

May 10, 2022

MINUTES

**OSWEGO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DIRECTORS MEETING**

The Directors and staff met at 10:03am on Tuesday May 10th 2022 in the District Office Conference Room, located at 3105 State Route 3, Fulton, NY 13069.

PRESENT:

Jeff Richards, Chairperson
Linda Lockwood, Vice Chairperson
Sandy Tuori-Bell, Member
Mary Ellen Chesbro, Member
Tom Bonoffski, Member

Laura Romanowicz, Secretary/Treasurer
Erica Schreiner, Sr. District Technician
Sarra Learned, Environmental Resource Technician

1. **MINUTES - MOTION: TO APPROVE MINUTES FOR April 2022 AS SUBMITTED.**
5 years (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)
Made by Director **Lockwood** and seconded by Director **Bonoffski** and carried.
2. **ADMINISTRATIVE - MOTION: TO APPROVE THE BILLS FOR May 2022 AS SUBMITTED.**
5 years (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)
Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Lockwood** and carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT - MOTION: TO APPROVE THE FINANCIAL REPORT FOR April 2022 AS SUBMITTED.

5 years (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)

Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Bonoffski** and carried.

2022 MODIFIED BUDGET - Board of Directors reviewed and approved the 2022 Modified Budget as submitted.

PAYROLL CERTIFICATION FOR EMPLOYEES - Board of Directors reviewed and approved the **May 2022** Payroll Certification for Employees as submitted.

RECONCILED BANK STATEMENTS - Director **Lockwood** reviewed the **April 2022** Reconciled Bank Statements and initialed.

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Old Business

Handbook: Laura contacted the company that developed the original handbook and they are willing to review and update the document for a reasonable fee, which is under our threshold for requiring a bid.

MOTION: TO APPROVE SENDING THE OSWEGO COUNTY SOIL AND WATER EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK TO PUBLIC SECTOR HR CONSULTANTS AT A COST OF \$185 PER HOUR FOR A FULL REVIEW OF ALL UPDATES AND CHANGES MADE SINCE 2010.

5 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)

Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Bonoffski** and carried.

AEM contract (Erica)

MOTION: PERMISSION GRANTED FOR THE DISTRICT MANAGER TO SIGN THE ROUND 17 AEM BASE PROGRAM CONTRACT UPON ITS ARRIVAL.

5 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)

Made by Director **Lockwood** and seconded by Director **Chesbro** and carried.

New Business

2022 Tree and Shrub Sale

MOTION: TO PROCESS PAYMENT TO MEADOWVIEW NURSERY FOR BARE ROOT SEEDLINGS ORDERED FOR THE 2022 TREE AND SHRUB SALE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$4,902.45.

5 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)

Made by Director **Bonoffski** and seconded by Director **Chesbro** and carried.

REPORTS:

Ryan Cunningham provided the following report:

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Region 4 Report - May 2022

Submitted by: Ryan Cunningham - Region 4 Associate Environmental Analyst

General Updates

Suspension of In-Person Meeting Requirement: The Governor has extended the suspension of in-person meeting requirements of Open Meetings Law until **June 8th, 2022**. The COOG memo permitting the continuation of remote meetings can be found here,

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<https://opengovernment.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2022/04/oml-videoconferencing-amendments-041122.pdf>

NYS SWCC News

SFY 2022-2023 Environmental Protection Fund: The Enacted SFY 2022-2023 Budget is now available at www.budget.ny.gov. In total, this year's approved EPF budget is yet another very strong showing of support for conservation programs. Overall appropriations for the FY 2022-2023 EPF were approved at \$400 million, an increase of \$100 million over last fiscal year. Proposals of interest to SWCC/SWCDs in this budget include the following:

- \$20 million for Agricultural Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Projects, including \$2 million for Cornell IPM, \$500,000 for the CCE of Suffolk County and \$250,000 for Cornell's Pesticide Management Program
- \$14.5 million for Soil and Water Conservation Districts (\$3.5 million increase over last year's levels)
- \$16.75 million for the Climate Resilient Farms Program (\$12.25 million increase over last year's levels)
- \$22 million for Water Quality Improvement Program
- \$22.5 million for Oceans and Great Lakes (EBM Program funding)
- \$16.5 million for Waterfront Revitalization Program

Additionally, the approved budget authorizes the \$4.20 billion Environmental Bond Act of 2022, "Clean Air, Clean Water, and Green Jobs," to fund environmental improvements that preserve, enhance, and restore New York's natural resources and reduce the impact of climate change. The Bond Act will appear on the ballot in the 2022 general election.

