

FRANKLIN COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS' MEETING

Regular Meeting – September 20, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. (Noon) via Zoom
FCSWCD Office, Malone, NY

Directors:

Bill Wood
Paul Lauzon
Dennis Egan
Steve Gokey

Staff

Chastity Miller
Donna Wright
Kristin Ballou
Allycia Foote
Christopher Ballou

1. Meeting began at 12:05 p.m. (Noon) - Quorum present. Meeting called to order by Bill Wood.
2. Paul Lauzon, the FC Legislative Rep on our Board, requested of our Chairperson, Bill Wood, for a "Moment of Silence" for the recent passing of former Legislator Tim "Guy" Smith. Tim "Guy" Smith also sat as a County Legislative Representative member on our FCSWCD Board. Bill Wood requested a "Moment of Silence", followed by extending condolences to his family, wishing that he "Rest in Peace" and also commended his service on our FCSWCD Board.
3. July 12, 2021 Board meeting minutes – tabled as the proper Quorum was not present.

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

Financial Reports were reviewed and approved

1st P. Lauzon, 2nd S. Gokey; all in favor, **carried**.

Abstract and Vouchers: were reviewed and approved

1st P. Lauzon, 2nd D. Egan; 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 (August);

**** At this point, Chas requested of the Board to increase our monthly contribution for Retirement to go from \$1500 a month to \$2000 a month to compensate the rise in our employer contribution.** Discussed and approved

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

Transfer of Funds continued:

- \$2,000.00 from Regular Checking to Retirement savings (August);
- \$2,657.20 from Regular Checking to Hydroseeder (August)
- \$ 341.00 from Regular Checking to No-Till (August)

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

5. **Reports:**

NRCS (nothing new to report this month)

Work cell phone: **518-605-2508**

FSA

Organic Certification Cost Share Program (OCCSP) – Assistance provided obtaining or renewing certification under Ntl. Organic Program up to 50% of annual certification fees paid 10/1/20 through 9/30/21, not to exceed \$500 per scope
Deadline is 11/1/21.

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

Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) – Deadline 10/12/21.

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) – See Deadlines below

- September 30th – Christmas trees, floriculture, hay & small grains (not covered by Federal Crop Insurance)
- November 22nd – perennial fruit & nut crops
- December 31st – honey & maple sap

Price Support Interest Rates for September 2021 were given.

Farm Loan Program Interest Rates for September 2021 were given.

USDA Covid-19 guidelines remain the same, one producer in the office at a time by appointment. Visitors are to wear a mask whether they are vaccinated or not. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you!

NYS Ag and Markets

USDA Service Center Covid-19 Requirements Over the last few weeks, USDA has provided additional directives to address the current pandemic and the operations of federal space. Currently, the USDA Secretary has mandated all USDA employees, on-site contractors, partners, volunteers, and customers in federally leased space and service centers are required to wear a mask regardless of their vaccination status. Additionally, meetings regularly held within USDA Service Centers will need to be rescheduled and/or moved offsite. SWCDs with questions about the USDA Service Center policy should contact their local NRCS representative.

NYS SWCC News

Funding Opportunities Available via Grants Gateway

- RFP0237 – Saturated Buffer Pilot Program: \$400,000.00 available to evaluate the effectiveness of saturated buffers in removing nitrates from tile drainage systems functioning within agricultural fields. <https://agriculture.ny.gov/rfp-0237-saturated-buffers-pilot-project>. Application deadline: 10/25, Questions: Lauren.Prezorski@agriculture.ny.gov by 10/8. Webinar: Tuesday, 9/14 10-11am
- Erosion and Sediment Control Implementation Grants for the Genesee River & Finger Lakes Watersheds - R2: \$770,000.00 of EBM funding available to improve water quality of the Genesee River & to Reduce Harmful Algal Blooms in the Finger Lakes. <https://agriculture.ny.gov/rfp-0260-erosion-and-sediment-control-implementation-grants-genesee-river-and-finger-lakes> Application deadline 10/25, questions by 10/8: Lauren.Prezorski@agriculture.ny.gov.

2021 AEM Leopold Conservation Award Winner: Congratulations Megan Hauser & family from Table Rock Farms & the Wyoming County SWCD for taking top honor for the 2021 AEM Leopold Conservation Award! The farm family & the District were honored at a ceremony on the farm in August. Thank you to all Districts who nominated a farm.

2020 SWCC Annual Report: please see the 2020 Soil & Water Conservation Committee Annual Report featuring updates of SWCC conservation programs, and support provided to County SWCDs over the calendar year. https://agriculture.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2021/08/2020_annual_report.pdf

September SWCC Meeting: 10:00 AM on September 21st.

