



# Hamilton County Soil and Water Conservation District

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[www.hamcoswcd.org](http://www.hamcoswcd.org)

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*Working to manage and promote the wise use of natural resources in Hamilton County since 1965.*

## Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

### June 4, 2024

Hamilton County SWCD office: 103 County View Drive, Lake Pleasant NY 12108

Inlet Highway Department: 65 Limekiln Lake Rd, Inlet, NY 13360

Zoom

#### Board of Directors

John M. Stortecky, Vice Chairperson

Chris D. Rhodes, Town Supervisor

Betsy Bain, Town Supervisor

#### District Staff

Caitlin Stewart, District Manager

Marjorie Remias, Clerk and Secretary to the Board

Katie WhitKovits, District Technician

#### Absent

Victoria Buyce, Chairperson

Shawn Hansen, Member-at-Large, virtual

Leonard Croote, Senior District Technician

Jacob Vander Pyl, Seasonal Intern

District Conservationist, Vacant, Natural

Resources and Conservation Service

Ryan Cunningham, Associate

Environmental Analyst, Soil and Water

Conservation Committee

**I. Call to order and Pledge of Allegiance** – J.M. Stortecky called the meeting to order at 9:30 am. Pledge of Allegiance conducted.

**II. Roll call** – J.M. Stortecky conducted roll call.

**III. Reading and approval of the May 7, 2024, meeting minutes** – The minutes were provided in advance of the meeting.

• **A motion was made by J.M. Stortecky, seconded by Bain to approve the May 7, 2024, meeting minutes. All in favor, motion carried.**

**IV. Treasurer’s Report** – Remias reviewed the Treasurer’s Report and distributed the expenses for Board review and approval for payment.

<b>Balance</b>	<b>4/30/24</b>	<b>\$518,746.06</b>
<b>Receipts</b>		<b>117,436.85</b>
<b>Disbursements</b>		<b>40,805.22</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>5/31/24</b>	<b>\$595,377.69</b>

• **A motion was made by J.M. Stortecky, seconded by Bain to accept the Treasurer’s report, and approve the bills to be paid. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

- V. **District apparel and safety gear** – Stewart reported that hard hats need to be replaced and we need more safety clothing. Safety yellow shirts are highly visible and enhance safety. She would also like to purchase shirts, jackets, and hats for District staff and board members. Branded apparel will ensure our staff are recognized as professional, unified, and trustworthy while in the field and giving presentations. Funding would be sourced from Part C.
- **A motion was made by J.M. Stortecky, seconded by Rhodes to purchase personal protective equipment and branded apparel for District staff and directors in the amount of \$3,000. All voted in favor, motion carried.**
  
- VI. **Adirondack Waterfest** – Stewart provided a history of the event. WhitKovits is organizing this year’s event for August 2, 2024, 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Speculator pavilion. Stewart sought approval of the budget to include advertisements, exhibitors - including the Utica Zoo mobile, face painting, balloon art, kayaks, reptiles, raptors, port-a-potties, and other event expenses to be sourced from Finger-Lakes Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance funds. WhitKovits has researched quotes, and vendor expenses have increased due to inflation.
- **A motion was made by J.M. Stortecky, seconded by Bain to approve the 2024 Adirondack Waterfest budget in the amount of \$8,500 sourced from FLOWPA. All voted in favor, motion carried.**
  
- VII. **Work boots** – Stewart reported that she would like the Directors to consider purchasing work boots for the staff, setting a \$200 limit. If staff purchase boots that are more expensive, they will pay the difference. Funds would be sourced from Part C. The board discussed and concurred this should be a bi-annual benefit.
- **A motion was made by J.M. Stortecky, seconded by Bain to approve the purchase of work boots for District staff members at a \$200.00 limit for employees on a bi-annual basis. All voted in favor, motion carried.**
  
