BOARD MEETING MINUTES
ULSTER COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
5 PARK LANE
HIGHLAND, NY 12528
July 22, 2026

1. **OPENING MEETING** - The **MEETING** was **CALLED TO ORDER** by Chairman L. Tantillo at 9:14 AM. Directors Present: L. Tantillo, J. Kovacs, F. Wilklow and K. Nolan. SWCD Staff in attendance: J. Wedemeyer - Executive Director, C. DeGroodt - Program Assistant and T. Ferry – NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee (NYS SWCC).

2. **WORK REPORTS**
Written staff reports were mailed and emailed to Board Members prior to the meeting for review (attached to the filed minutes).

a) SWCD

J. Wedemeyer - (see attached staff report)

The two new District Technicians started two weeks ago and both have been doing a great job. Wedemeyer mentioned that Jaffee has prior construction experience. Both techs have been busy moving field equipment and visiting various job sites for construction inspections.

Inventory and Evaluations - Wedemeyer assisted the Town of Woodstock with the operation and maintenance for stormwater detention basins.

SWP-101 Update – The Broad Street Hollow Stream Restoration Project will be starting next week.

Round 27 – Ag chemical mixing facilities will be constructed and completed on two farms by Friday.

Climate Resilient Farming (CRF) Round 7 Update – An irrigation water management system has been completed on a local farm and it passed the pressure test for the final certification.

District Updates/Other Projects – Wedemeyer met with Legislators Laura Donovan and Jay Mahler to discuss agricultural issues, the orchard killing frost and ways that the County and Soil and Water can help the farmers. He gave them an update on the NYS Tariff Relief Program which can assist farms and also discussed the cost of a 5' no-till drill for the District. Wedemeyer asked Director Wilklow whether or not he felt a 5' drill would be useful for farmers and Wilklow replied that it would.

The District's annual audit went very well and no issues were reported. Wedemeyer mentioned how well he and DeGroodt work together. It's a lot of work and a team effort keeping up with all of the financial paperwork for two offices.

C. DeGroodt – (see attached staff report)

DeGroodt mentioned to the Board that the auditor would like to attend a board meeting to discuss the audit results.

M. Flannery – (see attached staff report)

T. Jaffee – (see attached staff report) – Nolan asked if the trusses and framing on a local farm project that were listed on Jaffee's report were for an irrigation system. Wedemeyer said they were for an agricultural chemical mixing facility.

b) AWSMP

B. Taylor – (see attached staff report)

I. Gedicks – (see attached staff report)

M. Tollefson – (see attached staff report)

G. Bonse – (see attached staff report)

c) NRCS

O. Velez-Juarbe – NRCS has been working on contract obligations, which have an August 7, 2026 deadline.

d) NYS SWCC

T. Ferry – (see attached Region 6 report)

Ferry reminded the Board that the end of the year is fast approaching and that we should check on the status of our Performance Measures. There will be up to $323,000.00 available to each District for completing their 2026 Performance Measures.

Since we are now out of the extended "black out" period, any Claim for Payments the District may have submitted should be getting paid soon.

Nolan asked if the District is involved with the Ulster County Fair. Wedemeyer responded that we used to be, but not any longer.

3. NEW BUSINESS

a) Health Insurance – As of a few years ago, new District staff (Highland) started paying 10% of the cost of their health insurance which now is approximately $180/month per employee, while the Ashokan employees have 100% of their health insurance paid for by the NYS DEP. Wedemeyer feels that the District is now in a good financial position to pay the employees' share of the health insurance (currently one employee) out of Part C funds. He added that 100% of the cost of the health insurance has already been included in the budget and that we should invest in our employees. Tantillo agreed. Wilklow asked how much the 10% amounts to per year per employee. Wedemeyer said approximately $2,200.00. Nolan said that there was significant contention in the Ulster County Legislature in the past regarding how the District's NYS Retirement and the health insurance was paid, and that the 10% health insurance staff share was to show that the District was not asking the County to pay for 100% of everything. Nolan said it would be helpful to know the balance owed for the NYS Retirement and when it will be paid off because maybe we should hold off on paying the employees' share of the health

