, the DEC and us to meet to start the conservation on this matter. I have reached out to the department of transportation (both local and state), to figure out ways to reduce said erosion within the lake so as to contribute to said plan. However, for other reasons (explained below), beyond some outreach and Part C grant funding, I am not sure if the department can offer more to the planning procedure. As a representative of the Otsego SWCD, I can reach out to other departments and entities and contribute GIS work to help in said plan's creation though I am not sure if the department can take up the lion's share of the work. Also, there was a failure regarding the department's attendance during earth day with the OCCA. I (the manager) could not attend for religious/cultural reasons and two of the technicians outright refused to do so. The third was willing to attend under overtime, though until said approval came along, his schedule changed. Moving forward, I will pre-plan said items ahead to reduce their occurrences, though I would like to gain approval from the board to assign said duties with overtime (said amount will of course be conditional to the Board's approval) if the situation arises.

Elsewhere, the two intern candidates for the USC riparian buffer grant program have been selected. I believe that this is a positive direction for the department and a crucial step in reestablishing a good relationship with the USC. I have noted Lydia that I am still new to their functions and that I would need some more input on their side, considering the events that have unfolded last week. On their side, they seemed more than willing to cooperate after understanding our situation.

It is with great lament that I must inform everyone that Karl Giroux has submitted his two – week notice and that, after May 10 2023, he will no longer be employed by the department. Karl was instrumental during the transition period of the SWCD, and personally guided me in my first months as Manager. As the Otsego SWCD Manager, I wish him the best of luck in his future endeavors. Beyond his resignation, the department must contend with taking up his workload until a new technician is hired and trained to meet the requirements. This will complicate everyone, especially Christopher's, scheduling and duties. On a more positive side, the hiring and training of the new clerk, Robin Moshier, has also alleviated a lot of the pressure that the department has experienced regarding the financial side of operations. As of now, a job description for the technician is being drafted pending on the Board's approval for the description and salary. Ultimately, while impactful and unfortunate, it is my belief that I and the technicians can carry the burden of Karl's absence, provided that the position gets filled in a timely manner.



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These are the major updates that I have to report to the Board regarding the functions of the OCSWCD in April 2023. If there are any questions and concerns regarding the details or absences in this report I am more than willing to discuss them with the board so as to satisfy my duties as the Manager of Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District.

Sincerely,



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Meadows Complex, Classroom A

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B. New business

- 1. Network storage and backup

VII. Next Meeting

22 May 2023

1:00PM

Meadows Complex, Classroom A

VIII. Meeting adjourned