

FRANKLIN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS' MEETING

Regular Meeting – Monday, November 30, 2020 at 12:00 p.m. (Noon) via Zoom or speaker phone
FCSWCD Office, Malone, NY

Directors:

Bill Wood
Ralph Child
Paul Lauzon
Thomas Derouchie
Steve Gokey

Staff

Chastity Miller
Donna Wright
Kristin Ballou
Allycia Foote
Christopher Ballou
Ryan Cunningham

1. Meeting began at 12:10 p.m. - Quorum present. Meeting called to order by Bill Wood.
2. October 26, 2020 board meeting minutes approved.
1st R. Child, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, **carried**.
3. **Financial Reports (Donna):**
Financial Reports were reviewed and approved: 1st R. Child, 2nd S. Gokey; all in favor, **carried**.
Paul Lauzon joined the meeting.
Abstract and Vouchers: were reviewed and approved: 1st T. Derouchie, 2nd R. Child; all in favor, S. Gokey abstained, **carried**.
Transfers were reviewed and then approved for the following:
Requested permission to transfer the following for the month of Sept/Nov:
 - \$274.16 from Reg Checking to T/A account for monthly employee retirement;
 - \$1,500.00 from Regular Checking to Retirement savings,
 - \$1996.00 from Reg Checking to No-Till,
 - \$1967.00 from Reg Checking to Equipment/Hydroseeder
 - \$8,760.28 from CWICNY-2018 to Reg Checking
 - \$234,378.76 from CAFO 35 to Reg Checking
 - \$17,537.00 from AEM to Reg Checking1st R. Child, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, **carried**.
4. **Reports (Chastity):**
NRCS (No update-all the same)
FY 2020 EQIP Funding- surveys being set up for applications funded during past round. Hopeful to have engineering completed over the winter so projects can begin in the spring
FY 2021 EQIP- 19 applications in Franklin County. 67 total applications for Clinton, Essex and Franklin team.
Ongoing Projects- Manure storage currently under construction in Burke.
WRE -Restoration ongoing for easement in Bombay and plan to be completed this year. Compatible Use Agreements are being re-evaluated for a few sites; updates are needed.
Food Security Act -Continuing to work on HEL and Wetland 1026's as they come in. Soil Scientist has changed plans and won't be coming until Spring for the 569's
Administrative-Work cell phone: **518-605-2508**

FSA
County Committee Election – Ballots due in office or post marked by 12/7 for areas consisting of Bangor, Bellmont, Brandon, Brighton, Duane, Franklin, Harrietstown, Malone and Santa Clara
Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) 2.0-Signup runs through 12/7. Producers are encouraged to call FSA for more details as there is a very large listing of eligible crops, also see listing on farmers.gov/cfap.
Dairy Margin Coverage-Signup ends 12/11
Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC)/Price Loss Coverage (PLC)-Signup until 3/15/2021
Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) -Signup through 12/31

Non-insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program- Deadline to obtain 2021 Coverage listed below:

December 31 - Honey & Maple Sap

February 1 - Greens, herbs & onions

March 15 - Spring seeded Vegetables & fruit, hops, sunflowers, etc

Price Support Interest Rates for November 2020 were given.

Farm Loan Program Interest Rates for November 2020 were given.

FSA-COVID-19 – Due to Franklin County being in a “Community Spread” stage, FSA/NRCS have moved back to Phase 1 of the USDA re-opening plan, therefore we are not able to have producers in the office at this time. We are assisting by phone, mail, fax and email. Please call us` if you have any questions. Also, included in NRCS’s packet is a letter from the USDA dated 11/18/2020 which explains the USDA COVID-19 guidance for all their employees.

NYS Ag and Markets

Suspension of In-Person Meeting Requirements- the Governor has extended suspension of in-person meeting requirements of Open Meetings Law until 12/3/2020. If your SWCD does indeed plan to continue with board meetings in some sort of “remote” fashion, please pay attention to the added requirements of meeting recording and transcription, if applicable.

NYS SWCC News:

- SWCC Meeting: was held on 11/17
- AEM 5 Year Strategy (2021-2025): Submit to State Committee anytime between now and 12/31/2020.
- 2020 Part C Performance Measures: check to make sure your District is fulfilling obligations for meetings, training plans, etc. to earn all funds available. Modifications were made earlier due to COVID-19.

