

FRANKLIN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS' MEETING

Regular Meeting – Monday, March 27, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. (Noon)
FCSWCD Office, Malone, NY

Directors:

Ralph Child Paul Lauzon
Steve Gokey Justus Martin
Thomas Derouchie
Dennis Egan

Staff

Chastity Miller
Kristin Ballou
Donna Wright
Devin Normandeau
Mason Stine

**Prior to commencing the official meeting, Board Members & Staff honored Chastity Miller, FCSWCD District Mgr for receiving the 2023 Wm. F. Crony Award & Devin Normandeau, FCSWCD District Tech for receiving the 2023 Heroic Award. These are both very prestigious awards that were given to our employees from nominations throughout the entire State of New York. Congratulations to both of them!!

1. Meeting began at 12:24 p.m. - Quorum present. Meeting called to order by Ralph Child, Vice Chair
 2. February 21, 2023 Board meeting minutes – Discussed and approved:
Motion: 1st S. Gokey, 2nd T. Derouchie, all in favor, **carried**.
 3. **Financial Reports (Donna):**
Financial Reports were reviewed and approved:
Motion: 1st D. Egan, 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 for the month of February:
 - \$ 314.80 from Reg Checking to T/A account for monthly employee retirement (February 2023)
 - \$2,000.00 from Regular Checking to Retirement savings (March 2023)Motion: 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd J. Martin, all in favor, D. Egan abstained, **carried**.
 4. **Reports (Chastity):**
NRCS
FY 2023 EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program):
 - FRK Cty applications ranked: 9 Wildlife, 8 Forestry, 1 High Tunnel.
 - General Preapproval for EQIP applications planned for 3/31, Obligation deadline 5/26
 - EQIP Act Now for High Tunnels & Mgmt Plans – 20 Obligations completedFY 2023 CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program):
 - 4 Forestry apps, 1 Cropland app,
 - Preapprovals expected by 4/21 with obligation deadline of 6/9EQIP IRA?CSP IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) Funds:
 - Add'l funding pool opened-deadline 4/3. Certain "Climate Smart" Ag/Forestry practices included.Ongoing Projects:
 - Grazing project ongoing, water line installed, leak during the winter, repaired in Spring before system is done.
 - Engineering mtgs taking place for farmstead projects funded last year, final designs available early summerFood Security Act: All 1026 requests are up to date at this time.
Administration: Tric is starting a 120-day detail as Acting District Conservationist on 4/9. Call her anytime. Work cell phone: **518-605-2508**
- FSA**
Emergency Relief Program (ERP)Phase 2/Pandemic Asst Revenue Prg: Signup through June 2nd.
Conservation Reserve Program: Nationally ranked program designed to remove highly erodible cropland from production to plant/maintain conserving cover for duration of contract. Call FSA to sign up
Farm Storage Facility Loans: Low interest financing for variety of crop storage facilities & handling equipment.
Price Support Interest Rates for March 2023 were given.
Farm Loan Program Interest Rates for March 2023 were given.

FSA Loan Workshop – 3/31/23 @11AM in USDA Service Ctr meeting room
FSA office is open with staff present to assist by phone, email or in person.

NYS Ag and Markets (Ryan)

NYS SWCC News

- 2023 Comprehensive Nutrient Mgmt Planning for AEM: 4/4-6 on Cornell Campus, Ithaca, NY
- AEM Leopold Conservation Award 2023: Deadline for applications is 5/27
- SWCC Meeting: March 21st
- NCDEA Don Aron Scholarship Announcement: Deadline was 3/15

Other Events

- Freedom of Information Law & Open Meetings Law Virtual Training: was 3/14
- 2023 NYS Wetlands Forum Annual Conference: Save the Date: Double Tree Hotel, Niagara Falls on 4/25 & 4/26. Register: <http://www.wetlandsforum.org/registration.html>

Other Funding Options

- Great Lakes Sediment & Nutrient Reduction Program: applicants invited to submit proposals for sediment and nutrient reduction activities associated with one of two project types: 1) agricultural Non-point; and 2) shoreline or streambanks. Due 4/21 by 5PM <https://www.glc.org/work/sediment/apply-2023>
- NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants (COG) Funding: \$500,000 available FY 2023. Applications via Grants.gov by 11:59 on 4/23 https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=New+york&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery
- NRCS Funding Opportunity for Resource Conservation Partners in NY: provide direct technical services to address water quality, soil health, wildlife and plant health, as well as other key conservation objectives. Applications due 4/27. https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=New+york&utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Kristin (District Forester)

AEM

- Working on Forest Conservation Plans: working on plans over the coming months based on 2022
- Continuing implementation of plans with EQIP funding for 3 producers
- Meeting with more producers with maple operations interested in this program;
- Assisting Clinton County SWCD with AEM Forestry – 1 more to complete based on 2022 inventory
- AEM 17 Implementation Projects - working with producers to complete projects; 2 complete, 1 in progress, 3 waiting until 2023
- Assisting Hamilton County with AEM Program development.

