

# FRANKLIN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS' MEETING

Regular Meeting – Monday, March 4, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. (Noon)  
FCSWCD Office, Malone, NY

## Directors:

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

## Staff

Chastity Miller  
Donna Wright  
Devin Normandeau  
Ryan Cunningham – NYSWCC - Region 4 AEA

1. Meeting began at 12:03 p.m. - Quorum present. Meeting called to order by R. Child, Vice Chair
2. Meeting was called into Executive Session at 12:04 p.m. by R. Child to discuss Personnel Matters  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> P. Lauzon; 2<sup>nd</sup> T. Derouchie, all in favor, carried.
3. The meeting was taken out of Executive Session at 12:35 p.m. by R. Child.  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> D. Egan; 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Lauzon, all in favor, carried.
4. Resolution made to adopt an Interim Chair of the Board. Vice Chair, R. Child nominated for the position  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> T. Derouchie; 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Egan, all in favor, carried.
5. Resolution made to adopt an Interim Vice Chair of the Board with Bd Member; D. Egan nominated for the position  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> T. Derouchie; 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Lauzon, all in favor, carried.
6. Resolution by S. Gokey to exempt D. Wright/District Secretary from a 40-hr full time requirement then adopt a 35 hour work week as a full-time requirement for her employment with FCSWCD.  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> S. Gokey; 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Egan, all in favor, carried.
7. Resolution by S. Gokey to increase Medical Insurance Stipend for eligible employees from \$3,000 to \$4,000 yearly  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> S. Gokey; 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Martin, all in favor, carried.
8. Resolution by S. Gokey to add an additional 40 hrs. Personal Time to D. Wright/Dist. Sec. as discussed at the Dec 19, 2023 Board Meeting.  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> P. Lauzon; 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Egan, all in favor, carried.
9. January 16, 2024, Board meeting minutes - Discussed and approved.  
Motion: P. Lauzon, 2<sup>nd</sup> S. Gokey, all in favor, carried
10. **Financial Reports (Donna):**  
Financial Reports were reviewed and approved:  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> S. Gokey, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Egan; all in favor, **carried**.  
Abstract and Vouchers: were reviewed and approved  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> P. Lauzon, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Egan; all in favor, **carried**.  
Transfer of Funds: were reviewed and approved for the following:  
Requested permission to transfer the following:
  - \$ 433.71 from Reg Checking to Trust/Agency account - monthly employee retirement (January 2024)
  - \$ 2,000.00 from Reg Checking to Retirement savings (February 2024)Motion to accept: 1<sup>st</sup> S. Gokey, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Egan; all in favor, **carried**.
11. **Reports (Chastity):**  
**NRCS** – None provided this month  
**FSA**  
Dairy Margin Coverage Prg: 2024 enrollment begins 4/29; retroactive to 1/1/24  
Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP): Deadlines as follows:
  - Spring seeded fruits & vegetables, pumpkins, hops – 3/15Marketing Assistance Loans: (oats, barley, wheat) 3/30 deadline; (corn, soybeans, sunflower seed) deadline 5/31.  
Agricultural Risk Coverage/Price Loss Coverage: 2024 Crop year enrollment now through 3/15  
Conservation Reserve Program: Deadline is 7/31

Emergency Relief Program (EERP 2022) – deadline has not been announced. Contact FSA for details.  
Price Support Interest Rates & Farm Loan Program Interest Rates for February 2024 were given.  
Contact FSA if you have any questions. Happy New Years to all of you!

## **NYS Ag and Markets (Ryan)**

### NYS SWCC News

- Payments & Blackout Period – payments and any program reports were to be processed by 2/23/24 and emailed Claims for Payment for to State Committee. Any questions, contact Maureen Irish or Regional AEA.
- AEM Base Program: Options for AEM Base Round 17 Payments: A reminder Final Report/Close Out package was due 2/29. AEM17 close out packages and their CFPs won't likely be paid until after the Blackout Period if sent after February 23rd (depending on the number of Districts submitting and needs for report updates). While it varies, that could mean delays in payments until July 2024.
- State Programs Advisory Committee Mtg: 2/20/24
- SWCC Meeting – 2/27/24
- District Operations Sub-Committee; mtg planned for 4/24; need to develop list of SWCD reps (at least 2 per CDEA Division)
- AEM Leopold Conservation Award 2024: Application deadline 3/15/24
- Tools & References Wiki Update: updated; useful for new employees <https://www.nyscdea.com.useful-resources/>
- Statewide E-mail Distribution: send request to Melissa Gordon [melissa.gordon@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:melissa.gordon@agriculture.ny.gov)
- NYS Grants Mgmt Transition: Grants Gateway has been transitioned to Statewide Financial System (SFS) to manage contracts and payments. <https://www.sfs.ny.gov/> Help Desk [helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov](mailto:helpdesk@sfs.ny.gov)
- 2024 NCDEA Don Aron Scholarship Announcement: open to any conservation district employee or their immediate family member, along w/ a few other eligibility requirements. Deadline 3/15.  
<https://www.ncdea.us/dascholarship>

