

MINUTES
ULSTER COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
5 PARK LANE, HIGHLAND, NY 12528
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
JUNE 28, 2023

1. OPEN MEETING

The MEETING was **CALLED TO ORDER** by Chairman L. Tantillo at 7:07pm at the NRCS/UCSWCD Highland Office, located at 5 Park, Lane Highland, NY 12528. Directors Present, Legislator K. Nolan, Legislator H. Litts, R. Davenport-Director/Member-At-Large, F. Wilklow-Director/Member-At-Large. District Staff in attendance: Executive Director J. Wedemeyer, Ashokan Basin Project Manager- A. Doan, T. Ferry-District Technician, and J. Witkowski-Program Assistant in training. Legislator P. Erner was also in attendance. **Absent:** S. VanNostrand-Secretary/Treasurer and Grange Representative, J. Delaune-Director/Member-At-Large, O. Velez-Juarbe – District Conservationist, NRCS. District Staff: M. Wagner-Program Assistant.

2. WORK REPORTS

Written staff reports were prepared and presented at the meeting for review (attached to the filed minutes).

SWCD: J. Wedemeyer reported:

- AEM updates.
- Inventory and Evaluations
- Part B Arbor Day Initiative
- NYC DEP CAT 494
- District Updates/Other Projects
 1. Working with CCE of Ulster County to do another “Meat the Farmer” event in October 2023.
 2. No-Till Program – Travis and I are administering the no-till rental program, Margarete is doing the invoicing.
 3. Working with Rockland County SWCD to teach a 4 Hour Erosion and Sediment Control Course in October 2023.
 4. Working on CRF Round 7 applications.
 5. Attended Manager’s meeting with L. Tantillo and H. Litts regarding AEM and CRF programs and District needs, board member attendance counts as part of our performance measures and is documented in their training plan.
 6. Composed 2024 District Annual Budget.

NRCS: J. Wedemeyer reviewed NRCS Report from O. Velez-Juarbe:

- Contract Deadlines
- Pursuance of Funding
- High Tunnel Projects

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2. WORK REPORTS (Continued)

SWCD: T. Ferry reported:

- AEM
- Inventory and Evaluations
- CRF Round 6
- NYC DEP CAT 494
- Round 27
- No-Till Program
- Misc.

Adam Doan – Stream Project Manager: A. Doan reported:

- Administration
- Stream Management Implementation Program support - SMIP
- Assessment & Monitoring
- Projects
 - Stony Clove SRP
 - Warner Creek SRP
 - Woodland Creek SRP
 - Panther Kill SRP
 - Mink Hollow Bridge
 - Elk Bushkill
 - Hollow Tree Brook
- CSBI
- Meetings/Site Visits

AWSMP: A. Doan reported:

- Administration
- Assessment & Monitoring
- Projects
 - Stony Clove SRP
 - Warner Creek SRP
 - Panther Kill SRP
 - Mink Hollow Bridge
 - Elk Bushkill SRP
 - Woodland SRP
- CSBI Program

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NYS Soil & Water Conservation Committee Region 5 Report: submitted by Ben Luskin – Region 5 Associate Environmental Analyst Report

- Listening Sessions to Advance Bond Act
- Agricultural Non-Point Source Program Round 29
- Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 7
- June SWCC Meeting
- Director Training
- Other Events
- 2023 NY Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Field Days
- 2023 NACD Northeast Regional Conference
- Other Funding: Consolidated Funding Application Requesting Proposals
- Regenerate New York Forestry Cost Share Grant Program
- NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Round 18 – Conservation Easement Projects

3. NEW BUSINESS

a) Board of Directors Annual Training Plan:

J. Wedemeyer said that this Annual Training Plan is typically completed in June.

Training Modules cover basically what Districts do, as well as encompassing Funding Opportunities.

- (Organizational Meeting: where the Election of Officers is held. This was completed in January 2023.)
- Adoption of Annual Plan of Work is due/completed in November.
- Water Quality Symposium – District staff usually attend. (Directors are welcomed to attend)
- Employee Evaluations – Mentioned to wait until things slow down a little bit and have them rather in December/January instead of June.
- Development of Annual Budget
- Attend NYACD Meetings
- Attend Manger & RC&D Meetings
- District Law Training (J. Wedemeyer made mention of the previously completed District Law Training, which is typically done once every three years. This was recently completed by the Board of Directors in November 2022)
- Attend NYSSWCC Meeting (J. Wedemeyer mentioned that meetings can be attended in person in Albany or by Zoom. J. Delaune- Director/Member-At-Large attended this meeting in March 2023)

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- Attend U.C Department of the Environment meetings (J. Wedemeyer said that meetings can be attended in Kingston or by Zoom. Water Quality Coordinating Committee covers items of discussion regarding Esopus Stream Management, Herbicide Applications for the Catskill Mountain Railroad, and Current Water Quality Projects whether they are agricultural or for stream restoration projects.)

J. Wedemeyer is keeping track of a training plan for all of the Board members, as well as what objectives are being met. Jake said that he can email each member a copy of their individual training plans.

J. Wedemeyer shared that Programs and Funding have evolved drastically over the past 4 years.

No action was required for this item of business. It was indicated that this policy was just to be discussed, and acknowledged by all in attendance that it has been formally reviewed.

b) Proposed 2024 Annual Budget

J. Wedemeyer stated that he is proposing that staff receive a 3% raise, and he would accept a 2.5% raise to accommodate employee retention.

