

**Saratoga County Soil & Water Conservation District**  
Planning Room 50 West High Street Ballston Spa, NY 12020  
**Minutes of Regular Meeting 01/17/24**

**In Attendance:**

**District Directors:**

Jay Matthews – At Large Farmer  
Janet Bartow - Vice Chairman  
Jennifer Koval – At Large Farmer  
Steven Ropitzky –Chairman  
Kevin Veitch – Legislator  
Victoria Garlanda – At Large

**District Staff:**

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

Regrets: Kate Girard, Tina Williams,

Meeting called to order at 3:07 pm by Chairman Ropitzky.

1) **Annual Meeting:**

a) **Appointments & Elections:**

- i) The Saratoga Board of Supervisors reappointed Bartow and Ropitzky. Veitch was also reappointed as Supervisor, newly joining is the second supervisor from Galway, JD Arnold.
- ii) Elections – A **motion** made by Bartow, seconded by Garlanda, carried unanimously, to elect Ropitzky as Chairman & Bartow as Vice Chairman.

b) **Official Paper/Official Bank/Milage Rate/Meeting Dates and Time:** A **motion** was made by Garlanda, seconded by Matthews, carried unanimously to have:

- i) The Daily Gazette as the official newspaper for 2024
- ii) Ballston Spa National Bank as the official bank for 2024
- iii) \$0.67 per mile for mileage reimbursement for 2024
- iv) The 3rd Wednesday of every month as the meeting dates, 3:00pm as the meeting time for 2024 and the Planning Room at 50 West High Street as the meeting location.

2) **Minutes of December 2023 Meeting:** **Motion** to approve by Matthews, seconded by Bartow, carried unanimously.

3) **December 2023 Financial Reports\*\*:**

a) **Income Report, Expense Report, Bank Report, Budget vs Actual Report and Vouchers:** **Motion** to approve made by Veitch, seconded by Matthews, carried unanimously.

4) **Field Report: Attachment A**

5) **Cooperating Agency Reports:**

- a) **NRCS:** Provided via email, by Girard: *We have been working through applications, first ranking deadline is this Friday. The new engineer Cody Sargen started in Greenwich this Tuesday; he will be assisting Saratoga Co.'s producers.*
- b) **FSA:** Provided via email, by Williams. **Attachment B**
- c) **RC&D:** No Report. The close out is ongoing.
- d) **NYSSWCC:** Provided via email, by Fickbohm.
- e) **NYACD:** No Report. Lewis, Bartow & Ropitzky to attend Legislative Days.
- f) **CCE:** No official report.

6) **Old Business:**

a) **Water Quality Coordinating Committee:** No Meeting.

b) **Grants:** Lewis reported on the following:

- i) **Agricultural Environmental Management** – Two fuel storage projects are complete, waiting on documents to make final payments.
- ii) **Septic System** – Lewis is meeting with the deputy administrator to talk about the expansion of the eligible area for the new round and the possible funding the county could provide to support the project. There is a deadline made by the state of 1/26/24 to participate.
- iii) **Roadside Erosion** – Grant is completed in regard to materials, looking to wrap up this round with time spent on hydroseeding and roadside assessments.

c) **T&S 2024:** Lewis reports that the webstore will be live next month to start the sale. Brochures will be distributed in the area without the paper order forms, but with a link to the webstore.

d) **Envirothon 2024:** Lewis reported the Columbia Pavilion has been booked at the Saratoga Spa State Park and that Neils the chairman of the Water Quality Coordinating Committee has agreed to send out donation requests on the district's behalf. Ropitzky volunteered to be a judge at the regional competition.

7) **New Business:**

a) **Audit of 2023 Books:** The audit is scheduled to occur prior to the next monthly meeting in February. Bartow and Veitch volunteered to oversee the audit.

- b) **NY Class:** Lewis reported that after attending a presentation by NY Class there is a tentative plan to pursue switching over some of the district bank accounts. The board agreed to proceed with speaking with the county attorney regarding opening an account.
- c) **Water Quality Symposium Training:** The Training is scheduled for 3/12/24-3/15/24. The district staff has signed up for training and the fees come to approximately \$500.00.

8) **Other Business:**

- a) **Bill:** Lewis reported learning of a bill in the state senate that incentivizes the formation of new watershed groups.
- b) **Round Goby:** Lewis reported speaking with the NYS DEC about setting up informational meetings in the region to educate the public about the invasive Round Goby fish that has gained a foothold in the Erie Canal.
- c) **Governor Proposed Budget:** The new proposed budget for the state has been released and Lewis will distribute the details and review how it may affect the District in the future.

9) **Correspondence:** No Correspondence

10) **Next Meeting Date and Adjournment:** The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2024, at 3:00pm. Meeting adjourned by Chairman at 4:00 pm. approve by Bartow, seconded by Veitch.

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

Kaitlyn HJ Bemis, Secretary

Steve Ropitzky – Chairman

**ATTACHMENT A:**

December 2023 Field Report

- AEM Saratoga fuel storage
  - AEM Galway Farm Fuel storage
  - AEM round 18 tier 4 implementation projects
  - AEM tier 3 conservation plans (Saratoga Plan)
  - AEM Buffer planning and stock ordering (Saratoga Springs)
  - 4 Ag assessments
  - Pond site visit (Greenfield)
  - Work on extension to the Septic System Replacement Grant
  - Drone survey of Saratoga Lake (Stillwater)
  - Site visits for septic system replacement grant (Clifton Park)
  - Pond site visit (Ballston Spa)
  - Attended CDEA Division meeting in Johnstown.
  - Attended SWCC meeting.
  - Layout and construction oversight of new storage building site work
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**ATTACHMENT B:**



Farm  
Production  
and  
Conservation

Farm  
Service  
Agency

Farm Service Agency  
2530 State Route 40  
Greenwich, NY 12834  
518-692-9940 Ext 2  
855-526-4787 Fax

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SWCD – Saratoga County  
January 17, 2024 Meeting Report  
Tina Williams, FSA CED Washington/Warren/Saratoga Counties

The Farm Bill expired September 30, 2023 but with the passing of the last continuing resolution which funds us until January 19, 2024 they included a 1 year extension of the current Farm Bill through September 30, 2024.

2024 ARCPLC (the corn base program) sign began December 18, 2023 and ends March 15, 2024.

2024 DMC sign up has yet to be announced.

Farm Storage Facility Loan Interest Rates for January are:

- 4.375% per annum for a 3 year loan term
- 4.125% per annum for a 5 year loan term
- 4.250% per annum for a 7 year loan term
- 4.125% per annum for a 10 year loan term
- 4.250% per annum for a 12 year loan term

Marketing Assistance Loans are 6.125% for the month of January. The office has been busy processing these 9 month loans for producers who prefer to market their crops in the spring/summer when the prices are generally higher than they are at the time of harvest.

Signup for the Emergency Relief Program 2022 for crop disasters suffered from qualifying weather events in crop year 2022 is currently underway. I have attached the fact sheets as there are two "tracks" for sign up, Track 1 based on crop insurance or nap losses and track 2 based on revenue losses.

Sincerely,

Tina Williams  
[Tina.williams2@usda.gov](mailto:Tina.williams2@usda.gov)  
(518) 692-9940 ext 112

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*\*\*All financial records located at the Saratoga County SWCD office are available upon request. \*\**