SWCC Meeting: There will not be a State Committee board meeting in May - the next meeting is slated for June; date and time TBD.

Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 6: \$8 million is available to support projects. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC> and then navigate to Resources for Districts, Climate Resilient Farming Program, and Round 6. Project proposals are due at **4:30 p.m. on May 16th, 2022.**

AEM Leopold Conservation Award 2022: NYSDAM is partnering once again with the Sand County Foundation to present the AEM Leopold Conservation Award to recognize landowners who inspire others with their dedication to ethical land, water, and wildlife habitat management on agricultural land. The AEM Leopold Conservation Award (AEM LCA) nomination deadline has been extended to **May 27th, 2022.** The **award-winning farm will receive \$10,000 and the nominating District will receive \$1,000** from the Sand County Foundation along with having a high quality professionally produced video featuring

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the farm's conservation story. More information can be found at www.sandcountyfoundation.org/ApplyLCA and application materials are on the SWCC SharePoint site: <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC/SitePages/AEM.aspx>

Interim Reports Due: A reminder that interim reports were due (**May 1st**) for certain open and active program contracts. Interim reports should be submitted for active contracts in the following funding rounds: AGNPS Contracts (Round 21-Round 23), CAFO WSTSP (Round 1 and Round 2), CRF (Round 1 - Round 4). Interim reports should be sent to Maureen.Irish@agriculture.ny.gov, the appropriate program manager and to your Regional AEA.

Other Funding Assistance

New York Flood Adaptation Grant Writing Capacity Program: The Nature Conservancy in New York is currently seeking applications for the New York Flood Adaptation Grant Writing Capacity Program. The New York Flood Adaptation Grant Writing Capacity Program will provide grant preparation and writing capacity to New York communities that are pursuing funding for flood adaptation and mitigation projects. This program aims to help municipalities develop successful flood adaptation and mitigation grant applications and for municipal staff and partners to develop capacity for navigating the funding landscape. Applications are due: **Wednesday, May 25 11:59 PM EST**. Applicants will need to complete this Application Submission Form prior to the submission deadline to be eligible for this program. For more information on applicant eligibility and how to apply, please refer to the Request for Proposals. Questions about this program should be submitted via e-mail to Mike McCann, Climate Adaptation Specialist (michael.mccann@tnc.org) by Wednesday, May 18 11:59 PM EST. Anonymized questions and TNC's written answers will be available to all interested communities to ensure equitable access to information for all applicants.

Frank Bratt Scholarship: A reminder to all SWCD employees that the Frank Bratt Scholarship application deadline is **June 1st**. An application can be obtained from the CDEA Website at, www.nyscdea.com Questions and/or completed applications for consideration should be sent to Scott Collins, Region 1 CDEA Representative, scott.collins@ny.nacdnet.net

NYS Water Quality Improvement Program: The Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) grant application period is open through **July 29, 2022**. A total of at least \$75 million is available for projects that include: Nonagricultural Nonpoint Source Abatement and Control; Land Acquisition for Source Water Protection; Salt Storage; Aquatic Connectivity Restoration and; Marine District Habitat Restoration. Apply using the Consolidated Funding Application, <https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/> For those interested in learning more about the CFA, the Lake Champlain-Lake George Regional Planning Board will host a webinar on **May 10th from 10 - 11am** to review CFA funding opportunities. Discussion and overviews will be led by representatives from DEC, DOS and EFC. RSVP at this link: <https://bit.ly/registrationfunding>

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Shannon Bozeat provided the following report:

April 6th 2022- May 5

NRCS NE 5 Team: Cayuga, Onondaga, Oswego Co SWCD Board Report

Shannon Bozeat (District Conservationist), Scott Travis (Resource Conservationist),