SWCC Barriers to Cover Crop Adoption Survey: These were due back on 11/20

New Resources Available: Economic & Environmental Tool Kit to Quantify Soil Health Benefits

https://farmland.salsalabs.org/sh_casestudies_method/index.html?eType+EmailBlastContent&eld=73436814-dd1f-4277-a594-3c1c04f9a6be. Questions: mperez@farmland.org

New York Water Environment Association: see what’s available-www.nywea.org/SitePages/About/Chapters/default.aspx

Other News/Events:

- Watershed Wednesday Webinar Series: Mini webinar series was offered by the Upper Susquehanna Coalition beginning on 11/12. Past webinars can be viewed at: <http://www.upperSusquehanna.org/usc/watershed-Wednesday/>
- NYS Carbon Farming Pilot Study Forum: was held as a virtual event on 11/12 as a way to implement and document regenerative farming and soil health practices in Hudson Valley
- Smart Floodplains Training Webinar: was held on 11/12, NYCDEC is partnering Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
- Environmental Justice Mapping Tools Webinar: NY Sea Grant has developed a new Environmental Justice (EJ) Mapping Tool Guide, which are available at <https://seagrant.sunysb.edu/articles/t/resources-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-dei-resources>
- 2020 Northeast Regional Agri-business & CCA Conference Webinar- was offered on 12/1 through 12/3 for those preparing to take CCA exams/Advanced Training track for current CCA’s via digital webinar.

Part B- Ryan mentioned that it was announced today that Part B funding should be out soon.

5. Kristin (District Forester)

AEM

- Working on Forest Conservation Plans – 7 completed since February 2020, 4 inventories complete, working on plans over the coming months, no more inventory for 2020
- Beginning implementation of plans with EQIP funding for 2 producers and implementation with 1 producer outside of funding
- Meeting with more producers with maple operations interested in this program
- Assisting Clinton County SWCD with AEM Forestry

Grants

- LCBP Aquatic habitat NAACC Application
- LCBP Education and Outreach Skidder Bridge Workshops Application

Meetings/Trainings/Events

- Society of American Foresters National virtual conference
- CDEA Meeting
- CWICNY
- Fact Silvopasture Webinar Series

- Region 5 ReLeaf Meeting

Part B – 4 Forest Management Plans – All 4 inventories complete, 2 plans complete & signed by landowners, 1 plan complete and working with landowner on finishing touches, 1 inventory complete, plans to be completed in December

Part C - 2020 projects

- School Funding Program
 - Brushton – generator & tubing supplies for maple operation - complete
 - Chateaugay – greenhouse and grow cart supplies - complete
 - Malone Central – backed out due to COVID and virtual learning
 - Saranac Lake – backed out due to COVID and virtual learning
 - Tupper Lake – Elementary Schoolwide Community Garden Project - complete
 - Wilder Farm – Virtual Tour (Switched project) -complete
- EAB Monitoring and assessments – Planning is now beginning for 2021 monitoring and contacting landowners in affected areas. Virtual meeting with APHIS, USFS and other partners

Sea Grant NAACC Grant 2019 – 332 assessments complete –final report has been submitted, waiting on final closeout
WQIP NAACC –150 assessments completed to date

Allycia (District Technician):

AEM

- Tier 2 Site visit: 1 site visit (discussion about grant opportunities and conservation planning)
- Tier 3a: 1 grazing plan to finish, 1 Silvopasture Plan
- Tier 5a: 1 call about updating AEM info
- Tier 5b: 1 plan to update
- AEM Yr. 16:
 - Reaching hallway point
 - In house interim report to be completed by 12/31/2002
 - To date: 39 Farmers in Franklin County have been assisted
 - 1201.55 hours have been worked = \$52,868.20
 - ❖ Halfway through the AEM \$ and hours for the year-in a good spot for 2021
 - 16 Tier 1 Assessments (new participants)
 - 12 Tier 2 Site Visits completed
 - 19 Tier 3a Conservation plans are to be finished in this AEM Yr.
 - ❖ Currently 6 have already been completed, with 12 to finish by next year
 - 4 Tier 4 Implementations projects in progress
 - 11 Tier 5a Assessments (Updated participants)
 - 2 Tier 5b Conservation Plans to be updated
- AEM Yr. 16 Grant:
 - 1 Prescribed Grazing project finished and waiting on close-out
 - 1 Pathogen Management project close to being finished
 - 2 Prescribed Grazing Projects to start back up in the Spring
- AEM Strategy: Finished and submitted to State 11/18/2020
- AEM Round 17 Grant: Many calls about wanting plans written for funding opportunity in Spring 2021

