

**Saratoga County Soil & Water Conservation District**  
50 West High Street, Ballston Spa, NY 12020  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting 06/21/2023**

**In Attendance:**

District Directors:

Janet Bartow – Grange  
Victoria Garlanda – At Large  
Jennifer Koval – At Large Farmer  
Steven Ropitzky –Chairman  
Jay Matthews – At Large Farmer  
Mike Smith – Legislator

District Staff:

Dustin Lewis– District Manager  
Kaitlyn Bemis– Office Manager  
Scott Monica – Senior Technician  
Dan Palemire – Field Technician

Outside Agencies

Scott Fickbohm  
Kate Girard

Regrets: Kevin Veitch

Meeting called to order at 3:08 PM by Chairman Ropitzky.

1. **Minutes of May 2023 Meeting:** Motion to approve by Matthews, seconded by Smith, carried unanimously.
2. **May 2023 Financial Reports:**
  - a. **Income & Expense Report, Budget vs Actual Report and Vouchers:**
  - b. Motion to approve made by Matthews, seconded by Koval, was carried unanimously.
3. **Field Report: (Attachment A)**
4. **Cooperating Agency Reports:**
  - a. **NRCS:** Girard reported there are a couple contracts obligated in Saratoga County. Including pollinator projects, cover crops, high tunnels, grazing plans & forestry plans. Girard reported on the progress of the inflation reduction act, and that the budget is expected to grow in the future. The process for hiring new staff members for the office is ongoing.
  - b. **FSA:** No Report
  - c. **RC&D:** No Report
  - d. **NYSSWCC:** Fickbohm reported. (**Attachment B**)
  - e. **NYACD:** The Annual NYACD meeting is coming up in the fall, there was a discussion about the need for a division six representative.
  - f. **CCE:** No Report.
5. **Old Business:**
  - a. **Water Quality Coordinating Committee:** Lewis reported on the last meeting, there was no quorum. There was a discussion about the Ballston Lake Improvement Association and the efforts being made to assist in a possible project.
  - b. **Grants:**
    - i. Agricultural Environmental Management – Palemire reported about a completed payment for a IPM sprayer grant.
    - ii. Septic – Lewis reported that the mailers were distributed as planned and three approval letters have been sent out so far.
    - iii. Roadside Assistance – No Change
    - iv. Micro Irrigation Grant – Plans for a close out walkthrough with the participating farm is being made.
  - c. **Part C requirements:**
    - i. Lewis reported that Bartow and Smith were able to make it to the State Managers Meeting on 6/12/23, one more board member will need to attend an outside meeting to meet performance measures.
6. **New Business:**
  - a. **2024 Budget Committee:** Ropitzky and Bartow volunteered to come early before the next meeting to review the 2024 budget.
  - b. **Fair 2023:**
    - i. Lewis reported on materials needed to complete the “AR sandbox” project and to refresh the county fair display.  
Funding for educational materials not to exceed \$2,300 - **Motion** to approve by Smith, seconded by Matthews, carried unanimously.
  - c. **State Envirothon 2023:**
    - i. The Schuylerville team was awarded third place in the state competition.
  - d. **Pollinator Program:**
    - i. Lewis reported on adopting a new community outreach program for residents. Landowners would set aside a portion of their property to create a pollinator habitat for a minimum of 3 years and in return SWCD would provide the wildflower seeds needed. Funding for pledge a plot for

pollinators program not to exceed \$3,000 - **Motion** to approve by Bartow, seconded by Koval, carried unanimously.

7. **Other Business:**

a. **District Law Training by SWCC Staff**

8. **Executive Session (if needed):** A **motion** was made to enter Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the employment history of a particular employee at 4:35pm by Matthews, seconded by Bartow, carried unanimously. A **motion** to come out of executive session at 4:53pm was made by Bartow, seconded by Matthews, carried unanimously. No action taken.

9. **Correspondence:** None

10. **Next Meeting Date and Adjournment:** The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 26th, 2023, at 3:00pm with the budget committee meeting at 2pm. Meeting adjourned by Chairman at 4:49pm.

Respectfully submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Kaitlyn HJ Bemis, Secretary

Steve Ropitzky – Chairman

**ATTACHMENT A:**

**June 2023 Field Report**

- Attended State Manager’s Meeting
- Three Septic Grant site visits (Clifton Park)
- Held a 4Hour training in the Auditorium
- Constructed AR Sandbox for educational display
- Surveyed Ballston Lake outlet (Ballston)
- Continued working with Gansevoort Rd Residents on drainage concerns (Moreau)
- Wetland site visit (Malta)
- AEM - Farm cover crop/forage development/ livestock water management plan.
- AEM - irrigation Well/reservoir
- AEM- Assisted Oswego County SWCD with Farm irrigation project
- AEM-Round -18 grant application
- AEM- No-Till
- AEM- No-Till
- AEM- Saratoga County Orchard fuel storage site visit
- AEM- completed IPM sprayer payment.
- Dry hydrant survey (Galway)
- Hydro Seed Town of Wilton
- Hydro Seed Town of Greenfield

## **ATTACHMENT B:**

### **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 20<sup>th</sup>**. 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 22<sup>nd</sup>, 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 22<sup>nd</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> event at the Ontario County Fair Grounds** and the **July 13<sup>th</sup> 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>
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**ATTACHMENT B (Continued):**

- 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>

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