insurance. There was discussion regarding how Part C funding is being spent as it's also used to pay for the NYS Retirement and Wedemeyer added that NYS Retirement has always been paid for out of Part C funds and not paid for by the County. Nolan asked if the Board approves this change, would there be any change to the budget that's presented to the County this year or any increase to next year's budget for this. Wedemeyer said that there would be no change. **2026-7-22-1 Nolan made the Motion, Kovacs seconded, that the District pay 100% of the health insurance costs using Part C funds commencing with the next pay period. All in favor.**

b) **2026 Cover Crop Program –** In an effort to increase local adoption of soil health improving practices, as well as improve farm economic viability, the Ulster County SWCD implements a soil health program for farms in Ulster County. A total of $60,000.00 is available for funding cover crops. Each farm can be reimbursed up to $6,000.00. The application deadline is September 30, 2026. See attached information sheet and application form. Ferry said that the planting dates are taken from the USDA. Nolan asked if they can plant in between the rows. Wilklow said that you can't. The District has been paying an average of $40,000/year to farms.

c) IT Services – After the Agenda had been sent out for this meeting, Wedemeyer realized that staff can use Google Drive to share files. A brief discussion followed. The District may need to purchase an additional computer in order to install ArcPro on it as we are unsure when the new technicians will be able to join the federal system. At June's Board meeting, Directors approved spending up to $1,000.00 on a new laptop for one of the Technicians. Since less than half of the money was spent on one, Nolan suggested using the remainder to purchase the additional computer.

d) HR Services – The District has been researching Human Resources (HR) Services as a way to make sure we are up to compliance (Sexual Harassment, Workplace Violence, issues with coworkers, etc.). A place where employees can seek advice and can also be used as a payroll service should the need ever arise. Wedemeyer received price quotes from two companies: GTM Payroll & HR - $165/hour and Employee Direct Contact - $600/month plus a one-time set-up fee of $650 (9th month free to off-set this charge). Nolan suggested that the Board review the information passed out and interview both firms. She would like the District to ask GTM if they would charge a monthly fee because when it's by the hour, it's less access for the employees. If the District did choose to pay per hour, she'd recommend having a certain amount of hours that are covered. Nolan said that we could probably have a non-profit group look over our Personnel Manual and that it would also be a good idea to ask the DEP what they do for their employees. Nolan mentioned a third firm that she's had good experiences with called RUN ADP, which does payroll and HR, that is competitive and is largely online.

4. OLD BUSINESS

a) **2026 Chevy Silverado Purchase –** Wedemeyer told the Board that the truck has been ordered. Once the District receives it, we will put the 2019 Colorado up for bid.

5. Board Meeting Minutes Approval – 2026-7-22-2 Nolan made the Motion, Kovacs seconded, to approve the June Board Meeting Minutes and July 6th Special Board Meeting Minutes as written. All in favor.

6. FINANCIAL REPORTS AND ABSTRACTS – 2026-7-22-3 Nolan made the Motion, Kovacs seconded, to approve the June Financial Report and Abstract as presented. All in favor.

7. NEXT MEETING - The next Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, September 23, 2026 at 9:00 AM.

2026-7-22-4 Nolan made the Motion, Kovacs seconded, to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters at 10:16 AM. All in favor.

The Board came out of Executive Session at 10:56 AM. No Motions were adopted, passed, or agreed to in Executive Session.

2026-7-22-5 Nolan made a motion, Kovacs seconded, to approve a salary increase of $2,475.00 for DeGroodt effective the next pay period. All in favor.