NYS Grown & Certified: Things will be approved, this is closer to the bottom

Training/Workshop: FACT Silvopasture Webinars

Invasive Species Monitoring: Hoping to hear if we were funded by the end of the month

EEF

NAACC: Out culvert surveying with Kristin

Christopher (District Technician)

AEM

- Attended site visits and assisting with forest management activities,

Sea Grant NAACC

- Final report submitted, meeting with municipalities where culvert surveys are completed & discussing information that is in the report & priority areas for future grant applications.

WQIP Erosion Assessments

- We started erosion assessments and Constable and Brandon are completed. We are working on Bangor; 76 erosion assessments have been identified.

Continue erosion assessment's till we are able to assess them because of the weather.

Hydroseeding

- RE: 2018 FINN machine. The company hasn't had a chance to look at it, however I received word from them recently that they finally received the part needed and they hope to have it installed and tested this week. They also believe this will hopefully fall under the machines' warranty.

Donna (Secretary to the Board).

- Weekly – submit Payroll and Deferred Compensation
- Monthly – submit NYS Tax report, Federal Tax report, and NYS Retirement report
- Quarterly – submit NYS Quarterly Tax Report, Federal Quarterly Tax Report, Worker's Compensation Report
- Yearly Requirements – Pay Disability Insurance, complete Excellus Annual Group Report/September, NYS Retirement Annual Invoice., January: Treasurer's Report, Hourly Report, W2's, W3's
- Done throughout the Month:
 - Board Meeting:
 - Run reports/review with Chas
 - Mail Agenda & reports to Board Member/email to other required people
 - Prepare Binders and gather all needed for meeting
 - Take minutes at Board Meeting, then prepare minutes for board review at next meeting
 - Post approved minutes to Website.
 - Reconcile all bank accounts then scan to statements, reconciliations and monthly Trial Balance to FC offices as required
 - Add/update mailing list.
 - Assist people who come into our office/answer main phone line assisting all to the best of my ability
 - Assist staff, when needed.
 - Make regular bank deposits.
 - Post all entries in Quickbooks.
- Update the Secretary Manual, as needed

October 26th-November 30th (additionally done)

- Prepared work ahead in anticipation of being out of the office for a few weeks
- On Friday, 11/13 I began working remote from home
- 11/16, certified mailed the NYSLRS annual payment and also mailed notice of 11/30 board mtg to board members
- Following COVID guidelines.
- Prepared all checks, abstracts, transfers, board report, etc for board meeting and for Chas
- Ordered 2020 Tax forms
- Attended NYS Archives Webinars
- Review updates to NYS Tax & Finance website and Deferred Compensation website

6. District Managers Report: (Chastity)

Agricultural Non-Point Source Grants

- Round 24, 16-1– Working on engineering plans, Finished his other pit.
- Round 24, 16-2– Project doing great! Actual pit almost complete.
- Round 25, 16-3 – All set to go, need contract signatures from LO.
- Round 25, 16-1 – 2020 good, made request for 65% of year 1 cover crop \$, made payments to landowners
- Round 26 – 3 application projects are ranked unable to announce
 - Barnyard and Manure Storages in Dickinson,
 - Cover Crops,
 - Barnyard in North Bangor.

CAFO Manure Storage Grants Round 1 - CAFO 35 – Closing out, looking for approval today

CAFO Manure Storage Grants Round 3 - Round 3- All ready to go, waiting on construction.

WQIP Planning – Culvert Assessment & RRAMP got contracts from NYS DEC culvert surveying has begun!

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. We are waiting on 1 payment. We have received payment #3 and have them for approval today

FCRTA- working on ATV easements/planning and we've found a way across RT 11. Dave marked them so that NYSDOT has to check sight lines and need to do permits and plans. They are still working on identifying these locations as potential crossings. We are still working on the GEIS, almost complete.

SLRWP- plan complete! Waiting on the amendments to complete and for payments to be made on the 2 bills. I am beginning to put together an additional and final billing.

FSCWSC Office is closed once again to the public! We are taking appointments. The USDA side (NRCS/FSA) are still under Phase 2; however, they are moved back to Stage 1 due to the rise in cases in our county.

