

FRANKLIN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS' MEETING

Regular Meeting – Tuesday, December 19, 2023, at 12:00 p.m. (Noon)
FCSWCD Office, Malone, NY

Directors:

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

Staff

Chastity Miller
Kristin Ballou
Donna Wright
Devin Normandeau

1. Meeting began at 12:14 p.m. - Quorum present. Meeting called to order by Bill Wood, Chair
 2. November 14, 2023, Board meeting minutes - Discussed and approved.
Motion: D. Egan, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, carried.
 3. **Financial Reports (Donna):**
Financial Reports were reviewed and approved:
Motion: 1st R. Child, 2nd P. Lauzon; all in favor, **carried**.
Abstract and Vouchers: were reviewed and approved
Motion: 1st D. Egan, 2nd S. Gokey; all in favor, **carried**.
Transfer of Funds: were reviewed and approved for the following:
Requested permission to transfer the following:
 - \$ 49.41 from Reg T/A account to Cking for monthly employee retirement (November 2023) Credit applied
 - \$ 2,000.00 from Reg Checking to Retirement savings (December 2023)
 - \$ 5,033.34, plus interest if any is collected from AgNPS Rd25, 16-1 CC Stargo/Poppydale (close out acc), to Reg Cking acct
 - \$13,385.00 from AgNPS Rd26, 16-2 CC Egan/Staib to Reg Cking acctMotion to accept with revisions as presented: P. Lauzon, 2nd T. Derouchie; Roll call vote: Yes: T. Derouchie, R. Child, P. Lauzon and B. Wood with D. Egan and S. Gokey abstaining, carried.
 4. **Reports (Chastity):**
NRCS – None provided this month
FSA
Disaster Designation – due to excessive rain/flooding from this year's growing season, Franklin County was included in recent Secretarial Disaster Designation. Contact Heidi Wenzel (Heidi.Wenzel@usda.gov / 518-295-8600 ext. 114)
Farm Bill – was extended. Signup starting soon for 2024 Ag Risk Loss Coverage/Price Loss Coverage Program. Dairy Margin Coverage Program also extended for 2024 calendar year with no sign up announced yet.
Emergency Relief Program (EERP 2022) – financial assistance to producers w/eligible weather-related crop losses in 2022. The deadline has not been announced. Two (2) tracks for this program, contact FSA for details.
Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP): Deadlines as follows:
 - Honey & Maple Sap – 1/2/24
 - Greens, he3rbs, lettuce, onions – 2/1/24
 - Spring seeded fruits & vegetables, pumpkins, hops – 3/15/24Upcoming 2024 Dairy Margin Coverage:
 - Honey bee colonies & Maple taps – 1/2/24
 - Apples, grapes & peaches – 1/20/24Price Support Interest Rates & Farm Loan Program Interest Rates for December 2023 were given.
- NYS Ag and Markets (Ryan)**
NYS SWCC News
- Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas!
 - Climate Resilient Farming Program Rd 7: ~\$16M to be divided between 31 Districts to implement 116 farms. https://agriculture.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2023/11/projectsdescriptions_round_7_climateresilinetfarming.pdf
 - New State Programs Advisory Committee Mtg: held on 12/15
 - SWCC Meeting – held on 12/19
 - 2023 Part C Performance Measures – Make sure your District is fulfilling Performance Measure goals.
 - CREP Annual Progress Report - shareable outreach, success stories, challenges & suggestions that were provided to us will be shared with USDA

- NYS Conservation Storyboard – updated/accessible at <https://agriculture.ny.gov/soil-and-water/soil-water-conservation-committee>

Other Events:

- 2023 CCA Training – virtual training commences 12/12. Info link: <https://www.nysaba.com/educational-meetings>
- NACD 2024 Annual Meeting –Feb. 10-14. <https://www.nacdnet.org/news-and-events/annual-meeting>

Other Funding Options

- Five Star & Urban Waters Restoration Program 2024 Request for Proposals -Full proposals due 1/31/24 <https://www.nfwf.org/programs/five-star-and-urban-waters-restoration-grant-program/five-star-and-urban-waters-restoration-grant-program-2024-request-proposals>
- NOAA 2024 Great Lakes Bay Watershed Education & Training Grant Funding Available – more information, visit www.grants.gov , search NOAA-NOS-ONMS-2024-2008201. Applications due 11:59PM on 2/29/24

Kristin (District Forester)

AEM

- Working on Forest Conservation Plans – 1 completed, 3 more remaining based on 2022 data.
- Continuing implementation of plans with EQIP funding for producers
- Assisting Clinton Cty SWCD w/ AEM Forestry-1 more to complete based on 2022; 2 scheduled for 2024-25
- AEM 17 Impl Projects - working w/producers to complete projects; last in progress,
Part B - 2023 4 Forest Management Plans – all 4 complete
Part C - 2023 projects – Notice has been sent to all school districts and applications are due 3/31/24
2024 Tree Sale – All trees/seeds ordered & confirmed. Tree sale form is at the printers.