8. ADJOURNMENT

2026-7-22-6 A Motion was made by Nolan to Adjourn the Meeting at 10:58 AM, seconded by Kovacs. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine DeGroodt
Program Assistant

JLW Activities – June 18 through July 15, 2026

AEM: AEM Tier 4 – Row mulcher delivery, T/O Marlboro. AEM Tier 4 – No till drill delivery, T/O Lloyd. AEM Tier 5B – Tier 2 updates, T/O Ulster. AEM Tier 4 – Preconstruction meeting for irrigation system, T/O New Paltz. AEM Tier 4 – No till drill delivery, T/O Rochester. AEM Program Evaluation – reviewed and approved missing conservation plan items that were added to conservation plans for multiple farms. AEM Tier 4 – Provided summer cover crop recommendations and seeding rates, T/O Lloyd. AEM Tier 4 – On Farm Secondary Containment Facility siting.

Inventory and Evaluations: Heather King, T/O Marbletown - Flood mitigation assistance and preliminary mapping. T/O Woodstock Highway Department - Operation and maintenance for a sediment basin. Mark Bruban, T/O Wawarsing - Lime spreader rental assistance. T/O Woodstock- Potential oil leak from highway garage, correspondence with Sawkill group.

NYC DEP SWP-101: Project Managers monthly meetings. Received the Broad Street Hollow stream restoration project out to bid and permit and pre-construction meeting on 7/13, as well as coordination for hazard tree identification with certified arborist. Assistance to selected contractor with insurances and PASSport enrollment. CAT 494 final contract closeout for Capital account/DEP reimbursement. Reviewing and approving invoices for stream restoration engineering design and contract expenses. Bridge Street design firm interviews with UC DPW (two firms). Hollow Tree Brook final design meeting with Stantec. Completed contract between UCSWCD and Kinsley construction for BSH stream restoration project, signed and notarized.

Round 27: Construction in progress at two farms, concrete is scheduled to be poured the week of 7/20/26.

CRF Round 7: Irrigation system is completed, passed pressure test for final certification.

District Updates/Other Projects:

- District Technician Position – Final interviews completed and two candidates were selected and accepted the position.
- Ulster County - Meeting with Legislator Laura Donohue and Jay Mahr to discuss agricultural issues, orchard killing frost and ways the county and UCSWCD can help. Updated Jay and Laura Donovan of outreach for NYS tariff relief program to help farms and priced out 5' no till drill.
- District Technician onboarding
- Contacted two Human Resources Firms for services, obtained two quotes.
- Assisted Suffolk County SWCD with contacts for bio-char carbonator.
- NYS SWCC SPAC meeting/CCA credits.
- NYS DEC Wetlands training.
- External audit preparation with C. DeGroodt.

Christine DeGroodt
6/17/26 – 7/14/26

NYS Retirement and NYS Deferred Comp – I continued to do the monthly reporting for NYS Retirement and submit employees' NYS Deferred Comp contributions.

SWP-101 Contracts – Most of my time has been spent working on the two SWP-101 quarterly reports. Both the 3rd quarter and 4th quarter reports for both Capital and Expense have been completed in time for the audit this Thursday.

An intern at the Ashokan office was added to the District's insurance.

A check to Garfinkle in the amount of $65.98 to reimburse him for travel expenses was lost in the mail. The bank voided the check for us and I issued him a new one.

I emailed specific financials to the auditors ahead of the in-person audit, per their request.

Misc. – The most recent version of Quickbooks is now up and running (so far, so good).

Forms were completed and signed to renew the District's Professional Liability.

Sandor was removed from the District's insurance, WEX account and credit card. The two new District Technicians were added. Both are also set up for direct deposit paychecks.

The District sent a check in the amount of $3,600.00 to The Mount Academy for the NCF Envirothon per the Board's approval at last month's Board Meeting.

Forms were filled out and submitted to renew the District's health insurance.

The quarterly Federal Income Tax and the NYS Income Tax reports were submitted and the NYS Income Tax report was sent to Ulster County Self Insurance per their request.

