

**Minutes of the Wayne County Soil & Water  
Conservation District Board of Directors**

**Regular Meeting – February 26, 2020 at 9:00 a.m.**

**District Office, 7312 Route 31, Lyons NY 14489**

**Approved March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**Directors:**

Lynn Chatfield  
Jake Emmel  
Mark Humbert  
Steve Olson

**Staff:**

Bethany Comella  
Lindsey Gerstenslager

**Absent:**

Pat VanLare

**Regular Meeting**

- I. Call to order at 8:57 a.m.
- II. **A MOTION** was made by L Chatfield to suspend the orders of the day; seconded by S. Olson; motion carried.
- III. Greetings and introductions of our 2020 Board of Directors took place before the meeting. Joining us new this year is Town of Lyons Supervisor Jake Emmel.
- IV. Special Presentation from Michael DeBadts of Mengel, Metzger, Barr & Co. LLC regarding the 2018 Audit Review.
  - A. Michael presented a brief overview of key financial statements. The board discussed assets, equipment, and the future regarding the REDI project.
  - B. Lindsey noted issues with regards to communication gaps, and losing two team members during the course of the audit. The final bill will be approximately \$9,700 and will be paid for from General Savings.
  - C. **A MOTION** was made by L. Chatfield to accept the 2018 Audit; seconded by S. Olson; motion carried.
  - D. **A MOTION** was made by L. Chatfield to engage Mengel, Metzger, Barr & Co. LLC for a 2019 audit, with an anticipated start in May 2020; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.
- V. Approval of the Agenda
  - A. **A MOTION** was made by S. Olson to approve the agenda; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.
- VI. Acknowledgment of Guests—none at this time.
- VII. Open Meeting Business—none at this time.
- VIII. Report from SWCC—shared via email from Victor DiGiacomo (see attached).
  - A. Victor addressed grant opportunities, state aid reports being turned in by February 14, 2020, and a permanent site at the NYS Fairgrounds.

- B. Lindsey acknowledged that we were entering the state’s “blackout period,” in which no payments are made by the state during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.
  - C. Further discussion was had regarding rural roads active management training hosted in Seneca County, with Lindsey, Jake, and Lynn potentially training. Discussion also took place regarding the AVC program, the issues with water fluctuations, and other opportunities within the program.
- IX. Report from Grange—not shared at this time, due to P. VanLare’s absence.
- X. Report from Farm Bureau—shared by M. Humbert. Mark stated that there was no specific report, though noted that some of the farm-related issues had fallen to the back-burner in Albany.
- XI. Report from NYACD
- A. Lindsey discussed drafting a letter in support of Chemung County Soil & Water, who had put together a resolution for the employee’s association meeting to oppose the new WOTUS (Waters of the United States) legislation that would include Class C streams. NY State is looking to impose restrictions on working on Class C streams, which would change the district’s ability to work on stream corridors in Wayne County.
  - B. **A MOTION** was made by L. Chatfield to support Lindsey’s letter opposing the legislation restricting unpermitted work on Class C streams; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.
  - C. Lindsey and Mark will both sign the letter. Lindsey noted that the intention is good, but that the legislation would have unintended consequences.
- XII. Operational Business
- A. The correspondence folder was shared. There were no comments.
  - B. **A MOTION** was made by L. Chatfield to approve the minutes from January 2020’s operational board meeting; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.
  - C. **A MOTION** was made by L. Chatfield to approve the minutes from January 2020’s regular board meeting; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.
  - D. Treasurer Bethany Comella noted that state reporting was completed on time, and that soil group worksheets and tree/shrub sale are keeping things pretty busy. All told, we’re on track to do over 200 orders for soil group worksheets, with many orders requiring more than one worksheet.
    - A MOTION** was made by S. Olson to accept the February 2020 Treasurer’s Report; seconded by L. Chatfield; motion carried.
    - A MOTION** to pay the bills for January-February as presented was made by L. Chatfield and seconded by S. Olson; motion carried.
- XIII. Guest: Jim Kieb from Rep. John Katko’s office
- A. Jim was seeking input from the district on how legislation impacts the district and our work. Topics discussed included the WOTUS legislation mentioned above, the water levels in Lake Ontario and the REDI projects, and the need/potential for a large-scale beef processing facility in Wayne County.
- XIV. Old Business
- A. Employee Handbook—Lindsey noted that the handbook template had been developed in 2009, and that it would be helpful to have our handbook looked at again by HR

professionals. Erin Hammond also had made some recommendations from the County Attorney's office.

- i. **A MOTION** was made by S. Olson and seconded by L. Chatfield to contract with Public Sector HR Consultants LLC out of Schenectady.

B. AEM Round 16 contract update

- i. We received the contract at the end of January and returned it; we should be able to take our first 25% drawdown shortly. The contract used to be an annual contract that now follows the calendar year and runs for two years. The contract is \$187,000, and an additional \$50,000 each year for small projects.

C. State Reporting for District Funding through State Aid (NYS Department of Ag and Markets)

- i. Lindsey shared the file with the board, stating that "we did a lot last year." The district receives three different state funding—Part A, \$60,000; Part B, \$6,000; and Part C, which is incentive-based funding. We were awarded more Part C funding in 2020 than in previous years, due to the board and program staff meeting their goals.

XV. New Business

A. FLOWPA 19/20 Contract Agreement

- i. **A MOTION** was made by S. Olson and seconded by L. Chatfield to approve the FLOWPA 19/20 contract; motion carried.

B. Watershed Technical Assistant Programs MAP & LAP: budget update to Part C

- i. **A MOTION** was made by S. Olson to approve the use of Part C funds for smaller projects for municipalities and landowners; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.
- ii. The funds would be a cost-share taken from Part C funds, with a total of \$25,000 for municipalities and \$15,000 for landowners. Funds would be allocated based on applications reviewed by the staff and ranked in importance by the board.

C. The Part C 2020 budget will be presented as part of the operational plan of work review.

D. **A MOTION** was made by S. Olson to approve the Agricultural Drainage Program review rubric; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried. The rubric comes from a desire to be more cost- and time-effective with regards to people contacting the office in need of technical assistance. Projects will be decided upon by a committee including Ian Priestley, Chris Hotto, and Ron Thorn

E. **A MOTION** was made by J. Emmel to approve the district's participation in CRF Round 5; seconded by L. Chatfield; motion carried. Ron Thorn and Ian Priestley have been working on the applications.

F. Summer Internship Program (biannual)

- i. Lindsey shared with the board that a previous Envirothon participant currently majoring in Geomorphology at SUNY Fredonia had reached out to the district looking for a summer internship for 8 or 12 weeks. The internship would be for a specific project, assessing soils for water retention. The total cost would be approximately \$7,500, and paid for through a mini-grant.

ii. **A MOTION** was made by L. Chatfield to extend to her an invitation to interview; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.

G. Equipment: tablet & standing desk procurement

i. **A MOTION** was made L. Chatfield to procure standing desks at \$300/station, not to exceed \$2,100, and another tablet with Part B funds to complete more NAACC and stream corridor assessments, not to exceed \$2,100; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.

H. **A MOTION** was made by S. Olson to approve the 2020 AVC and Ag Drainage contracts with the county; seconded by L. Chatfield; motion carried.

XVI. **A MOTION** was made by L. Chatfield to adjourn at 10:59 a.m.; seconded by J. Emmel; motion carried.

**NEXT MEETING:** Wednesday, March 18, 2020, at 9:00 a.m.