Miranda Ciardulli (Soil Conservationist), Don Quinn-Jacobs (Soil Conservationist)

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

The Grassland CRP signup runs from **April 4, 2022 to May 13, 2022**. -Contact your Local Farm Service Agency

- The following is a list of GRP offers being processed:

Oswego/ 1 Hay land

Cayuga/ 2 Grazing

Onondaga/ 2 Grassland

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Application being processed:

- **Cayuga 0**
- **Onondaga 0**
- **Oswego 0**

All the participants had other resource concerns on their operation that have made them not MET the required resource concerns. They are or will be apply through the next round of EQIP

- Currently receiving documentation for CSP enhancements applied, payments will be processed in November, 2022
 - **Cayuga**
 - **Onondaga**
 - **Oswego**

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Funded as of to date for current application being assessed was November 1, 2021, Applications received:

- **3 of the** 12 for **Cayuga/ 4 High tunnel (1Cancelled)/ 1 Grazing/1 Energy audit/ 2 Reduced tillage/ 1 Waste Storage/ 1 Cover crop (Cancelled)/ 1 soil erosion/ 1 Forestry Plan**
- **7 for Onondaga/1 grazing (Cancelled)/ 3 High Tunnel/ 1 Forestry Plan/ 2 Waste Storage**

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- 2 of the 5 for **Oswego**/ 1 Waste Storage (Cancelled)/ 1 High tunnel (Cancelled)/ 1 reduce tillage/ 1 wildlife/ 1 CNMP

Implementation of EQIP Contracts:

- **Cayuga:** *Still Designing 2 WASCOSBS, 2 Underground outlets has been started.
*Livestock pipeline survey has been completed and design is being started.
* IR's have been developed for 2 contracts with Pasture and Hay land planting.
- **Onondaga:** *Design is still underway for Access Road, livestock pipeline, Roof Runoff structure.
*IR's have been developed for Pasture and hay land planting, Fence for Prescribed grazing system.
*High tunnel construction check completed.
*Laid out Diversion, producer did not like it! It is being redesigned, Underground outlet, Rock Lined channel, WASCOSB
- **Oswego:** High tunnel is currently being constructed

Payment for EQIP Contracts:

- **Cayuga:** Pasture planting \$15,911.00, \$7,236.00, Prescribed Grazing implemented in 2021 \$804.00
- **Onondaga:** Seeding and Mulching along a High Tunnel \$59.62.
- **Oswego:**

Wetland Easement Monitoring will be starting

- **Cayuga:** TBD
- **Onondaga:** TBD
- **Oswego:** TBD

Food Security Act Workload - April 6th - May 5th

- FSA has submitted to NRCS for **HEL** Determinations:
 - **Cayuga:** 7
 - **Onondaga:** 1
 - **Oswego:** 4

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- NRCS has completed **HEL** Determination on:
 - **Cayuga:** 11
 - **Onondaga:** 4
 - **Oswego:** 5

- FSA has submitted to NRCS for **Wetland** Determinations:
 - **Cayuga:** 15
 - **Onondaga:** 25
 - **Oswego:** 33

- NRCS has completed **Wetland** Determinations on:
 - **Cayuga:** 0
 - **Onondaga:** 1
 - **Oswego:** 5

- Food Security Act Compliance Check on Random Producers
 - **Cayuga:** 19 still working on
 - **Onondaga:** 16 still working on
 - **Oswego:** 4 Still working on

Joe Chairvolotti provided the following report:

The contractor that purchased the Parish Reforestation timber sale in 2020 contacted this office about starting the harvesting operations. I met with the logger to review the site and discuss the stream crossing. Additional trails were marked and the clear-cut boundaries were painted to assist the contractor in identifying them better.

St. Mary's Road in the Town of Parish is flooded due to a beaver dam on Oswego County Reforestation property. I obtained a nuisance beaver and dam removal permit from the NYS DEC. This has been delivered to the County and Town of Parish Highway Superintendent. The County Highway Dept has 2 staff members trapping the beavers now, and the Town of Parish will make a hole in the dam to drain the road and pond afterwards. There are strict guidelines for this work, and these have been relayed to the Town of Parish Highway Superintendent, George Horning.

