

FRANKLIN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS' MEETING

Regular Meeting – August 17, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. (Noon) held In Person outside/ Zoom
FCSWCD Office, Malone, NY

Directors:

Bill Wood
Ralph Child
Thomas Derouchie
Steve Gokey
Dennis Egan
Paul Lauzon

Staff

Chastity Miller
Donna Wright
Kristin Ballou
Allycia Foote
Christopher Ballou

1. Meeting began at 12:03 p.m. (Noon) - Quorum present. Meeting called to order by Bill Wood.

2. July 12, 2021 Board meeting minutes - Discussed and Approved minutes
1st P. Lauzon, 2nd S. Gokey; all in favor, **carried**.

3. **Financial Reports (Donna):**

Financial Reports were reviewed and approved

1st D. Egan, 2nd P. Lauzon; all in favor, **carried**.

Abstract and Vouchers: were reviewed and approved

1st P. Lauzon, 2nd R. Child; all in favor, **carried**.

Transfer of Funds: were reviewed and approved.

Requested permission to transfer the following:

- \$279.68 from Regular Checking to T/A account for monthly employee retirement (July):
- \$1,500.00 from Regular Checking to Retirement savings (July);
- \$1321.00 from Regular Checking to No-Till (July)

1st D. Egan, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, **carried**.

4. **Reports:**

NRCS

FY 2021 EQIP – Moving forward with designs for recent contracts.

FY 2022 EQIP - 24 applications have been taken for next year's funding; Still no deadline.

3 Energy Apps, 6 Forestry Apps, 1 Grazing Apps, 11 High Tunnel Apps, -3 Farmstead Apps

Ongoing Projects - Engineering commenced for farmstead project in Bangor. Construction is not expected until next year.

Food Security Act – Preliminary determinations have been mailed. Producers have 30 days to apply for a reconsideration before the determination becomes final, then another 30 days to appeal.

Administrative - Direct Hire Soil Conservationist position available in Malone has closed. The plan is to have someone start at the beginning of the fiscal year. Work cell phone: **518-605-2508**

FSA

Pandemic Assistance for Timber Harvesters & Haulers (PATHH) – New program developed with USDA Forest Service which aids loggers & timber haulers who suffered a gross revenue loss of at least 10% during 1/1-12/1/2020 as compared to 1/1-12/1/19. Deadline is October 15th.

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) - CFAP 2 continuing for those who didn't apply or have revisions.

Conservation Reserve Program – Signup ends 8/20.

Price Support Interest Rates for August 2021 were given.

Farm Loan Program Interest Rates for August 2021 were given.

USDA Covid-19 guidelines allow us to have one producer in the office at a time by appointment. Our regulations require visitors to wear a mask whether vaccinated or not. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you!

NYS Ag and Markets

USDA Service Center Covid-19 Requirements Due to an increase in transmission rates, all USDA employees, contractors and partners in federally leased space & service centers are required to wear a mask regardless of their vaccination status and regardless of their office's location on the CDC Community Transmission map.

NYS SWCC News

- SWCC Meeting – No monthly meeting in August
- 2022 Annual Plan of Work – Time to start updating for 2022. AEA submittal deadline is 11/1/21

- Source Water Buffer Program – Reminder- funding available to support the purchase of development rights on agricultural land to support the protection of active public drinking water sources. <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com> or questions to bethany.bzduch@agriculture.ny.gov
- Director Training – Regional AEA is available to present training modules to your Board of Directors.
- Status of Existing Contracts – Reminder that all contracts between NYS and SWCD;s must be closed out in a timely manner. Final written reports must be filed with the Department no later than 60 days from contract end date.
- Attention Grazers – <https://thegrasswhisperer.com/2021-nys-pasture-regrowth-monitoring-project/> and <https://cornell.app.box.com/s/yhrezm380m7klyx5sa375jakyv0apv>
- CRP/CREP Training Resources - Visit SharePoint “Resources for Districts”, “Other Resources” click on the CREP icon to find the 2-day remote training session on CRP/CREP that FSA/NRCS provided.

