

Schenectady County Soil & Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2024

Present:

Steven Ruther, B. Donald Ackerman, Michael Pileggi, Sara Mae Pratt, Eric Hess, Nicholas Klemczak, Joe Braun, Paula Schaeffer

The meeting was called to order at 10:10 am by Steven Ruther, Chairperson.

Privilege of the Floor: none

The Steven Ruther asked for a motion to approve the November Meeting Minutes. (The December Meeting was canceled)
Motion to approve made by Michael Pileggi, seconded by Eric Hess. Motion carried.

Organizational

A. Board of Directors Membership: Steven Ruther asked for a motion to keep Board Members at five.
Donald Ackerman motioned, Michael Pileggi seconded. Motion carried.

B. Election of 2024 Officers:

Steven Ruther motioned to put forth the following slate for officers:

Chairperson: Steven Ruther
Vice Chairperson: Michael Pileggi
Secretary/Treasurer: B. Donald Ackerman

The nominations closed. The acting secretary cast one ballot for the slate as proposed. The slate was unanimously approved.

C. Steven Ruther asked for a motion to approve mileage reimbursement of 67 cents per mile per the IRS for 2024.
Donald Ackerman motioned, seconded by Michael Pileggi. Motion carried.

D. Steven Ruther asked for a motion to approve the per diem rate of \$75.00 for 2024.
Eric Hess motioned, seconded by Sara Mae Pratt. Motion carried.

E. Steven Ruther asked for a motion to keep the Daily Gazette as our official District Newspaper for 2024.
Michael Pileggi motioned, seconded by Donald Ackerman. Motion carried.

F. Steven Ruther asked for a motion to authorize payment of all monthly bills without prior Board approval.
Motion made by Michael Pileggi, seconded by Sara Mae Pratt. Motion carried.

G. Nicholas reported that all information in the 2024 SSWCD Policy Manual has been update for the year.
New information has been added: *Workplace Violence Guidelines*.
Steven Ruther asked for a motion to adopt the 2024 SSWCD Policy Manual.
Donald Ackerman motioned, seconded by Michael Pileggi. Motion carried.

Financial

Steven Ruther asked for a motion to approve the November and December Treasurer's Report.
Sara Mae Pratt motioned to approve, seconded by Michael Pileggi. Motion carried.

Approval of Paid Bills: Steven Ruther asked for a motion to approve the paid bills for November and December.
Motion to approve made by Michael Pileggi, seconded by Donald Ackerman. Motion carried.

Rack Truck Repair: Nicholas explained that there was an incident in late November resulting in damage to the truck. Originally when the truck was purchased in 2018, it was never insured for collision and now repairs will have to be paid by the District. After researching why it was an oversight, Nicholas immediately had collision added to the policy. Since the truck is in very good condition and is used daily, the repair is worth the expense. He will obtain three quotes for the repair, review them and have repairs made.
Steven Ruther asked for a motion to approve Rack Truck repairs. Sara Mae Pratt motioned, Eric Hess seconded. Motion carried.

Nicholas mentioned that he plans (with Board approval) to auction off certain District equipment later in the year. Specifics will be provided at future meetings.

PROGRAM REPORTS

Scott Fickbohm, NYS SWCC submitted his report.

Nicholas emailed the report to the Directors and reviewed it at the meeting. The report is on file.

Nicholas Klemczak, Executive Director presented the District's Highlights

(See November 23, 2023 – January 23, 2024 for complete report)

Compost Facility

- John & Randy replacing drum gear on screener
- Awaiting the vacuum for screener to arrive
- Dave & Damien rebuilding the employee break room which has been deteriorating
- The new grinder was delivered January 18, training provided
- Looking to purchase a truck, or possibly a king pin hitch for loader, to move the new grinder around facility for maintenance, daily cleaning and for clearing the pad it is housed on. Being able to immediately move it is especially important in an emergency, like a compost fire, to keep the grinder out of harm's way. Currently we have to contact DEPW to come and move it.

Preserves, County Forest, Bike/ Hike Trail Joe and Dave installed stepping log rounds in the County Forest; Working with BOCES to make new preserve signs; Plowing continues when needed.

Part B Project Temperature probe project for compost pile monitoring; Zoller compost sent for analyzing-looks good for fertilizer; SiCM interviewing for a Compost Coordinator to manage the Zoller program and others, which will release the District from this duty.

Miscellaneous: Meetings & Projects:

- NYSDEC Open Space Plan; PRISM hemlock treatment;
- Vale tree inventory grant;
- County Tree give-away (seedlings) during Arbor Day;
- DEC Round 4 failing septic replacement program;
- SCEAC-Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) for Schenectady County-Nicholas will Chair the sub-committee to get the plan organized and determine feasibility, if anyone is interested, contact him;
- ReLeaf program for urban trees;
- Private property deer carcass disposal;
- We received a thank you letter for our donation from the National Envirothon Committee.

Nicholas also mentioned that Dave Pidgeon suffered a shoulder injury and will be on sick leave for 12 weeks post-op. We will be looking for volunteers to assist with the Tree & Shrub program.

Damien is doing a great job working on the program and with our crew.

Joe Braun, District Technician

Reported on Farm visits with Champlain Valley Agronomics; Awarded the CRF Round 7 grant; Construction completed on the AEM Base Program HUA project; New Tier I; Various Preserves projects; Continued work at the food waste compost site; Assisted with projects around the Facility; Assisted with bagging for the Compost Facility.

The next meeting is February 28, 2024 beginning at 10:00 am at the District.

Steven Ruther asked for a motion to adjourn at 11:25. Donald Ackerman motioned, Michael Pileggi seconded. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Schaeffer
Administrative Assistant