July 14 – Meeting Minutes, Marisa Flannery

- Laptop/Microsoft, email, NYS Retirement set up
- Site visits
    - Clarke Farm
        - Met with NRCS and the concrete foreman to confirm specs on pole barn
    - Dubois Farm
        - Brief visit with contractors to check on pole barn building process
        - Took photos of construction progress
    - Broadstreet Hollow
        - Met with Kinsley Construction crew, UCSWCD Ashokan team, DEP Risk Management Officer to discuss project in greater detail
        - Walked throughout the site, noting hazardous and take-down trees
- Read through Training Links documents
- Signed up for PennState Ext. Ag101 Certification Course and started it

Tyler Jaffee
District Technician

July UCSWCD Board Meeting Work Report

Helped look over agrichemical mixing projects for nutrients, herbicides or insecticide applications at DuBois and Clark farms. At Broad Street Hollow farm, we met with contractors and the Department of Environmental Protection to review and help oversee plans and challenges associated with the stream bank restoration taking place.

Reviewed training documents and online sources. Set up email.

Conducted and documented a site inspection of Dubois farms. Looked at lateral, W, V, and X trusts. Observed the framing, headers and post spacing.

Ian Gedicks

Stream Technical Specialist

July UCSWCD Board Meeting Work Report

Stream Feature Inventory

- 2026 SFI Beaver Kill: reassessing Management Units 1-3
  - Have reassessed just under 2 miles of stream so far

Geomorphic Assessments

- Completed geomorphic assessments at Broadstreet Hollow STRP and Hollow Tree Brook STRP.

Broadstreet Hollow STRP

- Spending a large amount of time reviewing design and other relevant materials in order to prepare for construction oversight
- Attended Broadstreet Hollow preconstruction meeting

Post Project Monitoring

- Completed field work earlier this spring
  - Warner Creek Site 1 & Site 2: Completed Year 5 Geomorphic survey
  - Stony Clove above Jansen: Completed Year 3 Geomorphic survey
  - Elk Bush Kill STRP: Completed Year 3 Geomorphic survey
- Will work on monitoring reports for aforementioned sites after field season

Modified Bank Erosion Monitoring Study (BEMS)

- On hold for now due to busy field season
- Need to continue drafting an Upper Esopus Creek Turbidity Reduction Management Strategy

Other

- Interns, Nick and Chloe have been helping with the field work so far
- Spent 2 days shadowing Greene County SCWD on STRP projects in order to learn how they handle construction oversight

July Board Report (6/18/25 – 7/15/26) Mark Tollefson – Watershed Technician

- **General Office Work**
    - Continued ongoing GIS data management and technical assistance within AWSMP
- **Training**
    - N/A
- **Assessment & Monitoring**
    - Broadstreet Hollow STRP site visit with CCE
    - Broadstreet Hollow Geomorphic Survey
    - Hollow Tree Brook Geomorphic Survey
    - SFI Beaverkill Preparation
    - RiverMorph data processing of BSH/HTB
    - Started Beaverkill SFI below Willow Flats
    - Assisting Brooke in field note scanning and RiverMorph data inputting
- **Meetings**
    - N/A

July 2026 Board Report-Bonse

Office Work

- Produced maps using ARC GIS Pro. Maps to be used in RCMPs, additional CSBI usage, and other future efforts conducted by AWSMP

Stream Monitoring

- Assisted in both office and field work
- Assisted in all necessary tasks
- Assisted in Broadstreet hollow and Elk Bushkill stream assessment
- Participated in Vegetation Monitoring for SRPs
- Participated in SFI

CSBI & Site Maintenance

- Monitored multiple sites, and preformed maintenance when needed
- Prepared for upcoming planting season, through data, observation, maintenance, etc.
- Inputted and performed quality control on previous season's data
- Sprayed anti-herbivory spray at Elk Bushkill SRP, Pantherkill SRP, Willow Fields at Coldbrook and Thomas Planting
- Attended landowner site visits with CSBI coordinator
- Performed Invasive Maintenance on a multitude of sites

Misc

- Attended multiple staff meetings
- Managed and maintained the Plant Material Center and office grounds
- Completed various other tasks as needed/assigned
- Maintained tools and equipment
- Assisted in education of SCA and WCC Interns
- Construction oversight shadowing with Greene County Soil and Water