- VIII. **Proganics purchase** – Stewart reported that Croote will begin hydroseeding ditches in the Upper Hudson River Watershed through the Water Quality Improvement Project grant funding of the Roadside Erosion and Remediation Program Phase II. He would like to purchase Proganics to hydroseed the project sites. Proganics accelerate the development of depleted soils with low organic matter, nutrients and limited biological activity to enhance grass seed growth. He will follow the District’s procurement policy and seek 3 quotes, but would like pre-approval to purchase the supplies to be reimbursed through the WQIP grant. Funds will initially be sourced from the county allocation and Part C.
- **A motion was made by J.M. Stortecky, seconded by Bain to approve the purchase of Proganics biotic soil media in the amount of \$25,000, to be reimbursed through the Water Quality Improvement Project Roadside Erosion and Remediation Program Phase II grant. All voted in favor, motion carried.**

- IX. Cyber liability security** – At the direction of the board, Stewart followed up with their inquiries. In order for the carrier to consider offering the District a higher limit, we would need a posted document destruction policy in place, access to personal information would need to be restricted by job description, and question 14 would have to be answered. The annual premium for a limit of \$100,000 is approximately \$845.00, and the Directors requested a higher limit.

At this time, Stewart asked permission to bring forth a discussion on performance measures. The Board granted permission. Stewart stated completing performance measures enables our District to receive State Aid funding. Performance measures include staff training, a required number of Board of Directors' meetings with a quorum annually, and directors also must attend a certain number of trainings and meetings. If we complete these performance measures, we become eligible to receive State Aid funding. Stewart noted that as Director Rhodes has been inundated with commitments to the county as well as his town, he has missed meetings where the District had presentations that completed performance measures for the Directors. Stewart asked Rhodes if he would consider stepping down to allow another town supervisor that has fewer commitments to serve on our board so performance measures can be completed for all directors as required. Rhodes agreed and the Board and Stewart thanked Rhodes for his service and his excellent contributions while serving.

Rhodes left the meeting at 9:58 a.m. for another meeting.

**X. District activities**

- a. Welcome Seasonal Technician Jacob Vander Pyl!** - Stewart reported that Vander Pyl returned for a second year with the District on May 28. His work has included reorganizing the MSDS binder, assisting Croote with the Shaw Brook streambank stabilization project, surveying and designing dry hydrants, preparing chlorophyll-a packets for the June lake monitoring rotation, maintaining the Adirondack EcoTrail, weed whacking the parking area, and assisting with the straw earned income program.
- b. Sediment and Erosion Control Program** – Croote continues work on the Shaw Brook streambank stabilization project in Long Lake.
- c. Adirondack Waterfest** – WhitKovits reported that she has been working on scheduling vendors and educational outreach for the event. She has sent an invitation with registration to all our neighboring soil and water districts and has been receiving responses.
- d. Agricultural Environmental Management** – WhitKovits reported that she has been in Warren County since the last meeting doing mini forestry training. Warren county is also going to come here and meet with her and a farmer in Hamilton County. She is planning a booth at the local farmer's market to get information out to prospective growers.
- e. Caring Through Conservation mini grant** – WhitKovits reported that we have received one more application. She has ranked it but held off on presenting it as we no longer had a quorum

to make a motion. Stewart reported that, per J.M. Stortecky's request, WhitKovits updated the ranking sheet to include a "Mission Statement of Applicant" question to ensure the validity of entities applying for funding.

