

**SUFFOLK COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS'**  
**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**423 Griffing Avenue**  
**Riverhead, New York 11901**

**July 9, 2020**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

**<https://suffolkny.zoom.us/j/8431288555?pwd=aG1xc1RSTldCUE1TV3M2MEdmSVp0UT09>**

**Meeting ID: 843 128 8555 +1 (929) 436-2866 (New York)**

**Board of Director's in attendance:**

Rob Carpenter, Chairman - Grange/Farm Bureau  
Legislator Al Krupski – Treasurer - Legislative District 1  
Legislator Robert Calarco, Legislative District 7  
Phil Schmitt – Farm Community Representative

**Staff and Organizations in attendance:**

Corey Humphrey – SWCD District Manager  
S. Odell-Pepe-SWCD Staff  
A.M. Calabro – SWCD Staff  
S. Frost – SWCD Staff  
E. Compagnone – SWCD Staff  
D. Aller – Suffolk County C.C.E.

- Chairman R. Carpenter called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.
- Chairman R. Carpenter declared a quorum. Four of the five Board Members were in attendance remotely. Let the record show B. Culhane was unable to attend because of a conflict in scheduling for prior commitment. Let the record show all attendees joined the meeting remotely through Zoom Meeting App. The July 9, 2020 meeting is being recorded.
- The draft minutes of the June 11, 2020 Board of Directors meeting were reviewed. Motion made by Legislator A. Krupski to accept the May 14, 2020 minutes as written, seconded by Legislator R. Calarco; none opposed; motion carried. Roll call 4/0

**Treasurer's Report presented by S. Odell-Pepe**

- The July 1, 2020 Treasurer's Report was presented and read to the Board of Directors.
- Motion made by P. Schmitt to accept the July 1, 2020 Treasurer's Report as written; seconded by Legislator R. Calarco; none opposed; motion carried. Roll call 4/0

### District Report presented by District Manager C. Humphrey

- The district report this month was a little bit different than in the past specifically when we get down towards project updates. I have asked staff to start assembling monthly updates based on who's administering the program.
- Just to touch on a few things happening in the office; our schedules have all been modified to try to accommodate folks for the Covid reopening. You'll see in the chart we try to alternate days to have folks socially distance as best as we can. This is all temporary and the staff is aware this is temporary. We will be revisiting the schedule on a periodic basis to ensure that it is functioning for the district and is still functioning in accordance for the County making sure we have the technical staff in the office should someone from the public walk in and need assistance. The schedule also allows for flexibility should the need arise.
- Today one of the bigger issues I would like to tackle is our budget and were embargoed a total of \$4,108 from our 2020 appropriation. The County is requesting a 5% cut to our 2021 budget, which is due tomorrow at the close of business. Based on our 2020 budget 5% cut is \$19,496 outside of personnel funds. We only get \$13,000 of non-personnel money from the County. If we were to give up all of our non-personnel funds, we would be short \$6,000. I started the conversation with the County Executive's Office, Budget Director E. Naughton and Budget Analyst J. Whist trying to come to a common agreement how we are able to still retain our staff and still make a 5% cut. Was told to zero out as many line items in the budget as possible and try to rework grant funded budget reimbursement so we can make up that difference of \$14,316.
- We have been talking about putting together strategic plan that outlines what we are doing and where we want to go. The strategic plan should be as comprehensive as possible. Strategic Plan Committee should include representation from the Board, District Office and County to help assemble this, I am anticipating the committee could have something on the ground in the next 3 to 6 months approved by the Board of Directors, vetted, comments and approved. Hopefully by the then end of the year, but that will be dependent upon the committee.
- I asked staff who are administering the lead on certain project provide short write ups about where they are with projects and what's left that has to be accomplished. These are due every month whether or not we have a board of directors meeting. This is in an attempt to reduce our weekly staff meeting down significantly. I am hoping this will increase our accountability and give a reference to the rest of the staff to look back in time to see what projects are and what they can do if they have time afforded to not only increase revenue and match, but also take some of the load on from other staff members that might be overwhelmed. I have listed out an outline of each individual project and updates.
- Motion made by Legislator A. Krupski to accept the presented District Manger Report; seconded by Legislator R. Calarco; none opposed; motion carried. Roll call 4/0

- U.S.D.A./N.R.C.S. – Currently no update this month

#### Legislative Report presented by Legislator A. Krupski and Legislator R. Calarco

- We're currently working on getting people back to work in the building safely, which has been a priority and working on the budget certainly has been a priority. Legislator R. Calarco initiated a Capital Budget Review exercise a couple of weeks ago and was very helpful for the 2020 Capital Budget. Going forward it's going to be a struggle and to see what programs are affected, but it is going to be a process that we won't know how it goes for another 6 months or so. We'll at least have a handle for the immediacy of the Capital Program and we have a few projects that we haven't tackled to discuss. As for operating wise, will start getting the group together in the next couple of weeks to start to discuss those challenges. The biggest issue being whether or not there is help from the federal government or are we going to be going alone. That's going to determine a lot of factors moving forward. The Legislative has returned to having meetings in person for our committee cycles with the guidance from the State being in Phase IV, which allows up to 50 people in a room properly socially distanced. There is the potential if the Board so chooses for the next board meeting to meet in person. Our biggest challenge as we know is our district budget, which we will discuss later.