Devin (District Technician)

AEM

- Tier 1 – 3 completed.
- Tier 2 – 3 completed.
- Tier 3a:
 - Met w/2 farmers for Grazing plans; applying for AEM Rd 18 funding
 - 1 Grazing plan site visit
 - 1 Farmstead Plan site visit.
- Tier 4:
 - 1 closed out.
 - 2 started.
 - 3 waiting for approval.
 - 4 waiting for approval.
 - 5 waiting for approval.
 - 6 Closed out.

AEM Rd 17 Final Report – Soil sampling 2 farms

Part C -Soil sampling 2 properties

AgNPS Grant – Rd 26 Cover Crops – 1 farmer checked and certified.

CWICNY – 1 Farm checked

Ag Assessments – 5 completed.

Donna (Secretary to the Board)

- Continue to perform office administrative duties as requested/required; will keep operations progressing.
- Preparing for year-end reporting, mailed Fall newsletter/Xmas Tree Recycling postcards & many other tasks

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

Agricultural Non-Point Source Grants

- Round 24, 16-1– waiting on bids for 2024 construction.
- Round 25, 16-3 – closing out paperwork, sent to State
- Round 26 – closing out and sending to State soon
- Round 27 – Got contract! LO contract done; he is working on bids for barnyard / manure storage.
- Round 28 – Barnyard / Manure pit LO contract complete. Waiting for the barn to be replaced.
- Round 29 – cancelled taking the CRF award
- CRF – awarded, 10 producers \$387,655.00; need to do plan of work.

CAFO Manure Storage Grants Round 3 – Need to figure this one out. Requesting extension.

AEM Yr 17 – Devin and Kristin have been working on getting these closed out and completed.

AEM Yr 18 – approved resolution for next round over email. Plan submitted; Devin is collecting applications.
WQIP Grants – awarded 2 for non-Ag money from NYSDEC (1-Hydroseeding in County; 1-planning of more culvert assessments). Contract in place for culverts; working on hydroseeding.
Rec Park Parking Lot – they have decided to forgo the Parking lot NYS DOS grant; working on closing contract.
Add'l. Grants/Educational Opportunities – working on finding some for district and schools.
Sunny View – This month salt sampling will be done in that area.
Part C – working on projects, budgets and raise recommendations for next year. Projects: insurance, benefits, and worker's comp; will be reviewed today.
Tree Sale – Kristin is working on this, and Donna is working on Christmas Tree Recycling program postcards.
Lake Champlain Basin – applying for add'l funding for staffing
Planning – Local, State and International Envirothons
HONORED – CHASTITY MILLER WAS PRESENTED WITH THE NORTHEAST ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION 2023 DISTRICT EMPLOYEE AWARD AT THE NYACD ANNUAL MEETING IN OCTOBER – CONGRATULATIONS CHAS!!