J. Wedemeyer added that he would like to also take on a Junior Technician in the future to assist with T. Ferry's District Technician workload/duties. The salary figure was proposed at \$50,000.00.

There was also the mention of taking on part-time clerical staff, namely M. Wagner, at an annual salary of \$25,000. This has been figured into the budget; however, NYC Contract will pay for her services.

Other part-time office help would include our high school help. They would assist with duties associated with the Newsletter, and Fertilizer Tablets etc. Typically, they work 20-30 hours a year. Value remains the same at \$2,500.00 annually.

The rate for Social Security Benefit increases slightly from \$19,665.00 to \$20,673.36.

The annual cost for Retirement increases slightly, as well from \$25,672.50 to \$29,850.66.

Healthcare Benefits cost increases. J. Wedemeyer stated that last year's rate was about 1.6% increase. And, just the other day, a letter was received stating that the Health Insurance rate is now increasing 8.45%.

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The new truck is proposed in the Budget for \$46,000. J. Wedemeyer and T. Ferry wanted to obtain the truck sooner but there were no trucks available. Currently they have a bid for two different trucks. The cost may possibly increase by an additional \$1,800.00.

The cost of the Annual Audit is included in the the budget. J. Wedemeyer stated that it is important do conduct an annual audit since the District is responsible for managing large sums of money with their contractual obligations. . He stated also that the last audit was conducted back in 2017. J. Wedemeyer mentioned that the annual audit would be conducted for both the UCSWCD books and the NYC DEP CAT-494 contract. (CAT-494 Audit will be paid for by the NYC DEP) J. Wedemeyer has proposed \$9,800.00 for 2024, in response to this year's value at \$9,300.00.

No Till Drill Maintenance and Repair has been included at a proposed cost of \$1,500.

Tree and Shrub Program shows a considerable increase. There is a lot of interest in this program. J. Wedemeyer said that he thinks this may have been the first time that they made a profit from the program. Total Cost for the program was \$7,305.000 to buy the Trees, Shrubs, and Fertilizer Tablets. The program's total sales were \$11,632.80. The program's total profits were \$4,327.77. J. Wedemeyer indicated that if you figured in staff time, possibly the total profit would be closer to \$1,000.00. The Tree and Shrub Program is very rewarding, in the sense that you get to meet with the public, and they are very appreciative. Budget value being proposed at \$8,300.00 from the \$4,000.00 value from the year prior.

The Fish Stocking Program only shows a slight increase regarding the budget. Grass Carp only were offered in the May 2023 Sale. Bass, Trout, Minnows, and possibly another fish species will be offered at the Fall sale in October 2023. Total Budgeted amount was \$3,600.00. We paid \$1,183.00 for the Grass Carp. We made \$150.00 in profit for this past May 2023 sale. Budget value being proposed at \$3,600.00 from the \$3,500.00 value from the year prior.

Travel and Training figures for both Directors and Employees increased slightly.

The Internet figure only increased slightly, from \$1,400.00 to \$1,500.00.

Cropware Renewal is \$1,000 a year.

Office Supplies have slightly increased from \$3,500.00 to \$3, 700.00. J. Wedemeyer said that since the NRCS pays for our rent, etc., we have been assisting with paper etc.

Gas and Oil are going up slightly, as well. Figures are increasing from \$2,500.00 to \$2,900.00.

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Figures for the Newsletter remained the same, at \$2,000.00. J. Wedemeyer stated that we are not totally going digital at this time, due to the fact that some of the public do not have access to the internet.

Insurance figures have increased considerably. Figures have increased from \$12,725.00 to \$21,340.00 for insurance, in total. J. Wedemeyer stated that this is namely due to the tragedy in Warner Creek. And, he also added that this rate should hopefully go down in the next year.

Legislator H. Litts, and B. Davenport-Director/Member-At-Large inquired about why we have a Public Officials Policy. It seems that we have not had this policy in the past. J. Wedemeyer stated that since we were dropped, the new insurance carrier has tacked on some new charges.

Legislator K.Nolan stated that she thought the insurance package was reasonable, granted the tragic situation that has forced our rates to climb considerably. She added that she believes that the insurance package may be something similar in comparison to the Officers and Directors policy that Not-for-Profit organizations have.

Legislator P. Erner added that sometimes organizations that work with the County Government share some services with the County, and suggested maybe looking into the Self-Insurance Program that the County has. J. Wedemeyer said that he thought that SWCD has looked into this previously and UCSWCD receives Workman's Compensation from the county.

Legislator K.Nolan stated that this sounds good, and the UCSWCD is like the other soil and water conservation districts under New York State law. This specifies that soil and water conservation districts must have a certain independence, and if SWCD pursued these recommendations that would possibly raise red flags.

J. Wedemeyer stated that Insurance rates in general were on the rise, and that, coupled with the adoption of the new policy, is why our insurance rates doubled.

Also, J. Wedemeyer reminded all present that it is necessary to pay all pertinent bills regarding the required insurance policies, otherwise SWCD would not have certificates of insurance. Certificates of Insurance are necessary to receive funding from the County, the NYC DEP CAT 494 Contract and from NYS Ag and Markets.

