

Schuyler County Soil and Water Conservation District  
Monthly Meeting of Directors  
February 23rd, 2022  
6:00 PM.  
2400 Meads Hill Road  
Watkins Glen, NY 14891

Attending: Tony Specchio-Chairperson  
Jim Howell, Jr. -Legislator -**Not Present**  
Gary Gray-Legislator  
Rick Reisinger-Treasurer  
Gary Gaige-Member-**Not Present**  
Jerry Verrigni-District Manager  
Karen Tillotson-Secretary/Asst. Treas.

1. **Meeting called to order**-by T. Specchio @ 6:00 PM
2. **Pledge**
3. **Minutes of January Meeting:** G. Gray motioned to approve the January minutes as mailed. Seconded by R. Reisinger. All in favor. Motion carried.
4. **Treasurer's Report January:** R. Reisinger motioned to approve the treasurer's Report for January. Seconded by G. Gray. All in favor. Motion carried.
5. **Vouchers:** R. Reisinger motioned to approve the list of bills as presented. Seconded by G. Gray. All in favor. Motion carried.
6. **Old Business:**
  - A. **D. Barber CR8-** Schuyler County SWCD was named in a claim D. Barber put against the County. J. Verrigni submitted information to the District insurance company, Sidle Ins. David Sidle has been great to work with regarding this claim, and David Sidle submitted all information to the insurance carrier. The claim will likely go nowhere but could take up to eighteen months to resolve. New York State Highway Law, and New York State Soil and Water District Law State that work can not be done within the right of way of the highway without the request of the municipality for assistance. The County Highway had never requested any work to be completed on this section of County Road 8 until three days after the damage from the storm in October. Just three days later the Soil and Water Office completed all repairs and pipe change in just one day. While on site the district also got repairs for culvert replacement and stabilization of the inlet and outlet areas south on county road 8. This was an area the county highway had an issue in a July flood.
7. **New Business:**
  - A. **Liability Resolution:** J. Verrigni developed a liability resolution where the District would not work with a resident/agency that threatens litigation or serves the District with litigation. The District has stated prior that work would not be completed for any agency/resident that threatens to or does sue the District due to an increased liability. The Schuyler County District is one of only a handful of Soil and Water Districts that own their own equipment and perform work with their own operators. This poses increased liability as it is. The District is overprescribed for work as it is. This would simply be part of the prioritization process used by the district to determine work scheduling.

**G. Gray questioned if the County Attorney reviewed the policy, which he has not. G. Gray would like the County Attorney to review the resolution. After discussion, the liability resolution was tabled until the County Attorney had reviewed it.**

B. Climate Resiliency Fund (CFR): The District applied for the Round 5 CRF grant and was awarded funds to complete a project on Adam Hunts farm in Rock Stream. Since the grant was submitted, the creamery has changed owners from Adam Hunt to Sarah Van Orden Morrow. Sarah is the current owner of a creamery in Ovid. The number of animals, the best management practices, and location of the work will remain identical. A formal resolution is required stating that the District supports the changes in the grant and wishes these changes are approved in order to continue with the grant as written. *Motion made by G. Gray to continue the project with Climate Resiliency under the new owners of the Rock Stream Creamery. Seconded by R. Reisinger. All in favor and carried.*

G. Gray informed the Board that J. Verrini did a great job at the Town of Orange meeting regarding the Sexton Hollow Bridge replacement.

B. **Slide Show 2021 Projects:** Jerry presented a slide show on many of the projects implemented by the Soil and Water District in 2021. He also included a synopsis of the total quantities of the practices implemented by the District in 2021 which is attached to the minutes. In total 79 projects were implemented.

8. **District Manager Report -Jerry V.** – Jerry's Report was sent out with the packet and will be on file with the Book of Minutes.

R. Reisinger brought up the issue of whether there is a place to honor folks that have worked as equipment operators/private contractors (like Bob Perry) in Schuyler County for their time committed and the effect they have had on the community and how the community relied on their efforts and ingenuity. Jerry mentioned the Schuyler County Hall of Fame, that he would like to get Jim Barrett in the hall of fame. Jerry mentioned that Tony Specchio, and Jim Howell were both members. That the way the hall of fame is set up it isn't truly for people like Jim Barrett. However, Jerry believes it should be. He believes when he has the time he can get hundreds of letters of support. Jim was utilized by every municipality for over 40 years anytime they had a large scale issue because of his skill set. There is also the Odessa File which has honorees that aren't in the Schuyler County Hall of Fame. This award in the Odessa File is called the Schuyler County Essentials. This may be a possible place for recognition as well.

9. **Adjournment** -*Motion to adjourn at 7:25 PM by G.Gray and seconded by R. Reisinger.*

**Respectfully submitted by:**

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Tony Specchio, Chairman

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Karen Tillotson- Secretary/Asst. Treas.