- f. Invasive Species Program** – Stewart reported that Vander Pyl deployed the emerald ash borer trap on a tree in the District's lower parking lot. The team is preparing to raise *Galerucella* beetles to biocontrol purple loosestrife. Remias submitted the NYS Department of Transportation permit and Croote submitted the county permit that allow District staff to treat invasive plants along road rights-of-ways. WhitKovits continues to add people to the waiting list for the Japanese knotweed stem injector loaner program. Stewart shared APIPP's brochure with the board detailing invasive plants of the Adirondacks and explained that the District's website references APIPP's materials.
- g. Conservation Education Program** – Stewart reported that 13 seniors submitted poems for the 16th annual Bob Tice Memorial Arbor Day Poetry Contest. The awards gala was held at the CVW Long Lake Public Library on May 8 where poets were honored with certificates and bundles of seedlings. The winners are: third: Tom Hutt, Blue Mountain Lake; second: Rosemary Carey, Long Lake; and first: Sue Kunzmann, Long Lake. Stewart thanked Long Lake Library Manager Kristel Guimara for helping to coordinate the gala. Stewart volunteered as an oral presentation evening judge and photographer at the New York State Envirothon May 22 – 23 at SUNY Cortland. The Mount Academy of Ulster County received first place and will represent New York at the National Conservation Foundation Envirothon where teams from across the globe will compete July 28 – August 3 at Hobard and William Smith Colleges, Geneva. 6<sup>th</sup> graders from Wells Central School learned about biomonitoring with macroinvertebrates during an immersive place-based field trip to the Sacandaga River with Stewart. WhitKovits and Stewart hosted an Erosion in Your Neighborhood field trip for Lake Pleasant Central School's 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders at the request of the Lake Pleasant Sacandaga Association. The field trip included the stream table, watershed model, and a walking tour of a shoreline buffer, Sacandaga River, and Marion Avenue streambank stabilization and bioengineering project. Stewart showed a video of the erosion field trip.
- h. Lake Monitoring Program** – Stewart reported that she, WhitKovits, and Croote completed the May rotation. This is the earliest that the District team has monitored lakes. The boat ran well, the weather cooperated, and WhitKovits delivered samples to the Adirondack Watershed Institute. Sacandaga, Fawn, and Algonquin lakes were not monitored due to short staffing and scheduling. WhitKovits reported that the District Durango's bumper grazed a parked trailer at the Blue Mountain Lake boat launch. The trailer owner was notified and there was no damage to their trailer. Stewart worked with our insurance company and adjuster to obtain a repair estimate for the Durango bumper, and repair is scheduled for later this week.
- i. Water Testing Program** – Remias oversaw the May drop off and reported that 17 samples were delivered.

**j. Septic System Replacement Fund** – Stewart reported that she received the signed participation agreement from the county and will proceed with sending the required documents to the Environmental Facilities Corporation for Round 4. Funding for Round 4 available to Hamilton County for septic system repair and replacement is \$200,000.

**k. Watershed partnership update**

- 1. FLOWPA** – Staff are implementing the annual work plan for FY2023-2024.
- 2. Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition** – Stewart canceled the May meeting due to scheduling conflicts and is preparing for the June meeting. Staff are implementing the Water Quality Improvement Project grant for the Upper Hudson River Roadside Erosion Remediation Phase II and the Non-Ag Nonpoint Source Planning grant for the Elbow Creek Assessment. Remias oversees the financial report for Phase II Roadside Erosion Remediation Program grant.
- 3. St. Lawrence River Watershed Project** – Stewart attended the May 8 meeting and reported on the Ecosystem Based Management funding opportunity. She, President Chastity Miller, and Ryan Cunningham will meet to further discuss EBM and possible projects for the watershed.
- 4. Mohawk River Watershed Coalition** – Stewart canceled the May meeting.
- 5. Black River Watershed** – Stewart will MC the 2024 Black River Watershed Conference and present Lake Monitoring on June 13. She will attend a conference planning meeting this afternoon.

**l. Other** – None.

**m. Directors' comments** – Director Stortecky reported that his son's farm that is in the process of having a second high tunnel installed has increased its acreage and is expanding and thriving.

**XI. Staff reports** – Stewart disseminated and emailed copies of the staff reports.

**XII. District Conservationist's report** – No report, position vacant.

**XIII. New York State Soil and Water Conservation Committee report** – appended to minutes.

**XIV. Correspondence**

- Dave Adams, NYS DEC – he commented on how nice it is to see positive press and congratulated our team on our 2023 accomplishments.

**XV. Next meeting date** – July 2, 2024, 9:30 AM, at the Hamilton County SWCD (103 County View Drive, Lake Pleasant NY 12108) and virtually on Zoom.

