

Schuyler County Soil and Water Conservation District
Monthly Meeting of Directors
January 26th, 2022
6:00 PM.
2400 Meads Hill Road
Watkins Glen, NY 14891

Attending: Tony Specchio-Chairperson
Jim Howell, Jr. -Legislator
Gary Gray-Legislator
Rick Reisinger-Treasurer
Gary Gaige-Member-Excused
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 December 1st, 2021 Meeting:** G. Gray motioned to approve the December minutes as mailed. Seconded by R. Reisinger. All in favor. Motion carried.
4. **Treasurer's Report November/December:** R. Reisinger motioned to approve the treasurer's Report November/December. 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. **AEM Resolution**-Year 17 AEM Tier IV Implementation Track for Schuyler County SWCD for implementation projects -Richard Richtmeyer II, Mathew Sena, and Alec Moore.
 - a. **Vote for AEM Year 17 Tier IV Track:** *J. Howell made a motion to enter into an agreement with AEM Year 17 for technical and Tier IV Track. R. Reisinger seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.*
 - G. Gray -Sexton Hollow Bridge-work will begin when school is out.
 - G. Gray-Had a question on hours submitted for equipment on the Part B project bill. Jerry Verrigni explained that it was for two pieces of equipment and two operators. That state AGMKTS equipment rates are used for all projects the district does and they are set each year.
 - B. **FL-LOWPA** – The contract year 2021/2022 FL-LOWPA resolution for Schuyler County SWCD to enter into an agreement with FL-LOWPA.
 - a. **Vote:** *G. Gray motioned to enter into an agreement with FL-LOWPA for the contract year 2021/2022. J. Howell seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.*
7. **New Business:**
 - A. **Organization Meeting**-This takes place yearly to satisfy NYS AG & Market requirements
Election of Officers-
Currently as Follows-
Chair-Anthony J. Specchio
Vice Chair-James Howell

Treasurer-Rick Reisinger

Vote: *G. Gray made a motion to leave the slate of officers, as noted above. A. Specchio seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.*

District Newspaper-Review Express

District Bank-Chemung Canal

District Holidays-Follow the Existing Holiday Schedule from Last Year.

District Policies –List of current policies given. No Changes made to

Policies

Vote: *G. Gray made a motion to keep the District's newspaper, bank, holiday schedule, and policies the same. J. Howell seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.*

B. Annual Reporting and Treasures Report-discussed that the Report gets submitted to NYS Ag & Markets and the NYS Comptroller's Office. J. Verrigni reviewed the Report with the board explaining how the reporting is completed. Jerry explained as he has in detail for the last 10 plus years that the number for starting balance on the annual report is adjusted to make the numbers all match that should. This is done because the district isn't in a truly modified accrual system of accounting. It was determined by Karen Tillotson and Jerry Verrigni as well as the board of directors that it is more important to know where every number comes from both in the report, and in quickbooks and that all of the funds are accountable. It was also explained by both Jerry Verrigni and Karen Tillotson that this is the case for Chemung County and many other Districts as well. Jerry explained that the idea of modified accrual accounting is so a business knows in real time whether they are solvent or not. This accounts for the fact if a district has an immense amount of unearned revenue, or has an immense amount of accounts receivable owed to them. Both these factors could make a business seem either flush with money they don't have or in very poor condition even though it is really a cash flow issue. The Schuyler SWCD doesn't have that issue, maintains separate accounts and knows its economic status at all times. Karen Tillotson nor Jerry Verrigni felt comfortable picking random dates to end the year on for things like expenses, revenue etc... Yes they understand they have prepaid expenses like two months of liability insurance but it was determined by both Karen Tillotson and Jerry Verrigni that this was not enough to compromise knowing exactly when the year ended and where all the numbers came from on the report itself. Large items like compensated absences are accounted for stated Jerry Verrigni. The board of directors agreed it is most important to know all funds are accounted for, where all numbers come from that are both on the report and in quickbooks and verified by Karen Tillotson through the bank reconciliations.

Vote: *J. Howell motioned to approve the Annual Reports and the Annual Treasures Report to be submitted to NYS Ag & Market and the NYS Comptroller's Office. G. Gray seconded. Motion carried.*

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.

A. Schuyler County Economic Development Fund Application (EDFA): J. Verrigni discussed three projects submitted November 5th, 2021, via the Schuyler County Economic Development Fund Application and has not heard back on these. The applications J. Verrigni submitted were handed out to the board. The total amount requested is \$400,000.00. Discussed J. Verrigni saw on the news information regarding the American Recovery Plan Act Funds for Schuyler County, and when he researched it, he was directed to the SCOPED website for the application which was submitted and received by Peggi

Tomassi at the County Administrators office. One application is for the multi barrier approach work performed by the SWCD. One is for Retention Ponds. The third was for a Salt Storage for the Town of Reading. This one Jerry said he knew was a long shot but felt obligated because he hasn't been able to get this funded and the town has saved a substantial amount of money to make this happen.

J. Howell explained that Schuyler received 3.5 million from the American Recovery Act Funding, but there was no public hearing. T. O' Hearn met with C. Blowers and created a list; however, the list has not gone anywhere, nor was it voted on as a whole. J. Howell will make a call tomorrow regarding this issue.

R. Reisinger questioned what was the biggest impact on waterquality in the County. What is seen as causing the most amount of sedimentation and nitrification issues. J. Verrigni explained he felt it was road ditches and streambanks. That most people focus on Agricultural Land because it covers a broad landscape. However, in Schuyler County many of our acres are run by CAFO farms that are regulated on crop rotation, installation of cover crops, nutrient management for manure spreading etc... With our steep slopes and intense rainfall we see more sediment and nutrients coming from eroded road ditches, steep vertically eroded stream banks, undersized culverts etc...

J. Verrigni discussed the (Seneca Lake Intermunicipal Organization) Seneca Lake 9 -Element Plan. He provided information, maps, and data. While on a call with the folks that were paid over \$250,000 to develop this plan provided many numbers were given for specific allocations of tons of sediment and nutrients directly from Row Cropped Land. Jerry asked during that meeting how these numbers were determined. The folks that developed the 9E plan said it was from instream sampling in 2020. That if there was cropland in the area the sediment and nutrients were assigned to cropland. Jerry asked how the sediment and nutrients from cropland were separated from road ditch and stream bank sediment and the folks that developed the 9E said they weren't and had no way to do that. Even if a field was in permanent hay and was just in the area any sample from that stream was then equated to sediment and nutrients to row crop land. Jerry stated this basically makes these numbers completely useless yet they are being used in public meetings as if they are hard numbers equating most of the pollution to Seneca Lake from Ag. and from row crop land when that data doesn't exist. The only information that was truly useable for SWCD's to obtain funding was the sub watersheds that contribute the most sediment and nutrients to Seneca Lake. However that could be directly extrapolated to flow volume and this issue

9. **Adjournment** -*Motion to adjourn at 6:57 PM by J. Howell and seconded by R. Reisinger.*

Respectfully submitted by:

Tony Specchio, Chairman

Karen Tillotson- Secretary/Asst. Treas.