### Other Funding

- SOGL 2024 Funding Opportunity: Deadline was 2/14
- CRF Funding – Funding delayed about a month
- Add'l EPF Funding – received add'l \$2M, therefore each District to receive around \$35,000 extra

## **Kristin (District Forester)**

### AEM

- Working on Forest Conservation Plans – 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; Draft sent to landowner, will complete billing to Clinton Cty SECD, 2 more plans scheduled for 2024-25
- LCBP Covered Barnyard Project – POW submitted, waiting for contract and next steps to begin
- Warren Cty AEM – Assisting w/development of AEM Forestry Prg

Part B - 4 Forest Mgmt Plans – 2024 – 4 Forest Mgmt Plans – landowners selected based on application date

Part C - 2023 projects – Notice has been sent to all school districts with applications due 3/28

2024 Tree Sale – collecting orders and managing inventory.

## **Devin (District Technician)**

### AEM

- Tier 1: 2 completed
- Tier 2: 2 completed
- Tier 3a: 2 Soil Conservation Plans; 1 Irrigation Plan (meeting landowners soon)
- Tier 4:
  - 1 closed out.
  - 2 waiting for approval.
  - 3 waiting for approval
  - 4 waiting for approval.
  - 5 waiting for approval.
  - 6 Closed out.

AEM Rd 17 Final Report

Meeting with farmers for plan reviews and Rd 18 funding

Ag Assessments – a lot were completed.

## **Donna (Secretary to the Board)**

- Continue to perform office administrative duties as requested/required; will keep operations progressing.
- Year-end reports completed, along with Sexual Harassment Annual Trg; working w/our Ins Co. on renewal binder.
- Processed over 150 Tree Sales so far, along w/phone calls and taking care of customers in the office...

## 12. **District Managers Report: (Chastity)**

Annual Reports were submitted on time! We have 3 applications for District Tec and 1 application for District Intern.

### Agricultural Non-Point Source Grants

- Round 24, 16-1– waiting on bids for 2024 construction. Asking for an extension
- Round 25, 16-3 – Finished and paid – Closed out!
- Round 26 – Sent for closeout.
- Round 27 – Got contract! LO contract done; he is working on bids for barnyard / manure storage, R'cd. 25%, going to request 65% after blackout period.
- Round 28 – Barnyard / Manure pit LO contract complete. Waiting for the barn to be replaced. 25% received.
- Round 29 – cancelled taking the CRF award
- CRF – awarded, 10 producers \$387,655.00; plan of work submitted.

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

AEM Yr 17 – Devin/Kristin did a great job managing projects & moving forward. Devin submitted closeout paperwork.

AEM Yr 18 – Plan submitted; Devin is collecting applications for this round.

WQIP Grants – working on the 2 grants for Non-Ag money from NYSDEC (1-Hydroseeding in County; 1-planning of more culvert assessments). Contracts in place for culverts; working on hydroseeding, intern for culverts.

Rec Park Parking Lot –they decided to forgo the Parking lot NYS DOS grant; Contract is officially cancelled.

Add'l. Grants/Educational Opportunities – working on finding some for district and schools and to possibly fund intern.

Lake Champlain Basin Prg – applying for add'l funding for staffing.

Sunny View – Salt sampling will be done for Sunnyview/neighbors this month; have list; will figure out how/when.

Part C – working projects (insurance/benefits/worker's comp; all to be reviewed today), budget & raise recommendations for next year.

Envirothons – Beginning to plan Local, State and International events

NYS Dept of State – working on some bond act \$\$ for culvert replacement; possibly \$50M in implementation with an admin fee for us. This has been submitted; we would more than likely manage this contract.

Workshops – planning workshops; met with Cooperative Extension; working on funding one.