**XVI. Adjournment – A motion was made by J.M. Stortecky, seconded by Bain to adjourn the meeting at 10:43 a.m. All in favor, carried.**

Respectfully Submitted



Marjorie Remias  
Secretary to the Board/Treasurer

**District Manager's report  
Submitted by Caitlin Stewart**

- **Administration**
  - Researched cyber security
  - Insurance coverage for the Dodge Durango
  - Staff meetings
  - Attended Katie's Safety Committee meeting
  - Prepared for the Seasonal Technician
  - Tracked performance measures that ensure our District receives state aid funding
  - Drone flight of Shaw Brook, Long Lake
  - Reviewed budget with Marj
  - Assisted Tim Ellifritz with computer maintenance and updates
  - Website updates
  - Social media posts
  
- **Technical Assistance**
  - Responded to tens of information requests regarding the Water Testing Program, lake monitoring, presentations, and invasive species
  
- **Watershed Coalitions**
  1. **FLLOWPA** – Overseeing the implementation of the annual work plan for FY2023-2024.
  2. **Upper Hudson River Watershed Coalition** – Canceled the May meeting due to scheduling conflicts and am preparing for the June meeting. Staff are implementing the Water Quality Improvement Project grant for the Upper Hudson River Roadside Erosion Remediation Phase II and the Non-Ag Nonpoint Source Planning grant for the Elbow Creek Assessment. I disseminate the financial report.
  3. **St. Lawrence River Watershed Project** – Attended the May 8 meeting and reported on the Ecosystem Based Management funding opportunity. I will meet with key coalition members to further discuss EBM and possible projects for the watershed.
  4. **Mohawk River Watershed Coalition** – Canceled the May meeting.
  5. **Black River Watershed** – Will MC the 2024 Black River Watershed Conference and present Lake Monitoring on June 13.

- **Lake Monitoring Program** – assisted with the May rotation.
- **Arbor Day Poetry Contest** - held the gala at the Long Lake Library to honor poets
- **Conservation Education**
  - Presentations
    - Erosion in Your Neighborhood – Lake Pleasant CSD 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders – 25 attendees
    - Biomonitoring with Benthic Macroinvertebrates – Wells CSD 6<sup>th</sup> grade – 13 attendees
  - New York State Envirothon volunteer – oral presentation evening judge and photographer
- **Septic System Replacement Fund**
  - Participation agreement
  - Brainstormed ways to disseminate Round 4 information to landowners
- **New York State Conservation District Employees Association**
  - Conservation Skills Workshop planning committee meeting
  - Prepared and held the May 30 – 31 meeting
  - Working on June CDEA News
  - Attended NYACD and SWCC meeting

**District Technician’s report  
Submitted by Lenny Croote**

**General**

7/10/23 Storm event  
 Shaw Brook Restoration Plans  
 GIS Arietta Snowmobiles trails  
 GIS Wells Snowmobiles trails  
 Permits for 2024 construction season  
 Dugway Creek Site visit  
 Elbow Creek restoration site visit  
 Elbow Creek Corridor assessment  
 Assist with Water Monitoring  
 Hydroseeding  
 Straw  
 Surveying and Design of Dry Hydrants for Town of Long Lake  
 Vehicle and equipment maintenance  
 Erosion site inspections  
 Trail Maintenance

**District Technician's report  
Submitted by Katie WhitKovits**

- Adirondack Waterfest – Friday August 2<sup>nd</sup> @ the Speculator Pavilion
  - Invited neighboring SWCD's and partner agencies to have tables
  - Plan to partner with local businesses for specials and promotion
- Japanese Knotweed
  - Still obtaining signed agreements and homeowners' insurance to have on file for the next treatment season
- Lake Monitoring
  - Picked up bottles and Deionized water from AWI
  - Completed May rotation & ready for June
- Agricultural Environmental Management
  - Working with Warren and Franklin Counties to shadow AEM farm and forestry visits
  - Planning site visits in Hamilton for AEM Forestry with Franklin County
- Caring Through Conservation Mini Grant
  - We received 1 application from Town of Lake Pleasant
  - **Motion to approve**