Other Events

- Watershed Wednesday's – Weekly from 8/4 through 10/27, presented by Upper Susquehanna Coalition, online mini-sessions on topics related to efforts in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, and any webinars on other conservation initiatives <http://www.upperSusquehanna.org/usc/watershed-wednesdays/>
- WNY Soil Health Field Day – 8/31/21 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Mulligans Farms, Avon, NY <https://farmland.salsalabs.org/wnysoilhealthfieldday/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=fef612f3-6f10-47f1-a657-9c83595b5c39>

Other Funding

- NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Rd 18 – Conservation Easement Projects -application taken on a rolling basis. <https://agriculture.ny.gov/land-and-water/rfa-0238-farmland-protection-implementation-grants-round-18-conservation-easement>
- DAP Funding Available – <https://cals.cornell.edu/pro-dairy/our-expertise/dairy-advancement-program>
- USEPA Announced \$9M in GLRI Funding – Applications due to this RFA by 8/20. <https://www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/fy-2021-rfa-glri-nonpoint-source-runoff-nutrient-reduction-projects>

Upcoming Events

- 2021 Soil Health Center at Empire Farm Days – August 3-5 <https://blogs.cornell.edu/soilhealthinitiative/calendarevent/8-3-8-5-empire-farm-days-soil-health-center>
- 2021 Empire Farm Days – August 3-5 – <https://empirefarmdays.leetradeshow.com>
- 2021 Cornell Aurora Farm Field Day 8/12 - <https://cals.cornell.edu/2021-aurora-farm-field-day>

5. Kristin (District Forester)

AEM

- Working on Forest Conservation Plans: 5 inventories complete, working on plans over the coming months and setting up more inventories for 2021.
- Beginning implementation plans with EQIP funding for 3 producers & implementation w/1 producer outside funding;
- Meeting with more producers with maple operations interested in this program.
- Assisting Clinton County SWCD with AEM Forestry.
- Finalized statewide sample 3A Forestry Conservation Plan.

Grants:

- LCBP Forestry BMP Education & Implementation – 2 workshops & quarterly reporting complete, final workshop is being planned for October 2021

Meetings/Trainings/Events

- CDEA Meeting
- Planning 2 days of Con Skills classes (agroforestry & forest regeneration & rehabilitation)

Part B – 4 Forest Management Plans – 2021 inventories, 3 inventories complete to date, 2 more planned

Part C - 2020 projects

- School Funding Program
 - ADK Education- maple sugaring equipment (waiting on proposal)
 - Brushton – Pollinator gardens
 - Chateaugay – Community Garden
 - SRMT – seedling donation, community handout & native plant nursery
 - Malone Central - seedlings for students & maple equipment – Complete, 2nd proposal submitted for “What’s flowing and growing in the Salmon River?”

- Salmon River – Indoor and Outdoor gardening for the magic maker after school program
 - Saranac Lake - macroinvertebrate & water quality sampling
 - EAB Monitoring & assessments – Traps were hung for 2021 monitoring & were checked
- Sea Grant NAACC Grant 2019 – 332 assessments complete –final report submitted, waiting on final closeout. Contacted again on 6/15/2021 with no response
- WQIP NAACC –150 assessments completed to date; beginning to compile information collected into final report

Allycia (District Technician):

AEM:

- Tier 3a: Working on Irrigation plan, crop plan, Silvopasture plan
- AEM Yr. 16 Grant:
 - AEM Grant 1: Still in progress – looking to finish up in September
 - AEM Grant 2: Project finished and completely closed out
 - AEM Grant 3: Met with producer to flag out project-setting up meeting to speak with them again soon
 - AEM Grant 4: Project finished and completely closed out.
- AG NPS R27: Grant applications sent in, waiting for state ranked list
- AEM Round 17 Grant: Applications due September 24th, finishing up 3a plans so producers can apply
- NACD Urban Ag Grant: All 3 workshops have been completed
 - “Soil Your Undies” Soil Health – July 13th 9 am – 2:30 pm – STARGO Dairy FSA/NRCS were the only agricultural vendors to attend. Equipment from FCSWCD, STARGO Dairy and Bare Bones Farms were on display. 18 farmers attended, along with presentations from NRCS: Olga Vargas; CCE: Kitty O’Neil, Bare Bones Owner/Operator: John Bonaparte and Never Tier Farm Owner/Operator/SUNY Potsdam Biology Professor: Ray Bowdish. An amazing discussion was had during the Farmer Panel.
 - 6 Home Gardener competition entries: winner Alison Gokey from STARGO Dairy
 - 1 Commercial Farm entries: winner April Gokey from STARGO Dairy
 - No High Tunnel entries-therefore all workshop participants names put into random drawing: winner Aaron Caiazza from Kate Mountain Farm
 - NACD Quarterly Reporting: Due July 15th; received our quarterly grant funding
- Farmland Protection Board Meeting attended meeting at the Franklin County Legislator’s office
- Franklin County Fair set up displays

Christopher (District Technician)

AEM: Helping with forest inventories and assisting with other forest management activities. Finished up what could be done on the management plans that have been done so far this year.

WQIP NAACC: Getting the excel spread sheet completed for the final report for towns completed.

WQIP Erosion Assessments: Malone is almost completed and I have started working on the town of Westville. I am up to 140 assessments completed and counting. The towns of Constable, Brandon, Bangor are completed. Working on entering data into a final spreadsheet to input into a database.

Hydroseeder: Fielding calls from people showing an interest in the hydroseeder. Brought the hydroseeder to the Town of Waverly’s sand pit for them to seed. Hoping to start seeding roadside shoulders/ditches for the Towns of Chateaugay and Franklin soon.

Education/Workshops: I watched a few webinars this past month pertaining to agriculture, erosion, forestry and stormwater to advance my knowledge in all aspects of my Soil and Water Technician position

Donna (Secretary to the Board).

- Weekly: Submit Payroll, Deferred Compensation;
- Monthly: submit NYS Tax, Federal Tax, NYS Retirement, bank reconciliation statements;
- Quarterly: submit NYS Tax, Federal Tax , Worker’s Compensation Report
- Yearly: submit all reports as required.

July 12th to August 17th

- Board Meeting preparation: reports, mailings, typed minutes, posted minutes to website;
- Reconciled May & June bank accounts, then scanned them to required Franklin County offices;
- Continuously adding and updating our mailing list;
- Continuously updating my secretary manual;
- Assisted customers and staff when needed (lots of water questions);
- Made regular bank deposits and posted all Quickbook entries;

- Attended Alycia's "Soil Your Undies" Soil Health Workshop on 7/13 – very educational;
- Called/emailed Insurance companies for Certificates of Liability Insurance for people to use our No-Till Drill and the Hydroseeder ;
- Assisted setting up our Fair Displays;
- Working on getting grant funding for the 2024 Envirothon
- Our office is closed again as we are following USDA Covid-19 regulations and we are meeting clients outside.

6. **District Managers Report: (Chastity)**

Our office is now closed to the public again as we are following USDA Covid-19 regulations. Call to make an appointment and we will meet you outside. USDA FSA and NRCS are not open, you must call for an appointment.