J. Wedemeyer now discussed projections for SWCD Revenue.

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Currently, SWCD is averaging roughly \$79,000.00 in revenue from the city contract, based on billable hours. The Ulster County SWCD Proposed 2024 Budget projects \$70,000.00 in revenue as a conservative figure

NYS Technical Services and Reimbursement (Part A) Revenue figures: \$60,000.00 plus we are also receiving at least \$190,000.00 from Part C performance measures funding and \$6,000 Part B funds for small projects. = \$250,000.00 in total.

Part A is \$60,000.00. if the County annual allocation is less than 50% of SWCD overhead.

Part B \$6,000.00 is awarded by NYS for funding for projects such as Arbor Day.

Part C money is awarded by NYS for performance measures. For example, back in 2022 SWCD was awarded \$122,000.00. AWSMP greatly assists SWCD, with checking off a lot of the boxes. The more boxes that are checked off for performance measures, the more money SWCD receives. J. Wedemeyer stated that this past year SWCD received approximately \$182,000.00 in Part C funds receiving a \$59,000.00 increase. If SWCD meets all performance measures: holding 8 quorums, completing the training policy, directors attending managers meetings, completing projects, and checking off more/all boxes, SWCD will receive the full performance measures reimbursement amount next year. J. Wedemeyer did specify that these funds are being used for paying off Retirement Deficiency, Agricultural Projects and a Riparian Buffer Project.

Sales/Services (Soils Group Worksheets, Wildlife Boxes) Revenue figure is projected to increase from \$2,000.00 to \$2,300.00. J. Wedemeyer stated that there has been quite an interest in bird box sales.

Tree and Shrub Revenue is projected to increase from \$1,200.00 to \$11,000.00 in 2024. J. Wedemeyer stated that these figures are based in conjunction with the estimated contractual expense for 2024 of \$8,300.00 for the purchase of the Trees and Shrubs.

Fish and Pond Stocking revenue figure projected to increase to \$4,500.00.

The AEM revenue figure is projected at \$60,000.00. J. Wedemeyer and T. Ferry are trying to dedicate 30% of their time to the AEM program to assist farmers.

J. Wedemeyer also stated that he devotes 37-40% of his time on the NYC DEP Contract, Travis will spend more time on stream restoration projects this summer ..

Stormwater Services are estimated at \$8,500.00. J. Wedemeyer and T. Ferry conduct at least three 4-hour workshops on erosion and sediment control a year. The District does these classes for neighboring counties.

Round 27 Technical Services is projected at \$5,000.00.

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CRF Round 6 Technical Services are estimated at \$2,000.00.

The No-Till Drill Program is projected at \$4,000.00 for 2024, after renting it out to our local farmers in Ulster County. Legislator H. Litts inquired about purchasing another No-Till Drill, if the demand became too high for the only No-Till Drill that SWCD currently has in its possession. J. Wedemeyer stated that he believes that SWCD should hold off for 2-3 years/play it by ear, since only 3 people have rented out the No-Till Drill, this past Spring 2023. J. Wedemeyer added that it takes time for the program to gain popularity by word of mouth, etc. Currently, J. Wedemeyer and T. Ferry are estimating 9-10 people that may be interested in renting the No-Till Drill this coming Fall 2023. Legislator K. Nolan suggested that at some point in the future to visit the consideration of increasing staffing for the No-Till Drill program, due to future possible program demands.

The UCSWCD 's county allocation is \$131,500.00. Legislator K. Nolan added that this figure included the Ulster County Legislature request for a Financial Audit of SWCD and NYC DEP Funds; and Legislator H. Litts added that this was also requested by the Ulster County Comptroller.

Legislator H. Litts stated that after looking at the whole net of the budget, SWCD's expenses increased \$65,000.00, and SWCD's income increased \$25,000.00. J. Wedemeyer added explanation of the balance as such: Retirement Deficiency that UCSWCD is trying to pay down, health insurance costs increasing by 8.45%, the UCSWCD insurance policies doubling and the \$25,000 in part time administrative help that is being paid for by the NYC CAT 494 contract..

Legislator K. Nolan stated that the UCSWCD Budget is balancing at a higher level, due to an increase in personnel staff, as well as doing more work. Legislator K. Nolan suggested that Ulster County should be fine with the allocation of projected funds of \$131,500.00, especially since some of the SWCD's deficits are utilizing internal sources (Part C Money) to rectify.

Ashokan Basin Project Manager- A. Doan suggested pursuing an inquiry into the NYC DEP City Contract, to see if they would be willing to accept some of the insurance cost increase. J. Wedemeyer stated that the NYC DEP shares the cost of Auto and Disability Insurance already. A. Doan added that he could put out a feeler inquiry to the city, and J. Wedemeyer said that he would be willing to provide all necessary invoices that may assist in the inquiry.