2022 Annual Plan of Work (APOW): start updating your APOW for 2022. Deadline November 1, 2021.

State Aid to Districts:

- 2022 Part B Conservation Project Financial Assistance –Due 11/1/21. Projects to be completed by 12/31/22. Part B requests should be submitted via email to ben.luskin@agriculture.ny.gov.
 - 2021 Part C Performance Measures - check to make sure your District is fulfilling obligations for meetings, training, training plans, etc., to be able to earn all funds that will be available. State Grant Administration:
 - Interim Reporting: Interim reports for AGNPS Contracts (Round 21-Round 23), CAFO WSTSP (Round 1 and Round 2), CRF (Round 1 – Round 4) MUST be submitted by May 1st and November 1st.
 - Amendments: Time Extension Requests for AGNPS, CAFO WSTSP & CRF (for AEM Round 16 cost-share projects, please see its Program & Contract Policy file on SharePoint for its amendment & close-out procedures)
 - Time Extension Requests may be submitted for any contract that will be expiring.
 - AGNPS & CRF: Time extensions in increments of appropriate length to complete the project(s) that are under current construction may be considered by State Committee Voting Members under consultation with State Committee Staff and Advisory Members. Time extensions will not be granted for project administration (i.e., preparation of close out documents).
 - CAFO WSTSP: Time extensions in increments of appropriate length to complete the project(s) that are under current construction may be considered by the Department under consultation with State Committee Staff. Time extensions will not be granted for project administration (i.e., preparation of close out documents).
 - Request Requirements:
 - The District requests the amendment using the amendment form.
 - The District has filed the most recent interim report on the project. For AGNPS Rounds 24-26, CRF Round 5, and CAFO Round 3 an updated SW 5 form must be submitted with the amendment request.
 - The reason for the delay is beyond the control of the District or the landowner(s) and is clearly stated in the amendment form
 - Project status (i.e.; construction or active implementation is currently under way) is clearly stated in the amendment form
 - The District's Board has approved submittal of the extension request
 - Renewed letters of commitment from the farm(s) experiencing delays are forwarded along with the completed amendment form
 - The requirement for a formal written justification from the sponsoring District has been waived.
 - All other Staff Approved Amendment (Landowner Change, BMP System Change) requirements remain the same
- AEM Base Program Round 17 Announced: offers non-competitive funding for technical assistance & cost-sharing BMP implementation projects based on the local AEM Strategy. Due 11/1/21. The program runs from 1/1/22 - 12/31/23. SharePoint has program details (<https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>): "Resources for Districts/Agricultural Environmental Management/AEM Base Program Materials/AEM Base Rd 17 Materials".

Other News/Events

On-Farm Grain Storage Management Training: Please join staff from CCE Thurs, 9/23/21, 1- 4 pm, Hewitt Farms, 37 Hewitt Lane, Troy, NY. Cost \$5/person, Pre-register by 5 pm Sept 22nd:

<https://blogs.cornell.edu/capitalareaagandhortprogram/2021/08/17/september-23-2021-on-farm-grain-storage-management-training/> or call Tove Ford, 518-765-3518, cce-caap@cornell.edu. CCA credits are available.

Conservation Skills Workshop: will be held Sept. 27th – 30th in Cortland, NY.

Other Funding

Arbor Foundation Funding Available: Interested applicants are encouraged to submit an online proposal by end of day 9/24/21. Please contact Brad Brandt (bbrandt@arborday.org) & Jennifer Moon (jmoon@arborday.org) with any questions, or consult the FAQ, <https://www.arborday.org/programs/replanting/planting-partners/faq.cfm>

6. 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 w/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.

Grants:

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

Meetings/Trainings/Events

- CWICNY
- WQS Planning Forestry Track

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 Gardens
 - 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 once

Sea Grant NAACC Grant 2019 – 332 assessments complete –final report has been 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 2 Site Visit – 1 site visit
- Tier 3a: finished 2 Silvopasture plans, 1 irrigation plan, 1 crop management plan, working on one grazing plan; met with 3 producers about plans.
- AEM Yr. 16: AEM Round 16 ends 12-31-2021
 - To date we have provided Technical Assistance to 57 farms through our tiered process
 - 27 Tier 1 Worksheets
 - 26 Tier 2 Site Visits
 - 31 Tier 3a conservation plans encompassing 1,843.75 acres
 - 5 plans are in Tier 4 implementation phase (4 through R16 funding)
 - 16 farm updates have been completed: Tier 5a
 - 3 conservation plan updates have been completed: Tier 5b, encompassing 86.4 acres
 - Bringing our total planning acres to 1,929.97 acres.
- AEM Yr. 16 Grant: 4 Farms granted
 - Grant 1 is finished and in the closeout process;
 - Grant 2 is finished and has been closed out;
 - Grant 3 still in the process of finishing project. Has to be finished by November 1, 2021;
 - Grant 4 is finished and has been closed out.
- AEM Round 17: Annual Action Plan for Round17 due November 1, 2021

