

**Minutes of The Wayne County Soil & Water
Conservation District Board of Directors
Regular Meeting June 15, 2011, 2011
SWCD Office, Lyons, NY, 14489**

Directors:

Steve Brownell
Bob VanLare
Tom Caprilla
Jody Bender
Bill Hammond

Staff:

Lindsey Gerstenslager
Cathy Comfort
Ron Thorn
Scott DeRue
Samantha Gonzalez

NRCS:

Bill Jones

FSA:

Absent

Guest:

Pat VanLare

Call to order @ 9:04am

Secretary's Report:

A MOTION was made to approve the minutes of the May 18th meeting by J. Bender second by S. Brownell; carried.

Treasurer's Report:

A MOTION was made to approve the treasurer's report by B. Hammond seconded by T. Caprilla; carried.

T. Caprilla expressed interest in L. Gerstenslager's training reimbursement. L. Gerstenslager explained the expense stating that this was mainly to cover mileage and tolls as she took her own vehicle and that it was a very informative training which she was able to bring back lots of useful information.

B. VanLare questioned dredging to get rid of the blue green algae. L. Gerstenslager brought up a suction dredging company out of Buffalo NY that was at the training seminar and expressed an interest in coming here. She further explained that they work on the premise that suctioning the invasive species is a more effective removal tool.

A MOTION was made to approve the bill's to be paid for June 2011 by J. Bender seconded by S. Brownell; carried.

NRCS Report

B. Jones gave a report on program contracts and the following EQIP are preapproved:

- 2 Forestry for a value of \$7,200
- 3 Air Quality for a value of \$104,000
- 4 Cropland for a value of \$78,000

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This brings the total EQIP contracts to 9. There is also 1 AMA High Tunnel approved, this is for a “Hoop House” and consists of the same crop on the outside as is inside. There is also no AMA Irrigation preapproved as of this time.

B. Jones stated that the overall signup is down for an average this year but it will be a good time to catch up on work.

There is a joint project being worked on by B. Jones and L. Gerstenslager, this is for the GLRI funds which has a sign up period of June 1st to July 1st 2011.

Civil rights review was held June 8th and 9th 2011; B. Jones reported that all seems to have gone well. L. Gerstenslager stated that Soil & Water will be using NRCS training webinar for future Soil & Water training.

E. Mombourquette’s anniversary with NRCS has passed and she has been promoted she has gone from a grade 7 to a grade 9, congratulations to Emily.

B. Jones attended OSHA training June 14th and found that there are quite a few new OSHA rules and regulations that need to be followed, he felt the training to be informative and encouraged others to be aware of the rules.

The 2012 federal budget is not looking very good and there are expected big cuts to the TA accounts which these are the accounts for wages and benefits mainly.

B. VanLare asked about Crandon Ditch and B. Jones explained the implementations and that this farm is looking at going organic in the future.

FSA Report

No Report This Period

Staff Report

R. Thorn gave an overview on the AG Program. AEM year 6 has been submitted, Les Travis was able to come and assist with the closeout. There was AEM money utilized by NRCS for air quality programs. L. Gerstenslager explained that all hours, 1170, are met to achieve grant as well as all deliverables. The Graze NY program has 9 new grazing plans most in the east part of the county. Ag Value Worksheets, 250 completed this year which is down a little from previous years however as L. Gerstenslager and R. Thorn stated we process many more worksheets than most other counties. Ag NPS Round 15, Manketelow project is complete and Maple Lawn is under way. Ag NPS Round 16 is underway at Mouton Farms. Ag NPS Round 17 is not official yet and has not been awarded.

B. VanLare asked about the application form for the AEM grant and that there are two forms. L. Gerstenslager explained that that they are similar however one is for federal and one is for state therefore both are required to be filled out.

Personnel Report

J. Bender explained that on June 8th the personnel committee met with each employee and conducted reviews. In all they were very satisfied with the growth of the employee's and contributed the main success to the leadership skills of the new district manager, L. Gerstenslager. B. VanLare also stated that continued training adds to the employee's growth.

L. Gerstenslager stated that she had an exit interview with L. Travis and was pleased with the results of this meeting.

The personnel committee will be meeting again to finish the review process.

S. Brownell stated that the improvement in relationships in the office as well as the productivity is noticeable. B. Hammond inquired who the new Les Travis will be; L. Gerstenslager explained that this has not been determined and that there should be more information available at the next district meeting in August. L. Gerstenslager also stated that Workers' Compensation will be a topic at this meeting as other Soil & Water districts are having similar problems with their county coverage as we are and she further urged all board members that were available to attend.

Discussion was held concerning seasonal employee's and holiday pay, as Memorial Day had just occurred and one employee had put in for it and one had not. Past practice dictates that this had been a covered benefit in the past, however a new Employee Handbook has come out and been adopted by the board on December 16, 2010. In the handbook Section 801; Holidays; Eligibility; it states "A part-time, temporary, or seasonal employee is not eligible for holiday pay." After much discussion the board has decided that it must uphold the Employee Handbook. L. Gerstenslager stated that she will draft a memo to the seasonal employee's to reaffirm this policy.