Legislator H. Litts suggested pursuing a call to the NYS Insurance Division to see if it's required to have a separate Public Officials Policy. He stated that this policy is an extra cost of \$3,000.00 for SWCD, currently. Legislator K. Nolan stated that Directors and Officers Policy runs roughly \$800.00 or more a year, and rarely ever gets used. Legislator

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K. Nolan suggested flagging this category as a red flag, to follow up on. Legislator K. Nolan also directed a question to Ashokan Basin Project Manager- A. Doan to see if the NYC DEP would be willing to share, theoretically speaking, 50% of the cost. And, if they share the cost, then Legislator K. Nolan stated that we would have that money to utilize for other things. Legislator H. Litts added, as well, that the reason that SWCD has been dropped, and incurring this insurance issue/debate is the result of one of the NYC DEP's Projects. Ashokan Basin Project Manager- A. Doan mentioned the context of a Business Administration Fee, using examples: use of equipment, like printing and the use of QuickBooks, etc. J. Wedemeyer shared that SWCD has an overhead charge of the hourly rate of \$5.00 for the NYC DEP Contract for billable hours. Legislator K. Nolan added that the overhead charge rate should cover phones and software. Legislator K. Nolan also shared that a business administration charge might be worthwhile in pursuing an inquiry for, as well, since we are managing this NYC DEP Project. J. Wedemeyer said that SWCD was discussing this last year and gave the example showing that if CCE gets a flat contract of \$1,000,000.00, they would then charge 20% in addition for administration. Ashokan Basin Project Manager- A. Doan and J. Wedemeyer agreed that Ashokan Basin Project Manager- A. Doan could put some feelers out to their contact, Dave, from NYC DEP, regarding the cost sharing of insurance, and an additional reimbursement for administration, regarding SWCD's maintenance of the NYC DEP Contract.

Legislator K. Nolan made the Motion, seconded by H. Litts to accept the proposed Ulster County SWCD Budget 2024 as presented. All in favor.

c) Part C Finding for AEM Covered Barnyard Project

J. Wedemeyer stated that he had budgeted the full use of the \$50,000 AEM funds for this Covered Barnyard Project. This project's original budget was proposed at \$75,000.00. J. Wedemeyer stated that the farmer cannot afford to pay more than \$25,000.00 to \$30,000.00 of his own money for this project. J. Wedemeyer stated that this contract is going to lapse on December 31, 2023. J. Wedemeyer is proposing to cover up to \$15,000.00 for this Covered Barnyard Project, due to the rise in inflation. Legislator K. Nolan inquired if the purpose of this covered barnyard is to contain the manure storage away from the streams. J. Wedemeyer stated that this farmer currently has an open barnyard, leading to considerable run off. J. Wedemeyer is proposing the \$15,000.00 addition for assistance for this covered barnyard/feeding area, which would eliminatethe open barn yard area and reduce fertilizer use by utilizing manure. The farmer will also be able to sell the manure. Legislator K. Nolan stated that this project seems supportable in reference to the positive benefits of the project aiding with water quality and soil health, and the reduction of the use of fertilizer.

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Legislator K. Nolan made the Motion, seconded by B. Davenport-Director/Member-At-Large to approve up to \$15,000.00 of Part C Funds to be used for the AEM Covered Barnyard Project. All in favor.

d) CRF Round 7 Grant Application Resolutions

T. Ferry has initiated the discussion of two letters of **RESOLUTION of the Ulster County Soil and Water Conservation District Date: 6/28/2023**, that have been provided to all those present in a hard copy format.

****T. Ferry stated that Resolution #2 is requested by UCSWCD to assist with two projects. Project #1 would be to assist with cover crop for a vegetable operation. Project #2 would be assisting an apple producer down in Marlboro, that wants to add mulch and compost around trees to reduce his fertilizer needs. ****

Legislator K. Nolan made the Motion, seconded by Legislator H. Litts to approve both proposed CRF Round 7 Grant Application Resolutions. All in favor.

CRF Round 7 Grant Application Resolutions have been signed by Chairman L. Tantillo.

e) Class C Stream Bill Opposition Letter

T. Ferry advised all present to reference the hard copy handout of this Class C Stream Bill Opposition Letter, for review at this time. T. Ferry stated that this opposition letter has been passed around for review by the NY Association of Conservation Districts. It originated in Hamilton County, NY. The NY State Legislature has attempted for the 4th time to have this amendment passed for the Environmental Conservation Law to require a permit for Class C Streams. Currently only Class C Streams with Trout or Trout spawning are the only streams that currently require a permit. According to the document, "Not all DEC Regions have an MOU with SWCDs, and the process to obtain a MOU is lengthy and complicated; local municipalities and highway departments would be obligated to obtain a permit for any project on what is now classified as C not requiring a DEC permit." According to T. Ferry there has been a recent change that would allow districts to directly enter an MOU with the Regional DEC Office; this would exempt the districts from having to obtain a permit for Class C Streams. T. Ferry said that this may possibly bring projects to USWCD under an MOU, if we got into one.

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This Letter has been vetoed the last three times that it has been passed through the Legislature.

Legislator K. Nolan supports the idea for this letter to be reviewed for informational purposes only. Legislator K. Nolan believes that if we wanted to pursue our participation for this Opposition Letter, then UCSWCD would have to review each justification for veto.

Legislator H. Litts added advisement, stating that the only problem with not maintaining stream health, is that this would directly correlate with hurting soil health, and increase the possibility for erosion, and siltation. Legislator H. Litts offered in discussion a recent situation. There have been 2 farmers that have maintained streams for over 123 years. When Scenic Hudson did not allow them to maintain the streams any longer, then the streams flooded the farmer's land, as well as the neighboring farmer's land. Soil migrated through the swamps; the cricket frogs are becoming endangered. Siltation is occurring which in turn is not beneficial for habitat, vegetation, and can directly influence pollinators. Legislator H. Litts stated that UCSWCD requires SWPPP (Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan) on all projects. The bottom line is that by not maintaining streams, soil health is compromised.