6. **Correspondences:** Northeast Association of Conservation District Employees letter dated 11/1/23 for contribution and NYACD letter dated 11/30/23 Merry Christmas and Happy New Years!
7. **At 1:47 PM, Bill Wood, Chair of the Board, asked to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues,** therefore staff members left the meeting, leaving in attendance the board members / District Manager. Motion: 1st D. Egan, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, **carried**.
8. **The Board went into Executive Session at 1:48 PM.** to discuss the current District Forester position, Motion made by 1st S. Gokey, 2nd T. Derouchie. **Carried. The Board came out of Executive Session at 1:54 PM** Motion made by 1st T. Derouchie, 2nd R. Child, all in favor, **carried**. The board stated they had agreed to give District Forester a 11.932% raise. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood, S. Gokey, D. Egan, **carried**.
9. **The Board went into Executive Session at 1:56PM** to discuss the first current District Technician, Motion made by 1st D. Egan, 2nd T. Derouchie. Carried. **The Board came out of Executive Session at 1:58 PM** Motion made by 1st D. Egan, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, **carried**. The board stated they had agreed to give District Technician a 22.08% raise. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood, S. Gokey, D. Egan, **carried**.
10. **The Board went into Executive Session at 2:07PM** to discuss the current District Secretary, Motion made by 1st D. Egan, 2nd T. Derouchie. Carried. **The Board came out of Executive Session at 2:10 PM. Motion** made by 1st S. Gokey, 2nd R. Child, all in favor, **carried**. The board discussed a compressed work week at current salary and to give an add'l 5 days of Personal Time to the District Secretary, which will be discussed at the January 2024 Board meeting as Chastity will discuss w/FC Personnel. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood, S. Gokey, D. Egan, **carried**.
11. **The Board went into Executive Session at 2:12 PM** to discuss the District Manager's position (District Manager exited the meeting), Motion to go into the session made by 1st R. Child, 2nd T. Derouchie, all in favor, **carried. The Board came out of Executive Session at 2:14 PM.** Motion made by 1st D. Egan, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, **carried**. The board stated that they agreed to give District Manager a 9.912% raise. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood, S. Gokey, D. Egan, **carried**.
12. At 2:17 PM, Bill Wood, Chair of Board asked all staff present to rejoin meeting to advise staff of above raises.
13. **New Business:**
 - Board approved:
 - a. Transfer funds from AgNPS Rd26, 16-2 CC (Egan/Staib) to C'king Acct. \$13,385.00,
 - b. Pay J. Staib \$8,031.00
 - c. Pay D. Egan \$5,354.00
 - d. Finally, close out this account, when finalized:
 - Motion: 1st S. Gokey; 2nd T. Derouchie, all in favor, carried – D. Egan abstained
 - Board approved to **CLOSE OUT** and **OPEN** the following bank accounts:

- a. AgNPS Rd 25, 16-3 Monica (close out once paid)
- b. AEM Yr 17 Implementation (close out once paid)
- c. AEM Yr 17 Soil Samples (close out account)
- d. AEM Yr 18 Implementation (Open account)
- e. AME Yr 18 Soil Samples (Open account)
- f. CRF Rd 8 (Open account)
- g. Lake Champlain Basin Ag (Open account)

Motion: 1st D. Egan: 2nd T. Derouchie, all in favor, carried

- Board approved to pay Indiana Berry for 2024 Tree Sale order - \$2,569.75:

Motion: 1st P. Lauzon: 2nd D. Egan, all in favor, carried – Yes or No

- Board approved to pay St. Lawrence Cty SWCD for 2023 Technical Assistance in the amount of \$1,152.00:

Motion: 1st P. Lauzon: 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, carried

- Board approved to pay Tucker Farms \$1,785.00 from Checking account for CWICNY Cover Crop Grant:

Motion: 1st S. Gokey: 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, carried

- Board approved to:

<u>Transfer from RRAMP Forest Rds 1 to C'king Account</u>	\$21,353.97
<u>RRAMP/Clinton Cty SWCD</u>	\$ 3,000.00
<u>Washington Cty Soil & Water for RRAMP</u>	\$ 952.00
<u>Forest RRAMP/Clinton Cty SWCD</u>	\$ 9,336.47
<u>Franklin Cty SWCD participation (OB)</u>	\$ 6,800.00
<u>Warren Cty SWCD RRAMP project</u>	\$ 1,265.50

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

- Board approved to:

a. Transfer from AEM Yr 17 Impl no more than \$11,000 to pay the following:

b. Pay Chad Carter no more than \$11,000, when approved by NYS Ag & Markets

c. Then, close out the account

Motion: 1st S. Gokey: 2nd T. Derouchie, all in favor, carried

- Board approved to pay Industrial Press \$624.00 for the 2024 Tree Sale Flyer

Motion: 1st T. Derouchie: 2nd D. Egan, all in favor, carried

- Board approved Part C and the Budget as presented by the District Manager

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

- Board approved 2024 Schedule for Board Meetings

Motion: 1st R. Child, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, carried.

14. **Old Business:** Thank you to Dennis Egan for providing lunch!! Bill Wood, Chair expressed appreciation for all Franklin County did in assisting us in the purchase of our new property. All staff expressed appreciation to our FCSWCD Board for the raises given. Happy Holidays to all!

15. **Next meeting will be on Tues, January 16, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. (noon)**

16. **Meeting Adjourned** at 2:31 PM

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

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Wright / Chastity Miller
Secretary / District Manager