Franklin County 8-year review for Ag District. Is complete and has been accepted by NYS. The county has been billed for our extra time we put into this program and the mailing completed by the District. I will be going through old files in my office to clean them up for archiving.

7. **Correspondences:** Clinton County SWCD Fall 2020 Newsletter
National Association of Conservation Districts Renewal Membership
NYACD 2021 Legislative Days: March 1st and 2nd, 2021
NYACD Virtual meeting held 10/21/2020 via Zoom
8. **New Business:**
None
9. **Old Business:**
 - Closeout of CAFO Round 1
Chastity requested to transfer from CAFO #1 account to checking and to pay \$234,378.76
Remaining balance of \$36,184.24
Total payment of \$270,563.00
Discussed and approved 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd T. Derouchie, all in favor, **carried**.
 - CWICNY WQIP
Chastity requested to transfer \$8,760.28 from CWICNY to Checking to pay:
Washington County SWCD \$5,113.99
Essex County SWCD \$3,646.29
Discussed and approved 1st S. Gokey, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, **carried**
 - AEM
Chastity requested the transfer of \$17,537.00 from AEM to Checking to pay Craig Tucker \$17,537.00
Discussed and approved 1st T. Derouchie, 2nd S. Gokey, all in favor, **carried**.
 - 2020 Part C – School Assistance Payout
Chastity requested approval to pay:
Chateaugay Central School \$1,368.00
Wilder Farm \$1,500.00 (review of paperwork)
Discussed and approved 1st T. Derouchie, 2nd R. Child, all in favor, **carried**.
 - Tree Sale Approvals
Chastity requested approval to pay:
25% to Indian Berry Company \$1,000.00
25% to Vermont Wildflower Farm \$ 300.00
Discussed and approved: 1st R. Child, 2nd S. Gokey all in favor, **carried**.
 - 2021 Part C – approval
Chastity presented to the board our 2021 Part C figures
Discussed and approved 1st S. Gokey, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, **carried**.
10. At 1:00 p.m.- Bill Wood, Chairman of the Board, asked to go into Executive Session to discuss personell, therefore staff members left the zoom meeting, leaving in attendance the board members and the District Manager.
11. **The Board went into Executive Session at 1:01 p.m.** to discuss the District Manager position, Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. **The Board came out of Executive Session at 1:05 p.m.** Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. - Motion made by S. Gokey, 2nd P. Lauzon- The board stated that they agreed to give District Manager a 2% raise. Carried. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, S. Gokey, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood, **Carried**.

12. **The Board went into Executive Session at 1:05 p.m.** to discuss the current District Forester position, Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. Carried. **The Board came out of Executive Session at 1:09 p.m.** Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. Carried. Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey to give District Forester a 2% raise. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, S. Gokey, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood. **Carried.**
13. **The Board went into Executive Session at 1:09 p.m.** to discuss the first current District Technician, Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. Carried. **The Board came out of Executive Session at 1:12 p.m.** Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. Carried. Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey to give District Technician a 2% raise. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, S. Gokey, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood. **Carried.**
14. **The Board went into Executive Session at 1:12 p.m.** to discuss the second current District Technician e , Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. Carried. **The Board came out of Executive Session at 1:15 p.m.** Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. Carried. Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey to give District Secretary a 2% raise. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, S. Gokey, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood. **Carried.**
15. **The Board went into Executive Session at 1:15 p.m.** to discuss the current Secretary, Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. Carried. **The Board came out of Executive Session at 1:19 p.m.** Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey. Carried. Motion made by P. Lauzon, seconded by S. Gokey to give District Secretary a 2% raise. Bill Wood called for a Roll Call of board members present. All in favor were the following board members: R. Child, S. Gokey, P. Lauzon, T. Derouchie, B. Wood. **Carried.**
16. 1:19 p.m. all staff re-joined the meeting and the Board Chairman advised everyone of the above raises.
17. Chastity discussed with and requested from the board to approve the new Dental/Vision plan from the North Country Chamber of Commerce that is a better plan for employees. Discussed and approved 1st P. Lauzon, 2nd R. Child, all in favor, carried.
18. Next meeting will be on **Monday, December 21, 2020 at 10.00 a.m.**, (how this meeting will be held is to be determined).
19. Meeting Adjourned at 1:08 p.m.
1st R. Child, 2nd P. Lauzon, all in favor, **carried**

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Wright / Chastity Miller
Secretary / District Manager