J. Wedemeyer also added that these farmers did not plant cover crops. UCSWCD had funds for them for cover crop planting reimbursement, but they were not able to plant cover crops, since the soils were too water saturated. J. Wedemeyer stated that this situation was largely due to a simple stream maintenance issue on lands owned by Scenic Hudson – removing rocks that were placed in the stream by hikers.

Legislator K. Nolan stated that she sees that this is designed to prevent people going in the stream and making things worse, but she understands the points being addressed. Legislator K. Nolan stands firm that she is against UCSWCD sending a letter. Legislator K. Nolan stated that the Board could still vote and approve a response to this letter request, but she stands against sending the response.

J. Wedemeyer added that UCSWCD maintains neutrality politically. The only intent to include this discussion item for review at this Board Meeting was to keep all Directors apprised on what is going on at the state level, and it was not intended for advocacy of the drafting of a letter on the part of UCSWCD.

A. Doan advised that in a general sense there are valid points, however, he has also seen on a case-by-case basis similar situations regarding areas of the Adirondacks, ultimately resulting in unintended consequences. A. Doan feels that if the majority agrees to send a

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response; then send a letter possibly taking a neutral position addressing staffing and functionality, as well as an inquiry on possible restrictions/impediments for the work that is currently performed by our organization.

F. Wilklow added that in order to obtain a permit for stream maintenance and repairs, it requires public hearings, and it takes months to obtain.

Legislator K. Nolan mentioned the possibility of looking into drafting something in an expedited process, with the inquiry regarding pre-existing maintenance, which is shown to not increase sedimentation. Legislator K. Nolan suggested looking to the Stream Management Program for guidance or language on this issue, and that we would be the right organization to handle this.

R. Davenport stated that the DEC already has ample control of all the streams and offered information in reference to the lower Esopus. R. Davenport described situations where a farmer isn't allowed to move a downed tree that is blocking the flow of the stream, and causing flooding of the land, or allowed to dig a site for irrigation.

T. Ferry added that the only way to properly remove a log from a stream would be to have the excavator machine on the top of the bank, and then the log would have to be cabled out.

A. Doan added an example of DEC law interpretation. He stated that in some part of the law set by the DEC, it may state that you wouldn't be able to disturb the bank of the stream. He gave an example of pulling out a big root wad, that could do more damage than foreseen, and that could become a big issue with the DEC.

T. Ferry also shared that the Wallkill River is a Class C Stream that still doesn't require a permit.

T. Ferry and A. Doan both stated that all watershed projects do require a permit.

F. Wilklow added an example of when he had a logger request permission to re-build a bridge that had collapsed from the use of the logging equipment; the bridge allowed passage from the adjacent property to his property. F. Wilklow had given a go ahead to allow the re-build. However, he said that the DEC had to come out, and in the end the whole process ended up taking a few months. So, he suggested to plan well in advance.

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A. Doan and T. Ferry also offered that there are most likely staffing issues affecting the slow response times.

J. Wedemeyer added that it does usually take a few months for response time.

No action was required for this item of business at this time. It was indicated that this policy was just to be discussed, and acknowledged by all in attendance that it has been formally reviewed.

4. OLD BUSINESS

a) External District Audit:

M. Wagner and J. Wedemeyer completed the NYC DEP Reconciliation of \$547,000.00. This reconciliation covers a three-year timeframe.

J. Wedemeyer and J. Witkowski worked with the auditors. J. Witkowski observed, while J. Wedemeyer discussed inquiries regarding policies and procedures, and where the money goes. J. Wedemeyer explained that all funds are deposited into dedicated accounts. J. Wedemeyer discussed that UCSWCD performs Quarterly Reconciliations, and Monthly Bank Statement Review. Once a month M. Wagner and J. Wedemeyer sit down to discuss the monthly bank statement. The auditors are making sure that the bank statements match what is being tracked.

Auditors are returning on July 27th 2023 to wrap up the NYC DEP end of the audit. After the NYC DEP audit is concluded, they will work on our district finances. The Official Audit Report will be finalized and made available sometime in October-November 2023.

This Audit will occur on an annual basis going forward.

b) Logo and Spare Tire/Hub Assembly for No-Till Drill:

T. Ferry advised that we ordered the decals for the No-Till Drill. There were some modifications and file format changes that had to be made to our logo. The cost of the logo is going to be \$50.00 per decal. Total Cost will be \$100.00 for two decals. Spare Tire/Hub Assembly has been delivered and in UCSWCD's possession.

5. Minutes Approval – May 2023

Motion was made by F. Wilklow Director/Member-At-Large, seconded by R. Davenport Director/Member-At-Large to approve the May 2023 minutes as presented. All in favor.

6. Reports and Abstract – May 2023

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After reviewing the May Abstract of 2023, Legislator H. Litts reviewed the Insurance Policy Breakdown. It was at this time he suggested to call the NYS Insurance Fund and inquire whether it's necessary/required to have the Employee Dishonest Bond, or Public Officials Policy.

Legislator K. Nolan suggested pursuing obtaining other Insurance Quotes.

Motion by Legislator K. Nolan, seconded by F. Wilklow Director/Member-At-Large to approve the May 2023 financials and abstract. All in favor.

7. Next Meeting

Scheduled for July 26th 7 PM.