Assisted numerous landowners and municipalities with general technical, water quality and forestry related advice, both remotely and on-site. Requests/inquiries have been received at a very high volume for pond construction and maintenance, forest management, drainage, shoreline erosion, tree diseases, ag or

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forestry tax assistance, wetlands, soils, tree planting and several other issues. Currently working with several landowners on larger scale issues and making contact with various agencies to get landowners the appropriate information.

Working with Sarra on customer assistance regarding wetland and soils information.

Have received several requests for forest management plan development and for permit assistance on 2 large projects. This work will take place in 2022.

Inspected the roadside projects completed by the Town of Williamstown in Happy Valley that border Oswego County property. One of the areas requires grass seed, and I'll be working with the Town to get the area vegetated.

Lake Neatahwanta: Contacted Senator Ritchie's office to inform her that the Reclamation Committee was interested in moving/selling the equipment from the dredging operation. Also met with Matt Marko, the Region 7 Director for the NYS DEC, to discuss the situation. There are several options, but Matt is consulting with the legal department to determine the best course of action. The owner of the property where the equipment is being stored would like to sell the land this year. Another issue has come up regarding reclaiming the pond area back to agricultural land and the DEC is aware of this.

Water Chestnut Control:

1. The public comment period for the herbicide application permit has ended, and I'm not aware of any issues.
2. Hired 6 interns for the water chestnut hand-pulling program and they will start June 13.
3. The boat motor package is planned to be picked up this week.
4. Will be working on planning out all of the other aspects of the program in mid-May.

FOLLOWPA Administration: A request for FOLLOWPA work plans, meeting minutes and bylaws came from a staff member from the Sierra Club. Work plans and membership information requests will need to go through the FOIL process with NYS DEC. Due to the fact that the Oswego County SWCD is the host organization for FOLLOWPA, requests for organizational information, such as minutes, will need to go through the Oswego County FOIL request procedure.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Control (HWA): Still waiting on a NYS DEC wetland permit for HWA treatment at Independence Park. The application will take place in September/October. Also, this office is still working on obtaining information on biocontrol. Planning on meeting with the HS committee in June or July to finalize the request to release insects that prey on HWA.

Silver Lake: Began conversations with CNYLT regarding the remaining funds and a potential conservation easement.

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Drainage Study Grant for the Village of Pulaski: Met with the Mayor of Pulaski and C2AE, an engineering firm working on drainage studies in the area. As we do have funding for a study in the Village of Pulaski, the Mayor wanted everyone to be on the same page and we now have a clearer picture of what our work will cover.

Developed the Envirothon Forestry Exam and administered the test the day of the event.

Participated in packing tree orders for the tree and shrub program. All of the staff did a great job with this year's tree sale.

Attended SLELO meeting.

Working with Civil Service to finalize Environmental Resource Technician position job description.

Erica Schreiner gave the following report:

Still awaiting a contract for the Round 17 AEM Base Program funding request of \$116,472 for staff time and \$100,000 for implementation. The contract began on January 1, 2022. It is not likely construction will occur this year as funding will not arrive in time for construction season.

Continued AEM planning with program participants. There are many upcoming field visits scheduled to address various concerns.

Maintained the District web site and FaceBook page. The number of followers has increased and there has been great interaction with program sponsors as well.

Continued planning the 2022 Oswego County Envirothon. Conducted meetings with District staff to review the program in detail. The 30th annual event was held on May 5. Five school districts participated. The team from Oswego High School was the overall winner. General discussion about the event took place and it was agreed that it is a rebuilding year for many schools and hopefully participation will increase next year. The entire list of 16 sponsors was read, with a brief explanation given about the type of donation from each entity/individual.

Presented a letter of appreciation and recognition to the Directors regarding the long-time involvement of Paul Cardinali with the Oswego County Envirothon. He began as a team advisor at Paul V. More High School and upon his retirement he continued as a volunteer photographer at the event. He is also the only person to have been at the first Oswego County Envirothon and the 30th. All Directors signed the letter which will be sent to Mr. Cardinali.

