



Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District

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

OTSEGO COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, February 19, 2021

Held remotely on GoToMeeting.com

United States (Toll Free): [1 866 899 4679](tel:18668994679)

United States: [+1 \(571\) 317-3116](tel:+15713173116)

Access Code: 895-898-989

Members Present:

Les Rathbun, Chair, Grange Rep.
Meg Kennedy, Vice Chair, Cty. Rep
Michele Farwell, County Legislator (Late)
Ed Lentz, Member at Large
Doris Moennich, Treasurer/Landowner

Staff Present:

Jordan Clements, District Manger
Jessica Miller, Admin. Assistant/
Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

Members Absent:

Larry Roseboom, Sr., Farm Bureau
Helene Kraham, Ag Landowner

Guests Present:

Anthony Capraro, District Conservationist, NRCS

- I. **Call to order:** Board Chairman, **Les Rathbun** called the online meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

- II. **Approval of minutes:**
 - Motion was made by **Lentz**, seconded by **Moennich** to approve January's board meeting minutes with typos corrected.
Roll Call Vote: Rathbun – Aye, Lentz – Aye, Moennich – Aye, Kennedy - Aye. The motion carried.

- III. **Approval of Treasurer's Report & Bills to be paid**

A list of January's bills to be paid were provided to the Board in advance of the meeting.

Motion was made by **Lentz**, seconded by **Kennedy** to approve treasurer's report.
Roll Call Vote: Rathbun – Aye, Lentz – Aye, Moennich – Aye, Kennedy - Aye. The motion carried.



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Lentz requests all receipts be collected for credit card purchases, and to find 2020 budget in minutes.

- Motion was made to approve bills paid was made by Kennedy, seconded by Moennich.

Roll Call Vote: Rathbun – Aye, Lentz – Aye, Moennich – Aye, Kennedy - Aye. The motion carried.

IV. Partner Reports

NRCS-

Anthony Capraro, District Conservationist, NRCS reports he is finishing up 2021 EQIP applications that are due by mid March. 25 EQIP applications will be going in. 4 applications are going in for RCPP-EQIP. Has had one applicant back out due to DFA buyout.

Construction finished on CRP wetland contract. Spent time working on CSP payments that have been made. Regarding Covid our office is working together great with Kate and Jordan, NRCS has gone back to phase 1, and can have more than one NRCS employee in the office when there is enough space. USDA must wear masks 100% of the time. We are still open for business and there is a beginning farmer webinar on March 4th, and 24th. The next 3 months will be busier for my staff, because my Soil Conservationist in Walton is taking 3 months off for paternity leave.

FSA- no report

V. District Secretary/Assistant Treasurer Report

Jessica reports business as usual, running payroll, paying bills, retirement reporting.

Distributed W-2's and 1099's. Processed tree sale orders as they came in. Worked on setting up virtual Envirothon. Assisted Jordan with the end of the year reporting, and would like additional training on end of the year reporting to prepare for next year.

VI. District Reports

Jordan Clements, District Manager, reports that the State announced last year's Climate Resilient Farming (CRF) round 5 award. The District received two CRF grants, one for irrigation, and one for a mulching applicator. This is the District's first time being awarded CRF grants. WBNG called to interview about the CRF grants.

End of the year reporting was completed 3 days ahead of time. If it was late you're taking away from your performance measures. Part A the State reimburses us .50 cents on the dollar for using other non-State funds to match with State funds. Our County allocation alone helps



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us achieve this performance measure. Part B is a project. 2021 part B funds go to hiring a USC buffer steward. It's very time consuming, and we are in a very productive area.

Need to have a District law training this year to meet performance measures for this year. Can send board member's a list of trainings out. Legislative days will be all on Zoom this year, but it still counts as a way to meet performance measures when board members attend. We will need one other board member to attend something else, NYACD, SWCC, Farm Bureau, or a Division meeting. We need at least two other meetings attended. We meet our outreach performance goals with our website and Facebook posts. We didn't have Earthfest, Fairs, due to Covid but the State made concessions. Legislative Day schedule will be sent out to the board. Ag and Markets will begin reviewing performance measures on Monday.

Jordan met with staff to review goals and objectives for 2021. Challenging but obtainable goals were set for each staff member. In 6 months, they will be reviewed again and can be adjusted. Each staff set 1-3 personal goals to achieve. Jordan reported he is continuing to work on closeouts, and he submitted the 2021 buffer steward application to USC. Chris is knocking on the door for CNMP certification. Mark Kugler is writing for the DEC, we are not sure yet which month his article will be posted in the Conservationist. The board would like to pass along to him that it is an honor. Karl is working on agricultural assessments. Dan is fully recovered.

Jordan reached out to building and grounds to get appropriate generator sizing for the office. The County has 5-6 generators sitting and will allow the District to use one, but not own it, and the District will be responsible for hooking generator up. The rest are going to be hooked up at highway depts. The County is going to get cost estimates on hooking generators up. The power company has cleared trees and upgraded power line but we still have experienced power outages. The generator will also benefit our USDA partners, it's definitely something we need to do. Tony Capraro notes that his former intern Kate will be returning this summer, and ask's Jordan how many interns Jordan plans on hiring. Jordan responds with hopefully two, one funded through part B, and one paid through USC. Minimum wage is now \$12.50 an hour, so that is what the buffer interns will make. Job announcement will be posted on website and colleges.

Jordan asks to go into executive session to discuss personnel matter at 10:46 a.m.
Executive session ended at 11:24 a.m. to return to regular meeting.



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VII. New Business

Grant overpayment of \$18,039.43 needs to be sent back to Ag and Markets. Jordan is going to see if it will be possible to pay back in two installments using part C monies, instead of one full payment. Jordan is considering seeing if farmer will agree to pay the District back in bi-monthly payments over two years to make it easier to swallow, then asking them to pay \$18,039.43 upfront. Jordan will provide this suggestion to Ag and Markets.

A motion was made by **Lentz**, and seconded by **Kennedy**, to pay State Ag and Markets in two installments of \$9,019.72 and farmer to make payment of \$1,503.29 bi-monthly to the District.

Roll Call Vote: Rathbun – Aye, Lentz – Aye, Moennich – Aye, Kennedy - Aye. The motion carried.

VIII. Next Meeting: Next meeting to be held on **Thursday, February 19, 2021 at 10:00 a.m.**

IX. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at **11:31 a.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Miller

Jessica L. Miller

Administrative Assistant/Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

March 01, 2021