



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

Thursday, December 17, 2020

Held remotely on GoToMeeting.com

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

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Members Present:

Les Rathbun, Chair, Grange Rep.
Meg Kennedy, Vice Chair, Cty. Rep
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
Michele Farwell, County Legislator
Helene Kraham, Ag Landowner

Guest:

Anthony Capraro – District Conservationist, NRCS
Scott Fickbohm- Ag & Markets, Regional Associate Environmental Analyst

- I. **Call to order:** Board Chairman, **Les Rathbun** called the online meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Financial committee meetings will start again before the next board meeting at 9:30am. Question by **Ed Lentz** on net income line to be clarified at next meeting. 2020 budget still needs to be amended in Quickbooks.

II. **Approval of minutes:**

- Motion was made by **Moennich**, seconded by **Lentz** to approve November's board meeting minutes after corrections are made that were submitted by **Ed Lentz**. Roll Call Vote: Rathbun – Aye, Kennedy – Aye, Lentz – Aye, Moennich – Aye. The amended motion carried.

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

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



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

IV. District Secretary/Assistant Treasurer Report

- Working with Angelica on 2020 audit review. Continuing to pay bills, run payroll, create invoices, sort mail, update social media, and answer phones.

V. Partner Reports

Tony Capraro, District Conservationist, NRCS, presents report. Hopes everyone is staying safe. NRCS is finishing up conservation stewardship payments. There are 18 applications for EQIP, 4 applications for RCPP and may be more to be put in. Some landowners have not turned in all paperwork. More high tunnel projects are going in. Although most NRCS employees are teleworking, Jeanine is usually in the office. One CRP was finished up today, business is normal. If anyone has any questions, I'll be on the line for the rest of the meeting.

FSA- No Report

VI. District Report

Jordan Clements, District Manager, reports that staff are busy getting articles done for the winter newsletter. To save money the newsletter will be distributed electronically, and tree sale order forms will be mailed out. The District dealt with our first Covid case. Employee's partner had a positive test result and notified me on Tuesday. I reached out to Kate and Tony, thankfully 50% of the staff was not in at the time. Jeanine stayed home until she was able to get her test results back in. Employee's test came back negative but was still mandated to stay home for quarantine period. Employee will need to test negative before returning back to work as well. This was the first true test of our response. Tony, Jordan, and Kate have been good at discussing this. Everyone is doing the best they can with what we can work with.

Jordan reported he's been busy working with SWEC, they passed our resolution in support of our allocation and PWC is in support of forestry allocation.



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We have a concern right now with one County forest parcel, but we did find it had a survey done in the 1930's. So far quotes to resurvey parcel have come in and were high. The County lawyer will send a letter to the adjacent landowner that if they are going to continue to dispute the boundary line that they will need a survey on their parcel. It's only 12 trees in question, we can always stay away from them. It's a 350-400 acre parcel, predominately ash. This will be the biggest log sale to date. Knowing there was unhappiness with the public on the Dozen Dad's log sale we should provide more education explaining why the trees were harvested. Creating a temporary kiosk explaining why and the benefits of harvesting ash may be a good idea. Another concern is the road, there is 50/50 share of the roadway. The right of way is part of the dispute also. **Ed Lentz** comments landowner should understand that not cutting the marked trees on County parcel should be taken as a consideration to the landowner. Jordan reports, currently the disputing landowner does not have an official survey on their parcel. Some of the County's forest property deeds are missing, Dan will continue to handle this.

Mark is working on riparian forest buffer planning. End of the year reporting will begin soon, and Jess and I will work together on it. Moving forward a construction project has halted. Contractor is refusing to finish the project. Trying to figure out if the project will move forward or not, it comes down to the condition of the barn, and engineering. Performance evaluations took time and we will need to review them today. Jordan invites Scott to speak.

Scott Fickbohm, Ag & Markets, Regional Associate Environmental Analyst reports SWCC has still suspended in person meetings, and that they will not be backing in person meetings any time soon. Looking at performance measures due by the end of December is the AEM 5 year strategy for priority areas. Scott thanks Jordan for working with him on reviewing projects, and working to complete past due closeouts. Notes two grants that will be expiring at the end of the week. It represents a lot of work. Hopefully these can all get done. Please send Larry my best, hope he feels better. Scott asked if the County followed up the Dozen Dad's harvest with a replanting. Jordan answered, the District organized a replanting of bare root stock with help from BOCES. Scott reports the state has carbon sequestration goals, and that DEC is asking for boots on the ground for managing smaller forest parcels. That may be where the District can come in and work it into the AEM program.

Jordan thanks Scott for attending, also reports the Morris USC project is making progress. The project will be moving forward on the school side so the farmer doesn't lose any crop ground.

Entered executive session at 10:57a.m. to discuss performance evaluations.

Meeting resumed regular session at 12:15 p.m.



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Lease referring to Covid policy was sent to County lawyer two weeks ago.

- A motion was made by **Kennedy** to approve all staff salary changes, seconded by

Lentz.

Roll Call Vote: Rathbun – Aye, Kennedy – Aye, Lentz – Aye, Moennich – Aye.

Motion Carried.

VII. Next Meeting: Next meeting to be held on **Thursday, January 21, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.** with finance meeting at 9:30 a.m.

VIII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at **12:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Miller

Jessica L. Miller

Administrative Assistant/Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

December 29, 2020