- All technical assistance hours and dollar amount requested for 2022-2023
- AEM R17 Grant Applications also due in this packet
- **CHANGES TO AEM R17**
 - Can request up to \$10,000 for Soil Sampling associated with Tier 3a Plans (we have already been doing this, but now this frees up some district money to be used toward workshops, etc.)
- AEM Round 17 Grant: Applications due to the District by September 24, 2021 by 4:30 pm,
 - 3 applications already turned in;
 - 2 more applications are to be sent in before deadline.
- NACD Grant: All workshops completed, working on final report.
- Hydroseeding: Assisting Chris with various Hydroseeding projects.
- NAACC: Soon to be finishing up assessments with Kristin

Christopher (District Technician)

AEM: Helping with forest inventories and assisting with other forest management activities. (I finished up what I could on another management plan. Hope to cruise a few more before snow flies.)

WQIP Erosion Assessments: Fort Covington and Malone are almost done. I am up to 160 plus assessments and counting. I have completed the towns of Constable, Brandon, Bangor, Burke, Franklin and Westville. I'm trying to get the data into a final spreadsheet to be able to input it into a database. Towns left include: Bombay, Bellmont, Dickinson, Duane, Harrietstown, Santa Clara and Waverly.

Hydroseeder: Fielding calls from people showing an interest in both hydroseeders. The newer machine was used to complete 3 smaller jobs this month and the older hydroseeder was used by the town of Dickinson to seed approximately 5 acres of an old sand pit. I'm still hoping to get to Chateaugay and Franklin to start seeding roadside shoulders and ditches

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 and I attended a wildlife habitat management workshop.

Donna (Secretary to the Board)

- Weekly: Submit Payroll, Deferred Compensation and now submitting semi-weekly tax liabilities to IRS, instead of monthly;
- Monthly: submit NYS Tax, NYS Retirement, bank reconciliation statements;
- Quarterly: submit NYS Tax, Federal Tax, Worker's Compensation Report
- Yearly: submit all reports as required.

August 17th to September 20th

- Board Meeting preparation: reports, mailings, typed minutes, posted minutes to website;
- Reconciled August bank accounts, then scanned them to required Franklin County offices;
- Continuously updating the mailing list;
- Continuously updating the secretary manual;
- Assisted customers/staff when needed;
- Lots of water questions received and many purchases of home water test kits;
- Bank deposits were made, along with all the Quickbook entries;
- Called/emailed Insurance companies for Certificates of Liability Insurance for people to use our No-Till Drill and the Hydroseeder ;
- Working on getting grant funding for the 2024 Envirothon

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

Our office is OPEN. USDA FSA and NRCS are not open, you must call for an appointment. The front door is locked so we will come see you!

Agricultural Non-Point Source Grants

- Round 24, 16-1– going to ask for an extension.
- Round 24, 16-2– Done and paid!
- 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% and received.
- 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 September or October.

CAFO Manure Storage Grants - Round 3 – Not sure where we are on this one. I was in bids...

-Submitted 2 WQIP grants for the Non-Agricultural money from NYSDEC. One for Hydroseeding in the County and the other is for planning of more culvert assessments. We will see in November or December.

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. Paid out 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. Some issues with easements and crossings and we are working on these.

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 still waiting on the final close out.

NYSCDEA Treasurer: I have been working on the online 4-hour classes. We need to work on shifting the platform on this. Assisted with Conservation Skills google form and the NYACD registration.

Ag Land & Protection: met and approved all applications and it was also approved by the legislature. Final approval for the state has been received and we are all set!

8. **Correspondences:** NYS Legislative Commission on Rural Resources Summer 2021 Newsletter, Grassroots September 2021 Edition, Thank you card from Kevin & Tammy Leahy for our FC Fair Day's Booth donation and NYACD letter dated 8/31/21

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

- **Requested Board approval to pay the following invoices once we receive them:**

• Excellus Health Insurance – Medical Insurance due 10/1/21	\$4513.30
• National Business Technologies – copy charges due 9/16/21 (no more than)	\$ 350.00
• Westelcom – phone/internet due 9/25/21	\$ 294.55
• Intuit Payment Solutions – Annual QB's Enhanced Payroll Renewal due 9/28/21	\$ 474.00

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

- **Requested Board approval to pay NYSLRS \$24,298 by December 15, 2021 for 2022 Estimated Employer contribution that we are required to pay:**

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

- **Requested Board approval to pay Paul Scott \$28,783 from AEM Yr. 16 account when we receive the funding:**

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

- **Requested Board approval of the 2022 Conservation Project Financial Assistance Request for Part B \$6,000 for Forest Management Plans:**

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

10. **Old Business:** None

11. **Next meeting will be on Monday, October 18, 2021 at 12:00 p.m. (noon)**

12. **Meeting Adjourned** at 12:50 p.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Wright / Chastity Miller
Secretary / District Manager