#### C.C.E. - Ag. Stewardship Report presented by Deborah Aller

- All projects and scouting activities are in full swing. All programs are moving forward. Doing site visits with growers when we can.
- Plant Science day has been cancelled. Not sure if it will be rescheduled for in the Fall or postponed until next year. Will keep everyone updated.
- Working to hopefully put together a few virtual field days maybe in August through November with the assistance of Ann Marie.
- Working with Kaitlin on the Equipment Loan Program and Ann Marie on the Soil Health Testing. Going to try and match up any of the soil health testing this Fall with Ann Marie's Nutrient Management Plans to maximize the program's efforts there.
- The District purchased the Row Mulcher from Cornell for the equipment loan program. I sent out an email to all the small fruit and fruit tree growers earlier this week and there was some interest right away in using that equipment.
- C.C.E. is submitting the 2020 Budget on Friday. Don't know where Ag. Stewardship Program is going to be next year.
- Since the Suffolk County C.C.E. Sanitizer/P.P.E. Distribution Program started, C.C.E. has distributed 5,700 gallons of Hand Sanitizer and 1,900 Masks to 250 Ag. Producers in Suffolk County from their locations in Yaphank and L.I.R.E.C., Riverhead. Supplies are still available and if you know of any farms in need please have them contact C.C.E.

#### L.I.C.A.P. Representative Update

- No meeting since the last board meeting in June 2020.

- L.I.C.A.P. continues a social outreach program called; "Our Water – Our Lives" and have interns working on the program. L.I.C.A.P. hasn't taken it forward suggesting water conservation legislatively.

Chairman's Report presented by R. Carpenter

- One issue continues to be the U.S.D.A. C.F.A.P. (Corona Food Assistance Program) funding for the farmers. Since our last meeting numerous letters have been sent to our federal and state elected officials as well as testifying at certain public hearings that the NYS Assembly have put forth regarding the use of the federal funding. The program so far hasn't been helpful to the Long Island farmers. I just sent a letter yesterday to our federal officials again expressing the frustration about the inequity for the Long Island folks. Senator Schumer's office responded and his chief of staff is coming out next week to talk to a few individual famers to get a better feel for boots on the ground to talk about the funding and how it is working.
- From a County perspective, I did have conversations with our Board. The County Executive Steve Bellone did reach out to me about the County Budget situation and forwarded me the report that was prepared. We do realize there are so many good programs that are in affect for the farm community both through C.C.E. and the work that they do; Ag. Stewardship Program, the Soil and Water District and their programs as well as state funding for E.Q.I.P. and water quality programs. We believe that if the Feds. don't step up there's going to be a number of issues affecting agriculture directly. We're certainly hoping for some relief so we can continue to do the important work that we are all doing now.
- The Legislature did meet last month and I believe all the parcels for the Agriculture District Program were approved, and on their way up to the commissioner for certification. Thanks to both Legislators A. Krupski and Legislator R. Calarco for their help with that. It is still a very valuable program for the farm community and glad to see there is great support.

Old Business:

- SWCD Strategic Planning Committee – by common consent of the Board of Directors; Chairperson R. Carpenter is authorized to appoint the SWCD Strategic Planning Committee members. Chairperson R. Carpenter will meet with District Manager C. Humphrey to discuss the Strategic Plan outline and timeline.
- Motion made by Chairperson R. Carpenter to approve the disbursement of NYS SWCC Part C Award Funds in the amount not to exceed \$14,316 to Suffolk County as revenue in the 2021 Suffolk County Soil and Water Conservation District's Annual Operating Budget; seconded by Legislator R. Calarco; none opposed; motion carried. Roll call 4/0

New Business:

- None

Executive Session:

- None

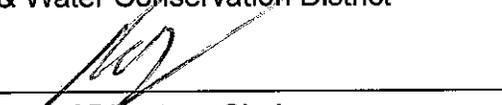
- Motion made by Legislator R. Calarco to adjourn the meeting at 5:15 p.m.; seconded by Legislator A. Krupski; none opposed; motion carried. Roll call 4/0

- Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.
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Minutes transcribed by 

Susan L. Odell-Pepe  
Principal Account Clerk  
Suffolk County Soil & Water Conservation District

Date: 8/13/2020

Approved by 

Rob Carpenter – Board of Director - Chairman  
Suffolk County Soil & Water Conservation District

Date: 9/10/20

