

**ESSEX COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MINUTES
April 16th, 2020**

Meeting was called to order at 7:42 a.m. by Chairman Tyler. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, the meeting was held via telephone conference.

Call in Board Members Attendance: Ike Tyler, Dave Blades, Anna Reynolds, Ben Leerkes, Jim Monty; SWCD – Alice Halloran, Lois Sayward, Olivia Dickenson.

MOTION to accept the March 19th, 2020 minutes was made by Blades, seconded by Monty, and carried.

Correspondence – Alice went over some correspondence received during the month.

Chairman’s Update – The Chairman didn’t have an update. Chairman Tyler would like to have the time changed to 9:00 a.m. if a conference call is needed again next month for the meeting. All agreed 9:00 would work.

The Board acknowledged receiving monthly update reports from Lois Sayward, Secretary, Alice Halloran, District Manager, Olivia Dickinson and Daniel Berheide, Technicians. (Appendixes 1 - 4)

OLD BUSINESS

- There was no old business to be discussed at this time.

NEW BUSINESS

- **AgNPS Round 26 Resolution** – **MOTION** to approve applying for AgNPS Round 26 grant for a farm in Moriah for up to \$250,000.00 was made by Monty, seconded by Leerkes, and carried. Jim’s understanding is the Governor can look at the state budget quarterly and make cuts to cover the pandemic crisis expenses wherever he feels necessary. Chairman Tyler recommends money isn’t spent until the grant money is in the account. Jim understands the money can be taken even if there is a signed contract, and would like the farmer to be aware of that. If the grant is awarded, wording can be put into the contract to reflect that.
- **Cell Phone Plan** – Alice has been using the cell phone more since working from home. After reviewing the cell phone plan, it was decided it wouldn’t be necessary to change plans.
- **AEM Implementation Bids** – Two bids were received this morning for ECHO Farm drainage and ditch crossing project. The farmer was only able to receive two bids although he sent them out to three additional contractors.
 - Champlain Valley Property Services - \$17,500.00 (Appendix 5)
 - Pribble Excavating - \$27,000.00 (Appendix 6)

Alice asked the board to look at them in their e-mail and review. The Chairman asked if the board needed more time to review since they just received them. Jim was concerned with the large discrepancy between the two bids. Alice said she would get the engineering design from Mark Buckley to look over. **MOTION** to approve Champlain Valley Property Services bid in the amount of \$17,500.00 contingent on review by the engineer that everything within the design was met was made by Monty, seconded by Leerkes, carried. Chairman Tyler would like written proof from the

engineer the bid meets the criteria before accepting. The farm could then move forward after an AEM contract with the farmer and Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District has been signed for the project. This is a standard contract between the farmer and Essex SWCD. A copy will be sent to the board of the contract. Chairman Tyler would like the district to notify the bidders of the award, since they are in charge of awarding the bids.

DISTRICT TREASURER

- A. Financial reports were presented to the Directors (Appendix 7)
MOTION by to accept the April report as presented was made by Blades, seconded by Reynolds, and carried.
- B. Bills due for payment were presented to the Board for approval. (Appendix 8)
MOTION by Monty to accept the April bills for approval, and pay as such, seconded by Blades, and carried. Chairman Tyler is not comfortable paying the bills without seeing them before the meeting. Jim said his board members came in before his board meeting to sign. If we are in the same situation next month Lois will scan and send copies of the bills prior to the meeting to review.

COOPERATING AGENCIES

NYSSWCC – (Appendix 9)
NRCS – No report.

OTHER

Alice and Lois will be working at the tree and shrub sale April 24th at the Fairgrounds. It will be a drive-thru from 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. No extras will be sold the day of the sale to avoid contact with the public.

Next Meeting – May 21st, 2020 @ 9:00 if telephone conference

MOTION to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 a.m. was made by Monty, seconded by Reynolds, and carried.

Attachments: Appendix 1 - Secretary Updates (Lois)
Appendix 2 - District Manager Updates (Alice)
Appendix 3 - Technician Updates (Olivia)
Appendix 4 - Technician Update (Daniel)
Appendix 5 - Champlain Valley Property Services bid
Appendix 6 – Pribble Excavating bid
Appendix 7 - Financial Reports
Appendix 8 - Bills for Approval
Appendix 9 - NYSSWCC

Submitted by:

Lois Sayward
Secretary to the Board

