

**ESSEX COUNTY SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

January 16th, 2025

DISTRICT BUSINESS

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Tyler in the Westport Town Hall at 7:46 a.m.

***Unless otherwise noted, votes on motions were unanimous.**

Attendance: Board members - Ike Tyler, Anna Reynolds, Mike Davis, Ben Leerkes. SWCD – Renee Clark, Alice Halloran, Daniel Berheide, Meagan Goff, Noah Weber; NRCS - Allie Holmes. Jim Monty was not in attendance and was excused. Guest Luke McNally from Ruffed Grouse Society.

MOTION to accept the November 21st, 2024 minutes with correction was made by Leerkes, seconded by Davis, and carried. Corrected minutes to read “**RESOLUTION** to adopt the Breach Notification Policy”

Correspondence – Alice let the Board know she emailed them the updated flood plain maps.

Chairman’s Update – No report

Farm Bureau Update- Meeting agenda for 1/16/25 attached to Board packet.

Farmland Protection Board Update-Mike gave an update about the meeting and a parcel being removed.

2025 Elections and Appointments

Election of Officers

Currently: Chairman - Ike Tyler
Vice Chairman - Jim Monty

MOTION made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds to appoint Ike Tyler as Chairman, and carried. **MOTION** to appoint Jim Monty as Vice Chairman was made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds, and carried.

MOTION made by Leerkes to make the following appointments for 2025, seconded by Reynolds, and carried.

2025 Appointments

Secretary to the Board/Records Management Officer	Renee Clark
Treasurer	Renee Clark
SLWRP	
Representative	Alice Halloran
Representative	Renee Clark
Directors to audit 2025 financial records	Ben Leerkes and Jim Monty
Official bank	Champlain National Bank
Official newspaper	Sun, Press Republican
Champlain Watershed Improvement Coalition of NY (CWICNY)	
Representative	Alice Halloran
Alternate Representative	Meagan Goff
Upper Hudson	
Representative	Noah Weber
Alternate Representative	Alice Halloran

Annual review of SWCD’s personnel, investment, procurement, financial, dispute resolution, director meeting attendance, receipts, FOIL, sexual harassment and credit card policies, workplace violence prevention, ethics. - All policies were sent out prior to the meeting to review, after review and discussion, the Board deferred adoption of the Personnel Policy to the next regular meeting. A clean copy of proposed changes will be presented at the February meeting for further consideration.

MOTION to accept current policies was made by Leerkes, seconded by Davis, and carried.

Meeting Times – Essex County Soil and Water Conservation District Board Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month, at 7:45 AM, at the Westport Town Hall at 22 Champlain Ave, Westport, NY. Please check our website essexcountyswcd.org for any changes.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT - The Federal IRS rate of 70 cents per mile has been set for 2025 mileage reimbursement for district business. **MOTION** made by Leerkes to allow 70 cents mileage reimbursement for District business, seconded by Davis, and carried.

2024 Salaries:

District Manager (Alice) - \$68,250.00
Secretary (Renee) - \$47,250.00
Technician (Daniel) - \$52,500.00
Technician (Meagan) - \$42,000.00
Technician (Noah) - \$39,900.00
Interns (3) – Up to \$24,000.00

MOTION made by Leerkes to approve the 2025 salaries included in the 2025 budget, seconded by Davis and carried.

Monthly Updates

Secretary Update was reviewed by the Board. (Appendix 1)

MOTION to accept the January update was made by Reynolds, seconded by Davis, and carried.

District Manager Update was reviewed by the Board. (Appendix 2)

MOTION to accept the January update was made by Reynolds, seconded by Davis, and carried.

Technician Update (Daniel) was reviewed by the Board (Appendix 3)

MOTION to accept the January update was made by Davis, seconded by Leerkes, and carried.

Technician Update (Meagan) – was reviewed by the Board (Appendix 4)

MOTION to accept the January update was made by Reynolds, seconded by Leerkes, and carried.

Technician Update (Noah) – was reviewed by the Board (Appendix 5)

MOTION to accept the January update was made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds, and carried.