8. Adjournment

Legislator H. Litts made the Motion, seconded by both Legislator K. Nolan and

F. Wilklow Director/Member-At-Large to adjourn the meeting at 9:10pm.

All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jocelyn Witkowski

Program Assistant in Training

Reviewed and Corrected by J. Wedemeyer, Executive Director, UCSWCD

JLW Activities May 17 through June 21 2023

AEM: AEM Tier 4 – Covered barnyard final design is completed, project is ready to go out to bid, composed landowner contract T/O Marbletown. AEM Tier 1, T/O Saugerties. AEM Education, T/O Saugerties – visited newer farm operation, discussed AEM program and grant opportunities. AEM Tier 4 – Sub-surface drainage system, T/O Esopus. AEM Tier 2 farm visit for rotational grazing and livestock watering system, T/O Marlborough. AEM Tier 4 – Irrigation preliminary design and cost estimate, T/O Marbletown. AEM Tier 4 – cover crop program sign up assistance, T/O Hurley. AEM Tier 4, rotational grazing system, obtained lease agreement and composed invitation to bid and landowner contract. AEM Outreach, assisted CCE of Ulster County with contacting 18 agricultural producers. AEM Tier 4, no-till drill delivery and set up, T/O Olive. AEM Tier 4, no till drill sign up assistance, T/O Saugerties. AEM Tier 4, no till drill set up assistance, T/O New Paltz. AEM Tier 4 – claim for payment for implementation, AEM Round 17. AEM Tier 5B – nutrient management and farm planning, T/O Wawarsing.

Inventory and Evaluations: Glen Street, City of Kingston – completed field assessment and preliminary design and recommendations, discussed maintenance recommendations with landowner. Erik Schellenberg, T/O Lloyd – ongoing assistance for drainage maintenance agreement with Scenic Hudson. Tom Maynard, T/O Esopus – assistance with NYS DEC Pumping Permit application for irrigation. Carlo DeStephano, T/O Plattekill – field visit, sub-surface drainage layout. Dom Sorbello, T/O Lloyd – soil and wetlands mapping for potential farmland rental. T/O Marlborough Assessor’s office – assistance with soil group worksheet and farming operation verification. Participated in Lower Esopus Stream Management Plan meetings. Alex Dzieduszkzcki, T/O Gardiner – soils assistance for potential farming operation. Rachel Queonemoen, T/O Rochester – soils and wetlands mapping. Martin Hensel, T/O Olive – assisted T. Ferry with pond site enhancement.

Part B Arbor Day Initiative: George Washington School Arbor Day Planting on June 9th. Partnered with UC Department of the Environment.

NYC DEP CAT 494: Contract administration, reviewed and approved timesheets, payroll delivery, assistance with advance requests for funding, provided certificates of insurance, working with external auditor with the CAT 494 contract. Bi-Weekly meetings with AWSMP staff. Assistance with Elk Bush Kill project regarding permit status, final design status and invitation to bid. Drone purchase memo to DEP. Bank transfer reconciliations. Herbicide application letter to DEP for Mugwort abatement, Woodland Valley SRP.

District Updates/Other Projects:

- Working with CCE of Ulster County to do another “Meat the Farmer” event in October 2023.
- No-Till Program – Travis and I are administering the no-till rental program, Margarete is doing the invoicing.
- Working with Rockland County SWCD to teach a 4 Hour Erosion and Sediment Control Course in October 2023.
- Working on CRF Round 7 applications.
- Attended Manager’s meeting with L. Tantillo and H. Litts regarding AEM and CRF programs and District needs, board member attendance counts as part of our performance measures and is documented in their training plan.
- Composed 2024 District Annual Budget.

TRF Activities May 17, 2023 – June 21, 2023

AEM: Tier 2 – T/O Marlborough – Tier 1 and 2 site visit for livestock grazing issues. Tier 4 – T/O Ulster – deliver drainage tile designs. Tier 3A – T/O Saugerties – work on cover crop plan. Tier 1 & 2 – T/O Ulster – site visit for cover crop planning. Tier 1 – T/O Saugerties – site visit to see what programs the farm could qualify for/work with us. Tier 4 – T/O Marbletown – get BY contract signed. Tier 4 – T/O Olive – pickup no-till drill. Tier 4 – T/O Rochester – get rotational grazing contract signed. Tier 4 – T/O New Paltz – drill delivery and setup/calibration for sorghum summer cover crop. Tier 3A – T/O Ulster – work on 3A cover crop plan.

Inventory and Evaluations: T/O Lloyd – Erik Schellenberg – black dirt/scenic Hudson drainage issue meeting. C/O Kingston – George Washington School – look at planting site for Arbor Day Program. T/O Shawangunk – Dom Hassler – phone call about fill on property questions. Sullivan Co – Streambank erosion call from property owner just across the border in Sullivan County, directed to Sullivan Co. SWCD. T/O Plattekill – Destefano – walk and survey hayfield for drainage. T/O New Paltz – Gavin Rinkor – help troubleshoot hydraulic hookup issues with no-till drill. T/O Shokan – Martin Hensel/Chris Sheller – pond silting in/manure pump to clean out questions. Karen, CCE Master Gardener – questions about Japanese knotweed removal programs available to residents. Kathleen Koster – call about caterpillars on oak trees.

CRF Round 6: No activity.

NYC DEP CAT 494: No activity.

Round 27: No activity.

No-Till Program: Received our spare tire and hub assembly. Drill has been out on 2 more farms. Seeded Sorghum Sudan on roughly 7 ac. Still working on getting decals for drill. Needed to make some modifications and file format changes to our logo. Picked up a few more tools for the no-till drill.