Part B - 2023 4 Forest Management Plans

Part C - 2023 projects-School Funding Program - Notice sent to all school districts. Applications due March 31st

- ADK Education – Maple sugaring equipment (in progress)
- Brushton – Add'l. grow towers for farm to school program (in progress)
- Chateaugay – Expanding raised beds and growing capacity
- Malone Central – seedlings to hand out for Arbor Day, raised beds and materials to establish gardening club at St. Joe's Elementary

Tree Sale – sold out of a lot of species and low on the rest. Packing orders next 2 wks. Distribution: 4/4 & 4/5. Sold 14,365 plants & tress (10,335 trees, 4030 berries, groundcovers, etc) and 60 seed pkgs/15lbs.

Devin (District Technician)

AEM - Outreach with a few landowners

Tier 2 - Working with Farmers on projects

Tier 3a

- Farmstead Plan – Reviewing and editing
- Forest Management Plan – 1 completed – meeting with landowner

Part B

- Working on Forest Management Plan
- 1 completed – meeting with landowner

Agricultural Assessment Program

- Continuing with soil group worksheets.

Mason (District Technician)

Towns - Continued to develop layout & design information for erosion projects

Drone - Purchased new drone. Started creating orthographic images with this Drone.

Invasive Species – Received Commercial Pesticide license. Priced out required equipment to start pesticide program.

Hydroseeder – Collected quotes for mulch. Moved hydroseeders out of FC Hwy Garage shed.

New Job – Mason told the Board his last day with the District is 4/7 as he will begin working with NYS 4/13. He expressed appreciation to all Board members and staff for everything while working at the District. The Board thanked him for his service and wished him well in his future endeavors.

Donna (Secretary to the Board)

- Performed office administrative duties as requested/required; will continue to keep operations progressing
- Processed final Tree Sale orders and busy getting things ready for Tree Sale distribution days
- Will begin to get things together for NARE

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

Agricultural Non-Point Source Grants

- Round 24, 16-1– extension approved
- Round 25, 16-3 – Estimates & engineering going. Still working on estimates, may be looking at new manure storage, need to touch base with planner.
- Round 25, 16-1 – done working on close out paperwork.
- Round 26 – Year 2 complete, planning for Year 3.
- Round 27 – signed contract waiting to receive back, need to do billing. Engineering underway
- Round 28 – Awarded one! Barnyard & Manure storage. Submitted POW-waiting on contract. Engineering started.

CAFO Manure Storage Grants Round 3: Extension approved. Asked planner status.

AGNPS Rd 29: Applications are being thought about and put together, maybe 4 or 5. Waiting

CRF Rd 7 applications: planning at least 2, maybe 3.

AEM Yr 17: Third project well underway, leaving 3 for this construction season. Devin's working on applications for the next round.

WQIP Grants: awarded 2 grants for Non-Ag money from NYSDEC (1 Hydroseeding in County; 1 planning culvert assessments). Working on work plans for hydroseeding and completed the plan for culverts.

Malone Rec Park: working with Rec Park for Parking lot NYSDOS grant. Will work on extension next summer. I asked Blue Mountain Engineering for an estimate on the planning.

Village of Malone-Lane Street Pit: Received mining permit need to work on the reclamation update.

Districts/Schools: Working on finding some add'l grants and educational opportunities.

New Truck: investigating the purchase of a new truck and sold the Equinox on Auctions International

Drone – sale approval.

Rec Park Permits: working on permits for the eastern shore and plants. Had someone look at western shore for engineering drawings.

Permit: for Bannon's.

Tree Sale: picking up trees on 3/28 & 3/29, then packing for distribution on April 4th & 5th

Ag Assessments: Devin is working on lots of last-minute assessments. We're also signing up people for ag district, if not yet enrolled. Received many from Burke & Chateaugay this year. New assessor in Malone; he is trying to get things caught up.

6. **Correspondences**: Grassroots March/April 2023 Edition, The Empire State Granger January/February 2023 Edition, CCE Franklin Cty 4-H Emerald Gazette January 2023 Edition, NYACD letter dated 2/28/23

7. **New Business**:

- Board approved to **Device Magic/Annual subscription (monitor grants/Rural Rds), no more than \$600**:
Motion: 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd T D. Egan, all in favor, carried.
- Board approved to **purchase new Truck, replacing Chevy Equinox (recently sold)**:
Motion: 1st D. Egan; 2nd J. Martin, all in favor, carried.
- Board approved **purchase mulch for Hydroseeder, not to exceed \$24,000** :
Motion: 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd T. Derouchie, all in favor, carried.
- Board approved **to pay remainder of NCF 2024 Envirothon invoice, in the amount of \$1,500**:
Motion: 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, carried.
- Board approved to **open three (3) Interest Bearing accounts**:

- **RRAMP & Forest Rds. 1**
- **RRAMP & Forest Rds. 2**
- **CWICNY Org Grant 2023**

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

- Board approved **hire a new District Technician:**

Motion: 1st T. Derouchie, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, carried.

- Board approved **to make NARE purchases for May event, not to exceed \$2,000:**

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

- Board approved **to pay team registration for State event - \$600 per County times 4, totaling \$2,400:**

Motion: 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd J. Martin, , all in favor, carried.

- Board approved to **Water information materials, no more than \$1,000:**

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

- Board approved **the sale of the Drone on Auctions International for \$900:**

Motion: 1st J. Martin, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, carried

- Board approved to **transfer \$5,000 from Checking Account to Building Fund Account:**

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

8. **Old Business:** none

9. **Next meeting will be on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)**

10. **Meeting Adjourned** at 1:20 p.m.

1st J. Martin, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, **carried**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Wright / Chastity Miller
Secretary / District Manager