Agricultural Non-Point Source Grants

- Round 24, 16-1– Reviewing engineering plans and getting ready for bids, going to ask for an extension;
- Round 24, 16-2– Closed out, waiting on final payment from the state;
- Round 25, 16-3 - Working on bids;
- Round 25, 16-1 – Year 1 complete. Planning on year 2;
- Round 26 –Cover Crops: Plan of work complete. Working on contracts. Account has been opened. Vouchered for initial 25%.
- Round 27 – Submitted 5 applications. Cover Crops, Petroleum Storage, Barnyard & Manure Storage in Bangor, Silage Leachate System in Burke and a Barnyard/Manure Storage/Silage Leachate in Moira.
- We are hoping to have a ranked list maybe in August or September

CAFO Manure Storage Grants - Round 3 – Hoping for this summer. Going to check on this.

-Submitted 2 grants for the Non-Agricultural money from NYSDEC. One for Hydroseeding in the County and the other is for planning of more culvert assessments.

WQIP Planning: Culvert Assessments & RRAMP, Chris is back out working on RRAMP assessments; Kristin & Alycia will be working on culverts later in the summer.

CWICNY WQIP Grant: working w/CWICNY on grant for implementation of Non-Ag projects within Lk Champlain Basin in 5 counties. We are the grant administration. Sent voucher #7. This is the last construction season on this grant, there is also an update due on the identified projects in the region.

FCRTA: working on ATV easements/planning. Finished the GEIS, submitted it to NYSDEC at a meeting at NYSDEC for internal review before publishing it. Working on the Phase 2 SEQRA for the snowmobiles.

SLRWP: This plan is **complete!** We have received payment on one of the bills, we received the third billing and sent it to the consultant. Completed the audits for MWBE and now waiting on the final close out.

Mining Plan – Completed a mining plan for S. Rabideau and working on one for the Town of Constable.

NYSCDEA Treasurer: I have been working on the online 4-hour classes. We need to work on shifting the platform on this, but we will see what works. Assisted on setting up the Conservation Skills google form and the NYACD registration.

Ag Land & Protection: Meeting was held and all applications were approved, then approved by the legislature.

7. **Correspondences**: Erie County SWCD Summer Newsletter, Grassroots July and August 2021 Editions, Franklin County Cornell University Cooperative Extension June Newsletter, two (2) letters from NYACD

8. **New Business - Chastity requested the following:**

- Requested Board approval to pay American Water Service no more than \$700 for Home Water Test Kits
Motion: 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd D. Egan, all in favor, **carried**.
- Requested Board approval to pay Logger Training for Kristin's Workshop (8@\$20) Total \$160:
Motion: 1st S. Gokey, 2nd R. Child, all in favor, **carried**.
- Requested Board approval to pay for October Skidder Bridge Workshop for no more than \$3,000:
Motion: 1st R. Child, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, **carried**.
- Requested Board approval to pay no more than \$1,000 for 3 staff to attend Con Skills:
Motion: 1st S. Gokey, 2nd T. Derouche, all in favor, **carried**.
- Requested Board approval pay no more than \$1,557 for 2 staff and a Board member to attend NYACD:
Motion: 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd D. Egan, all in favor, **carried**.
- Requested Board approval to pay Society of American Foresters \$145 for Kristin's 2022 membership:
Motion: 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, **carried**.
- Requested Board approval to transfer \$1,859.18 for Checking account to CWICNY account:
Motion: 1st D. Egan, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, **carried**.
- Requested Board approval to pay up to \$2500 to Fr. County Treasurer for Annual Worker's Compensation invoice:

1st T. Derouchie; 2nd R. Child, all in favor, **carried**

- Requested Board approval to then transfer from CWICNY to C'king account to pay Clinton County SWCD \$1,859.71:
1st S. Gokey; 2nd T. Derouchie, all in favor, **carried**.
- Requested Board approval for up to \$2,000 to purchase seed for the Hydroseeder:
1st P. Lauzon, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, **carried**.

9. **Old Business:** None

10. **Next meeting** will be on **Monday, September 20, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)**

11. Meeting Adjourned at 12:44 p.m.

1st P. Lauzon, 2nd D. Egan, all in favor, **carried**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Wright / Chastity Miller
Secretary / District Manager