Misc: Worked on getting our new truck mini-bid back on the state bid list. Started working on 2 proposals for CRF Round 7.

A. Doan – Stream Project Manager

- Administration
 - Responded to major email/IT issue that disrupted email access to AWSMP staff for multiple weeks
 - Updated FY24, Q1 Expense request for funds docs and coordinated with DEP and JW
 - Met w/ Leslie and Adam Trescott re: Adam's new role with AWSMP as DEP project manager and timeline for transition
 - Responded to DEP request for info related to FY24, Q1 Expense RFF
 - Responded to DEP request for info related to FY24, Q1 Capital RFF and recon docs
 - Responded to DEP request for info related to FY23, Q2 Capital recon
 - Provided CAT494 docs to assist with UCSWCD audit
- Stream Management Implementation Program support- SMIP
 - Attended meeting and assisted Town of Hunter and AWSMP staff with limits of study area determination and review of Scope of Work for Lanesville Local Flood Analysis SMIP grant application
 - Provided assistance to Big Indian Mountain Association over proposed stream work and rejected SMIP application funding
 - Reviewed status of Town of Shandaken LOMR with SLR
- Assessment & Monitoring
 - Filed visit w/ AL to determine monitoring strategy at Panther Kill SRP and Stony Clove SRP
 - Reviewed site selection data for evaluation of potential 2025/26 restoration sites
 - Broadstreet Hollow SFI coordination and coms w/ SLR assessment staff
 - Weekly to daily check-ins with Mark and Allison
- Projects
 - Stony Clove SRP
 - Completed lessons learned site visit w/ SLR and AWSMP staff
 - Site visit to evaluate status of plantings and re-seeding efforts
 - Received and reviewed cost proposal for invasive species treatment
 - Coordinated with herbicide applicator regarding permitting and schedule
 - Warner Creek SRP
 - Woodland Creek SRP
 - Received and reviewed cost proposal for invasive species treatment
 - Coordinated with herbicide applicator regarding permitting and schedule
 - Coordinated with landowner association regarding next steps and treatment dates
 - Panther Kill SRP
 - Received revised as-built and began review
 - Site visit to evaluate status of plantings and re-seeding efforts
 - Mink Hollow Bridge

- Received as-built and began review
 - Elk Bushkill
 - Completed 90% design review/coordinated comments from DEP and submitted review tracking log to Stantec
 - Completed final design/spec review and provided comments to Stantec
 - Completed additional bid docs for bid package
 - Multiple meetings and coms between staff, DEP and Stantec to advance plans
 - Provided updates to landowners re: project status and estimated timeline
 - Proposed and coordinated bid schedule with SWCD, DEP and Stantec staff
 - Drafted and released Invitation to Bid
 - Completed site visit w/ A. Lent to evaluate proposed edits to 90% design
 - Coordinated No Rise certification and floodplain development permit w/ staff and Stantec
 - Outreach and coordination w/ ACOE re: permit status/application
 - Hollow Tree Brook
 - Completed draft design contract based on SLR scope of work
- CSBI
 - Weekly to daily check-ins with Bobby

Meetings/Site Visits

- Bridge Street Bridge meeting w/ SLR
- AWSMP Stream Ecosystem Working Group
- Elk Bushkill SRP design review meeting w/ Stantec
- Post-flood Training development meeting
- Bridge Street Bridge modeling meeting w/ SLR
- Bridge Street Bridge funding meeting w/ DEP
- SAFARI – Shandaken flood committee meeting
- Elk Bushkill SRP planting plan meeting w/ Stantec
- Town of Hunter flood committee meeting re: Lanesville LFA
- Elk Bushkill SRP bid docs and spec meeting w/ Stantec
- Big Indian Mountain Association meeting re: proposed stream work
- Monthly Project Managers meeting with DEP, CCE
- Weekly check-in call w/ Jake (multiple over period)
- SAFARI meeting – Shandaken flood committee
- Ulster Co. Department of Environment planner check-in meeting
- Post-flood intervention training development meetings – working on a 2023 training for Town highway, contractors, etc. that may be involved in post-storm recovery related to streams
- Site visit – Stony Clove SRP for post-construction monitoring
- Site visit – Panther Kill SRP for post-construction monitoring
- Site visit – Stony CLOVE SRP site walk with SLR re: lessons learned
- Site visit – G. Cornett: bank erosion Town of Woodstock
- Site visit – Town of Olive flood buyout property in Boiceville for reuse evaluation

Updates June 2023

Ashokan Watershed Stream Management Program

- Administration
 - Submitted Expense request for funds (RFF) to DEP
 - Responded to DEP request for additional info related to Capital and Expense RFF's and reconciliations
 - Held first meeting with Town of Hunter flood commission which is seeking funding for a Local Flood Analysis in Lanesville
 - Submitted purchase request for UAV purchase to DEP
 - All staff participating in planning of AWSMP conference in late July

- Assessment & Monitoring
 - Welcomed 2023 SUNY Ulster interns who will be assisting with field work
 - Completed project monitoring at Woodland Creek SRP
 - In addition to the Ulster interns Allison and Mark have also been orienting new CCE staff to filed procedures and assessment protocols
 - Mark is progressing UAV licensing and training
 - Next site will be the Elk Bushkill SRP and paired reach for the fisheries study