Other

- Held "Erosion in your Neighborhood" field day for Lake Pleasant Students with Caitlin
- Assisted Warren County SWCD with an invasive species event for Queensbury students
- Signed up for National Envirothon
- Hydroseeded Cold Stream buffer with Lenny
- Attended ARCPro Training in Warren County
- Attended PERMA Safety Conference

**New York State Soil & Water Conservation Committee  
Region 4 Report – June 2024**

**Submitted by: Ryan Cunningham – Region 4 Associate Environmental Analyst**

**NYS SWCC News**

**(CAFO) Enhanced Nutrient and Methane Management Program:** \$14 million has been made available for on-farm projects through Round 1 of the Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) Enhanced Nutrient and Methane Management Program (CAFO ENMP), which will help farmers protect water quality and mitigate the impacts of climate change. The RFP and associated documents are now available on Sharepoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>.

All questions related to the RFP and the required attachments shall be addressed to Jason Kokkinos



[Jason.Kokkinos@agriculture.ny.gov](mailto:Jason.Kokkinos@agriculture.ny.gov) by **September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024**. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **5PM, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

**An informational webinar will be held on June 25<sup>th</sup> from 1:00pm-2:30pm.**

**Climate Resilient Farming Program Round 8:** \$28.75 million is available to support projects. The RFP and associated documents are now available on SharePoint, <https://nysemail.sharepoint.com/sites/Agriculture/SWCC>. Applications for funding must be submitted through the NYS SWCC SharePoint website by **5PM, June 24, 2024**.

**June SWCC Meeting:** The next meeting of the NYS Soil and Water Conservation Committee will be on **Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup> starting at 10:00 AM**. Attendance options include Webex and in-person locations in Syracuse and Albany. Further details and an agenda for this meeting will be sent out shortly. Reminder – participation at a SWCC meeting is eligible toward PM1, Part C of State Aid to Districts.

**2024 NCF Envirothon Call for Volunteers:** The NYS Envirothon Committee is pleased to host the 2024 NCF Envirothon. The 2024 annual competition will be held from **July 28 – August 3, 2024**, at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York, and is putting out a call for all volunteers. Please let the Committee know if you are willing to volunteer by completing the online volunteer registration at, [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScKIG9Hyzz\\_wlubbce3MzPI0n-gFWG6jvMsa6H2tHjXu0MHVw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScKIG9Hyzz_wlubbce3MzPI0n-gFWG6jvMsa6H2tHjXu0MHVw/viewform)

**Director Training:** A reminder that your Regional AEA is available to present training modules to your Board of Directors. Most notably the District Law training module which is training required every 3 years under the Performance Measure 1. Please reach out to your Regional AEA if you have any training needs. Additionally, the District Law training module is available to complete virtually via VIMEO: <https://vimeo.com/446525792>

#### **Other Events**

**2024 NY Soil Health and Climate Resiliency Field Days:** The NY Soil Health Alliance Group will convene a series of Soil Health & Climate Resiliency Field Day's throughout the State during 2024. Registration is now live for the **June 25<sup>th</sup> event at Hearty Roots Farm, located in the Hudson Valley** and the **July 25<sup>th</sup> event at the Rodman Lott & Son Farms in Seneca Falls**. Visit, <https://www.newyorksoilhealth.org/fielddays/> for more information and to register.

**Training Opportunity - Seeking Competition in Procurement:** The Office of the State Comptroller's Legal Division will discuss legal requirements for competitive bidding, including statutory amendments to the General Municipal Law § 103 and various exceptions to the bidding requirements. **June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**. Register here, <https://www.osc.ny.gov/local-government/academy/seeking-competition-procurement-1>

**2024 Annual CDEA Golf Tourney:** The 23rd Annual NYS CDEA Golf Tournament is being held on **August 1st , 2024** @ Casolwood Golf Club. Anyone that is interested in playing needs to submit their registration info by **JULY 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024**.

**2024 NACD Northeast Regional Conference - Save the Date:** This year the conference will be held in Boston, MA at the Renaissance Boston Waterfront Hotel on **August 10-14, 2024**. Further details will be available