WQS – 3 staff will be attending; 2 free with coupons and 1 free – track chair.

Aerial Photography – has been updated.

SUNY Canton Job Fair – attended and there was some interest; no applications yet.

District and Municipal Brochures – updated for outreach events

Water Sampling for Total Coliform/E-coli – Life Science Labs = \$42 vs. Endyne = \$30. Quick response time from Endyne

NARE – working on exams for our Local Envirothon.

Roof Repairs – Working on obtaining estimates to replace our roof. We have 2 estimates so far.

13. **Correspondences:** Delaware Cty SWCD Newsletter-Winter 2023-2024, Erie Cty SWCD Newsletter/Tree Shrub Flyer & Winter 2024 Edition, NYACD Inv. dated 1/9/24 \$1,500 Assessment, NACD letter dated 1/2/24 "Update Membership Now", 11/15/23 letter from Robert Carpenter, Chair Suffolk Cty SWCD challenging all SWCD Districts to stand up & help 2024 N'tl Envirothon, NYACD 2024 legislative Day "Conservation at Work", 2023 CWICNY Annual Report

## 14. **New Business:**

- Board approved FCSWCD 2023 Audit (T. Derouchie & D. Egan conducted the Audit):  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> D. Egan: 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Lauzon, all in favor, carried
- Board approved to transfer/pay RRAMP payment to Essex Cty SWCD in the amount of \$13,773.25:  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> S. Gokey: 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Egan, all in favor, carried
- Board approved to pay annual NARE event (4/25/24) purchases, not to exceed \$7,500.00:  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> J. Martin: 2<sup>nd</sup> T. Derouchie, all in favor, carried.
- Board approved Arbor Day event purchases, not to exceed \$250.00:  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> P. Lauzon: 2<sup>nd</sup> S. Gokey, all in favor, carried
- Board approved to pay the following Pt C School Ass't Prg payments, not to exceed amounts listed below:  

<u>Saranac Lake Ctrl School</u>	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
<u>Brushton Moira Ctrl School</u>	<u>\$2,000.00</u>
<u>Malone Ctrl School</u>	<u>\$1,300.00</u>

  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> T. Derouchie: 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Martin, Bd. Member D. Egan abstained, all in favor, carried
- Board approved to extend AgNPS Rd 24, 16-1 Oakes #C701358 until March 1, 2025:  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> S. Gokey: 2<sup>nd</sup> P. Lauzon, all in favor, carried

- Board approved MOU's to for FCSWCD to provide Tech. assistance with Hamilton, Clinton and Warren Cty SWCD's at the current rate:  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> D. Egan, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Martin, all in favor, carried
  - Board approved to transfer \$78,000.00 from Checking acc't to RRAMP Forest Rds. 1 acct, when money is received from State  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> D. Egan, 2<sup>nd</sup> S. Gokey, all in favor, carried
  - Board approved to pay David Kent \$690.00 for repairs done at our building:  
Motion 1<sup>st</sup> P. Lauzon, 2<sup>nd</sup> D. Egan, all in favor, carried
  - Board approved to pay Warren Cty SWCD \$4,874.20 for RRAMP-Lk George Hwy Dpt/Gage & Snyder Rd projects:  
Motion 1<sup>st</sup> S. Gokey, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Martin, all in favor, carried.
  - Board approved to pay annual NYS Unemployment, not to exceed \$500:  
Motion 1<sup>st</sup> S. Gokey, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Martin, all in favor, carried.
  - Board approved Resolution for CRF Rd 8 funding:  
Motion 1<sup>st</sup> D. Egan, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Martin, all in favor, carried.
  - Board approved FCSWCD Forester, K. Ballou to also be Franklin County Forester as Identified in the new AG BMP Catalog:  
Motion 1<sup>st</sup> P. Lauzon, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Martin, all in favor, carried.
  - Board approved to extend application deadline for District Internship and Technician to 3/28/2024:  
Motion 1<sup>st</sup> D. Egan, 2<sup>nd</sup> J. Martin, all in favor, carried.
15. **Old Business:** Annual District Board Training – not enough time today, therefore it will be done at our next Board meeting.
16. **Next meeting will be on Tues, April 9, 2024, at 12:00 p.m. (noon)**
17. **Meeting Adjourned** at 1:54 PM  
Motion: 1<sup>st</sup> J. Martin, 2<sup>nd</sup> T. Derouchie, all in favor, **carried**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Wright / Chastity Miller  
Secretary / District Manager