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Continued planning the 2022 Plant a Tree Program, with Cornell Cooperative Extension of Oswego County. Five thousand tree seedlings and educational materials were distributed in conjunction with our annual tree and shrub program. A sponsor photo was coordinated at Mexico Middle School.

Participated in packing and distribution for the annual tree and shrub program.

Provided customer technical assistance in the following areas: ag assessment vs. ag district, ag drainage, DEC wetlands permit, nuisance wildlife, and well water.

Picked up the new District boat at Clayton Marina.

Worked with ag value assessment customers who have been granted an extension past the March 1 deadline.

Gave a presentation about District environmental education programs at the May meeting of the EDP committee. The report was well-received, with several questions and comments. The committee voted to recognize the winner of the Oswego County Envirothon at the full meeting of the Legislature in June.

Sarra Learned gave the following report:

Giant hogweed:

Continued to plan the 2022 giant hogweed season. Verified landowner information and permission status.

Created an excel spreadsheet to track site information and plant progress which is used by myself and is also distributed to our contractors.

Conducting road-side inspections over the last two weeks: monitoring the plant's growth to determine the best time to begin site visits.

Looking ahead, landowners will be contacted this week regarding permission for 2022 access to monitor and treat any giant hogweed plants found on their property. Contact will be by email, phone call, or letter. In compliance with landowner permission, site visits will begin next week to flag plants for treatment by our contractors.

Other:

Provided customer technical assistance for wetland assessments and determinations, erosion concerns, soils reports, and producing general property maps as requested.

Helped pack orders for our tree and shrub sale. Assisted in getting the correct orders to customers as they arrived on pick-up day.

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Continuing to work on water chestnut hand-pull permits for various Oswego County waterbodies (Little Salmon River, Sage Creek, and the Salmon River Estuary).

Reviewed tests for the Oswego County Envirothon. Participated in the event as an administrator for the Current Issues exam which was focused on recycling, composting, and hazardous waste.

Volunteered as a Team Trail Guide for the NY State Envirothon, taking place on the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth of this month.

Laura Romanowicz gave the following report:

New Phone System- We have opted to decline installation of the new door buzzer at this time. This offset will decrease the one-time charge by \$700.00. We are in the process of working with the new company to initiate training on Friday May 27th.

Dunk Kits- have been communicating with Joe and Bonide about ordering a $\frac{1}{2}$ pallet (approx. 55 cases) of dunk kits. This order would include distributing 1 case to each town and village facility that is interested, as well as keeping stock at the office. I have emailed all locations and have had great response thus far.

MOTION: TO ORDER UP TO \$5,000 OF MOSQUITO DUNK KITS FROM BONIDE AND PROCESS PAYMENT UPON RECEIPT OF THE INVOICE.

5 yeas (in favor), **0 nays** (those opposed)

Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Lockwood** and carried.

2022 Tree and Shrub Sale - Tree and Shrub pick-up went very well. There was a constant flow of vehicles on Monday 4/18. Tuesday 4/19, we moved the pick-up and directed customers to come to the front door due to weather. We had a chalkboard sign that listed the over stock inventory, so extra sales went pretty smoothly for both days. From Wednesday-Friday, additional calls were made to customers that inquired about extra stock. We also did a buy one, get one free deal for 2022 Earth Day.

2022 Envirothon - Had a great experience setting up and attending this year's Envirothon. It was very nice to meet our sponsors, volunteers, and the students & teachers. Erica put together such an amazing in person event! Looking forward to the next educational event!

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4. **NEXT MEETING** - Tuesday June 14th, 2022 @ 10:00am at the District's Conference Room

5. **ADJOURNMENT** - Meeting adjourned at 10:42am.

MOTION: TO ADJOURN

Made by Director **Chesbro** and seconded by Director **Tuori-Bell** and carried.

Respectively submitted,

Laura Romanowicz
Secretary

cc: Directors
NRCS/Area Office
Ryan Cunningham/NYSSWCC
FSA & NRCS/Oswego Field Office
Betsy Sherman-Saunders/Clerk of the Legislature
Shannele Porter/Deputy Clerk of the Legislature