District Manager Report

L. Gerstenslager advised the board of the requirements of the open meeting law; per requirements a notice has to be posted in a public place for 72 hours prior, currently Soil & Water posts on the front door of the building and on facebook page, eventually the notice will also be on the website. L. Gerstenslager asked the board if they had any questions, B. Hammond asked if a notice in the paper was required as it is for town meetings, L. Gerstenslager said that it is not. S. Brownell stated that he is satisfied as to the current way it is being done.

L. Gerstenslager advised the board that a decision has been made that Soil & Water will maintain the web page in house by herself and C. Comfort once it has been established. She is developing a bid package for that and it should be ready to go out for bid in the near future.

As we are ranked high for both Rounds 15 & 16, Terry Reynolds, Part-Time program Assistant, has agreed to stay on as long as we will need him. Terry has been taking Chris Hotto, Program Assistant, out on various jobs to train him, however Chris has a heavy workload of his own during this time of year. L. Gerstenslager and The County Attorney have been working on a contract to use other Soil & Water Conservation District employee's for Terry's days off as well as nutrient management planning and other areas if the need arises.

Spiegel Drive Part B has been postponed with the possibility of redressing this next year after stepping back and re-education of concerned constituents. The stabilization programs for DeFisher steep slope (cost share with the farmer) and Trapbrook (Town of Macedon property) are scheduled to start in July.

The County Drainage Contract was received in the mail yesterday, and the County Harvesting Contract is due to be approved at the next Board of Supervisors meeting, June 21, 2011.

Discussion concerning the boat motor repair of the pontoon boat would include welding it back together. B. Hammond and S. Brownell asked how old the motor is and L. Gerstenslager replied approximately 20 years old, which led to further discussion of the cost of repairing versus replacing. L. Gerstenslager excused herself and brought in S. DeRue and S. Gonzalez to take part in the discussion. After much discussion of the pros and cons it was decided that the current motor is antiquated and replacement would be the best way to go. S. DeRue was told to look into different motors costing no more than \$5,000, L. Gerstenslager stated that these funds would be available through the ANS Grant.

A Motion was made to replace the motor at a cost not to exceed \$5,000.00 by J. Bender second by T. Caprilla; carried.

A Motion was made to declare the old motor as surplus and to accept bids to remove this from inventory by B. Hammond second by T. Caprilla; carried.

L. Gerstenslager sent the Board an email about the Public Works Committee meeting June 7th concerning the \$50,000 the County would like to appropriate to us for a skimmer technology plan. At this time this plan is not feasible as Alpha Boats has sold their skimmer boat and there are no others available in the surrounding areas. Currently the resolution has been rewritten at the County level with no input from Soil & Water District Manager L. Gerstenslager. B. Hammond stated he feels the resolution will go thru the county board as it was passed at the finance committee 4-1 in favor. J. Bender felt that this is an additional amount that the Soil & Water District will be getting every year. T. Caprilla asked the approximate cost of the summer program, L. Gerstenslager replied about \$138,000. B. Hammond had brochures from other companies and other types of boats he has looked at for invasive species that would be more efficient, and he also stated that the county would be expecting a budget from L. Gerstenslager and S. DeRue on the \$50,000 funds. L. Gerstenslager explained that she wrote the plan for skimmer technology that is not available at this time, therefore the \$50,000 does not have a budget, she also requested the minutes from the finance meeting. L. Gerstenslager is concerned as protocol has not been followed, she was not aware that the original resolution had been changed and she was not included on the discussions on any levels of this and does not believe the resolution should even be going through at this time. The board agrees with L. Gerstenslager, B. Hammond put a call in to County Administrator, J. Marquette, and asked him to contact L. Gerstenslager to discuss said matter.

L. Gerstenslager explained that without being ready to accept the money and having a plan and budget we will just look bad in the long term of this.

At 11:30 B. Hammond excused himself from the meeting.

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J. Bender stated that after listening today she is planning on voting down the resolution. S. DeRue asked about the possibility of taking less money and extending the work year. J. Bender stated that she will be talking further with J. Marquette and S. LeRoy.

L. Gerstenslager asked that the board put in writing an outline of what they would like the \$50,000 to be used for including deliverables.

Other Business

L. Gerstenslager had S. DeRue introduce returning summer intern Samantha Gonzalez, Samantha told the board that she is in her 5th year studying Environmental Science at RIT. L. Gerstenslager explained that Samantha will be working with S. DeRue this summer as well as doing public outreach and assisting with the webpage.

Next Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 20, 2011 at 9:00am at the SWCD Office Conference Room.

A MOTION was made to adjourn at 12:00 by S.Brownell seconded by T. Caprilla; carried.