OLD BUSINESS

- **2025 Budget** – The County’s budget was approved. A **MOTION** to accept and adopt the proposed 2025 SWCD budget was made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds, and carried. A carryover of assigned unappropriated funds was included in 2025 budget as follows:
 - \$25,000 to Accrued Payroll Liability (Dedicated Fund)
 - \$25,000 to Field Equipment. (Dedicated Fund)
 - \$45,000 for Municipal Salt Reduction Equipment.
- **Director Terms** – Mike Davis’s new term of 1/1/25-12/31/2027 will be brought to the County Clerk for recording and given to the Board of Supervisors.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Water Quality Symposium**- The annual district training will be held March 11th - 14th in person this year at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, Rochester, NY. The cost to attend all workshops is \$570 to Soil and Water employees and a \$2,500.00 credit was given to each County for staff to attend. All staff plans to attend some workshops related to their training plan. A **MOTION** to approve paying for travel and meals to go to symposium was made by Leerkes, seconded by Davis, and carried.
- **2024 Tree and Shrub Program** – The 2025 tree and shrub program will be held April 17th in Floral Hall at the Westport Fairgrounds. Spread the word to all you think may be interested. Order forms will be available on the Essex SWCD website, Facebook, county website, e-mail lists, and mailed to all who request them, order deadline will be March 3rd, 2025.
- **AGNPS Round 30 Applications**- A **RESOLUTION #25-01** to approve the submittal of the application for bmp implementation for 3 farms was made by Leerkes, seconded by Davis and carried. A **RESOLUTION #25-02** to approve the application for a planning and nutrient plan for 6 farms was made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds and carried. Match with Part C Funds was included in these resolutions.

- **Ausable River HUA**- A **MOTION** to close the bank account for Ausable River HUA was made by Davis, seconded by Leerkes and carried.
- **Cell Phones for Technicians**- A **MOTION** to purchase 3 Tracfoners from QVC at \$267.00 a piece was made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds and carried.
- **NACD Utah Trip**- A **MOTION** to approve Alice and Jim or Daniel in his place to attend the NACD annual conference in Salt Lake City Utah and all actual and necessary expenses was made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds, and carried. Essex County SWCD will be recognized for technical support and Ben Wever farm will be given the Hugh Hammond Bennett Award.
- **Interns**- A **MOTION** was made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds, and carried to post intern job listing at \$16.00 per hour as a new summer intern and \$18.00 for returning.
- **Technician Position**- A **MOTION** was made by Leerkes, seconded by Reynolds, and carried to post technician job listing at \$38,000.00 per year.
- **Computers and Drone**- A **MOTION** was made by Davis, seconded by Reynolds, and carried to approve the purchase of 2 new computers up to \$2,000.00 each and a new drone, quotes for drone will be presented to the Board for approval.

District Treasurer

A. A financial report was presented to the Directors, (Appendix 6). A **MOTION** was made by Leerkes to accept the December report as presented, seconded by Reynolds, and carried.

B. Bills due for payment in the amount of \$56,072.21 were presented to the Board for approval, (Appendix 7). A **MOTION** was made by Leerkes to accept and pay the January bills for approval, and pay as such, seconded by Reynolds, and carried.

COOPERATING AGENCIES

NRCS – Allie Holmes was present to give a report.

NYSSWCC – (Appendix 8)

NYACD- (Appendix 9)

Other Business

With no further business and/or discussion to come before the Board a **MOTION** to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 a.m. was made by Leerkes, seconded by Davis, and carried.

Next Meeting – Thursday, February 20th, 2025 at 7:45 a.m. at the Westport Town Hall

Attachments: Appendix 1 - Secretary Update (Renee)
 Appendix 2 - District Manager Update (Alice)
 Appendix 3 –Technician Update (Daniel)
 Appendix 4 - Technician Update (Meagan)
 Appendix 5 - Technician Update (Noah)
 Appendix 6 - Financial Report
 Appendix 7- Bills
 Appendix 8- NYSSWCC Report
 Appendix 9- NYACD Report

Submitted by:

Renee Clark, Secretary to the Board