

Schuyler County Soil and Water Conservation District
Monthly Meeting of Directors
February 28th, 2024
6:00 PM.
2400 Meads Hill Road
Watkins Glen, NY 14891

Attending: Tony Specchio-Chairperson
Jim Howell – Vice Chairperson
Gary Gaige - Member
Rick Reisinger-Treasurer
Gary Gray – Legislative Rep

Jerry Verrigni – District Manager
Jessica Verrigni – Stormwater Program Technician

1. **Meeting called to order** by T. Specchio @ 6:03 PM
2. **Pledge**
3. **Minutes of January 24th Meeting:** *Gary Gray motioned to approve the January 24th minutes as mailed. Seconded by Gary Gaige. All in favor. Motion carried.*
4. **Treasurer's Report January:** *Rick Reisinger motioned to approve the treasurer's report. Seconded by Gary Gray. All in favor. Motion carried.*
5. **Vouchers January:** *Rick Reisinger motioned to approve the list of bills as presented. Seconded by Gary Gaige. All in favor. Motion carried.*
6. **Old Business:**
 - A. **None**
7. **New Business:**
 - A. **Padua Ridge Planned Gravel Expansion -**

Jerry discussed the planned Padua Ridge mine expansion. He reviewed the submitted public comments to NYS DEC. He explained that he felt it very necessary to make public comment on this proposal due to the sensitive location and the past issues with the mining operation, all of which were documented in the comments submitted to NYS DEC. Gary Gray asked if these were now official comments and if it was ok to share them with the County. Jerry said absolutely they were filed with NYS DEC and would be happy to have the County use them for potential further comment from the County itself.
 - B. **Agricultural Exemption Soil Worksheets –** Jerry explained the only portion of Agricultural exemption that soil and water has any involvement in is soil worksheets. He explained since dating back before him, and through several employees there has been struggles each year with the efficiency in which these worksheets are completed in regards to coordination with the Real Property Tax Office. Jessica has worked extremely hard to make a very simple check list form so the office of Real Property provides the basic information we need to complete the worksheet. For the most part this has improved the issues we see. Most importantly helping our landowners from having to go to many office visits and appointments. Recently an issue, that is a non issue according to Jerry arose when an unusual circumstance of someone leasing their property to their sons bee operation was submitted for exemption. Jerry wasn't sure how to handle that so he went to his partners at AGMKT that oversee the program. They explained the parcels are not eligible for ag exemption. Jerry relayed this to the Real Property Tax office thinking it would be beneficial for them to know

for their program. Instead it was thought by the director of real property that it was an overstep. Jerry simply reminded the dept. head that we are a quanzi unit of the state of ny through AGMKTS. We work with them daily, and by State Law we have to do Soil group worksheets according to the law. In order to that Jerry did his due diligence and found the correct way to do that, because the local real property office did not know. Jessica also stated that although the template form she created has made things much more workable, at times she is not given the sheet, or its not filled out completely or correct, or updated required maps aren't included. We complete over 100 of these annually and its really not considered part of our workload, its just something we do. So like anything we do it needs to be done efficiently. So we hope moving forward things will continue to improve in that regard.

C. **Banking Chemung Canal** – Jerry stated that while doing banking a banker at the Montour falls office assisted our office with notifying him of increases in interest rates on CD's. Our current CD had been at a quarter of 1 percent for many years. The new CD is now at 4.5%. Jerry stated this is the only way to invest any funds on hand for soil and water and this is a substantial gain.

8. **Stormwater Technician Report – Jessica V.** –Her report is in the packet and will be on file with the book of minutes. Jessica reviewed her reports highlights and showcased the busy time of year.
9. **District Manager Report -Jerry V.** – Jerry's Report was sent out with the packet and will be on file with the Book of Minutes.
10. **Adjournment** -Motion to adjourn at 7:17 by Jim Howell and seconded by Rick Reisinger

Respectfully submitted by:

Tony Specchio, Chairman

Jerry Verrigni – District Manager