- Projects
 - Stony Clove SRP
 - Tracking germination on reseeded sections
 - SLR conducting stormwater inspections post storms
 - Working with certified applicator on repeat treatment of Japanese knotweed in project area
 - Awaiting as-built and report for review from SLR

 - Warner Creek SRP
 - Post-construction monitoring to continue via DEP and UCSWCD efforts for next 5 years

 - Panther Kill SRP
 - Tracking germination on reseeded sections
 - Reviewing as-built
 - Retainage to be released once 80% coverage obtained

 - Mink Hollow Bridge
 - CCE has begun close out of project
 - CSBI landowner will continue to receive assistance from Bobby and may require fencing

 - Elk Bushkill
 - Received and reviewed 90 and 100% design submission
 - Project is currently out to bid with pre-bid site showing on 6/28
 - Following up with landowners on 100% design and construction schedule

Continued on back

- Woodland SRP
 - Working on herbicide application via certified applicator to address mugwort infestation
- CSBI
 - Completed planning/design on interpretive panels at Emerson buffer walk
 - Seeded wildflower mix at Mink Hollow Bridge CSBI site
 - Evaluating need for deer fencing at Mink Hollow CSBI site
 - Working on CSBI programming for 2023 Ashokan Watershed conference

New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee
Region 5 Report – June 2023
Submitted by: Ben Luskin – Region 5 Associate Environmental Analyst

NYS SWCC News

Listening Sessions to Advance Bond Act: Governor Hochul has announced the details for the next couple locations in the statewide educational listening tour to advance the \$4.2 billion Clean Water, Clean Air and Green Jobs Environmental Bond Act. The tour provides an opportunity for the public and potential funding applicants to learn more about the Bond Act and the draft eligibility guidelines being developed to identify potential projects. Details are being finalized for additional locations, as well as two virtual meetings. To register for any of these sessions, visit <https://www.ny.gov/programs/clean-water-clean-air-and-green-jobs-environmental-bond-act>

- **Central New York: June 8, from 1 to 3 p.m.,** State University of New York Cortland, Corey Union Function Room
- **North Country: July 14, 1 to 3 p.m.,** North Country Community College, Sparks Athletic Complex Alumni Gymnasium

Agricultural Non-Point Source Program Round 29: \$13.5 million is available to support agricultural water quality conservation projects across the State. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **4:30 PM June 26, 2023**.

Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 7: \$15 million is available to support projects. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **4:30 PM August 7, 2023**.

June SWCC Meeting: The next SWCC meeting is scheduled to convene at **10:00 AM on June 20th**. Further details and an agenda for this meeting will be sent out shortly. **Reminder – participation at a SWCC meeting is eligible toward PM1, Part C of State Aid to Districts.**

Director Training: A reminder that your Regional AEA is available to present training modules to your Board of Directors. Most notably the District Law training module which is training required every 3 years under the Performance Measure 1. Please reach out to your Regional AEA if you have any training needs. Additionally, the District Law training module is available to complete virtually via VIMEO: <https://vimeo.com/446525792>

Other Events

Training Opportunity - Seeking Competition in Procurement: The Office of the State Comptroller's Legal Division will discuss legal requirements for competitive bidding, including statutory amendments to the General Municipal Law § 103 and various exceptions to the bidding requirements. **Thursday, Jun 22nd, 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**. Register here, <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/2233481280518001238>

2023 NY Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Field Days: The NY Soil Health Alliance Group will convene a series of Soil Health & Climate Resiliency Field Day's throughout the State during 2023. Registration is now live for the **June 22nd-23rd event at the Ontario County Fair Grounds** and the **July 13th orchard event at the Rodman Lott and Son Farms in Seneca Falls**. Visit, <https://www.newyorksoilhealth.org/fielddays/> for more information and to register.

2023 NACD Northeast Regional Conference - Save the Date: This year the conference will be held in Portland, ME at the Portland Sheraton at Sable Oaks on **September 17-20, 2023**. Further details will be available shortly.

Other Funding

Consolidated Funding Application Requesting Proposals: Round XIII of the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) is open and applications are requested by **4:00 p.m. on Friday, July 28, 2023**. More than \$750,000,000 in funding will be made available under this year's CFA. Grant programs of interest to SWCDs offered via the CFA include:

- Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) Program - <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/4774.html>

- Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning and MS4 Mapping Grant - <https://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/116725.html>

Regenerate New York Forestry Cost Share Grant Program: Funding for private landowners with five acres of land or more is available to support the regeneration of forests so they may continue to deliver vital services such as mitigating climate change, protecting air and water quality, and supporting the economy. A minimum of \$10,000 and a maximum of \$100,000 with a 25% match requirement is available. Applications for Round 3 will close **Friday, October 6th, 2023 at 5:00pm**, or when funds are exhausted, whichever comes first. For more information and to apply, visit:

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/119950.html>. **Soil & Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) are able to apply for funds on behalf of private landowners.**

NYS Farmland Protection Implementation Grants Round 18 - Conservation Easement Projects – A reminder that these applications are taken on a rolling basis. The intent of the grant program is to fund the implementation of certain farmland protection activities intended to maintain the economic viability of the State’s agricultural industry and its supporting land base and to protect the environmental and landscape preservation values associated with agriculture. For more information about applying, please visit, <https://agriculture.ny.gov/land-and-water/rfa-0238-farmland-protection-implementation-grants-round-18-conservation-easement>