



Zoom Meeting
Wednesday, January 24, 2024
7:00 P.M.

Attendance:

Sam Casella, President	Jim Brick, Div. I
Scott Ryan, 2 nd V. President	Bruce Dolph, Member @ Lg
Rollin Pickering, Div. II	Ernie Swift, Treas.
Rob Carpenter, 1 st V. President	John M. Stortecky, Div. V
Blanche Hurlbutt, Ex. Dr.	

Absent:

Dan Farrand, Past Pres.

Guests Present: None Present

Partners Present: Blake Glover, NRCS State Conservation, Caitlin Stewart, NYSCDEA' President.

Absent: Bethany Bzduch, SWCC Ex. Dir.,

- I. **Call to Order:** Sam Casella, President Called the meeting to order 7:09 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** Blanche Hurlbutt, Ex. Dr. gave roll call.
- III. **Secretary's Report/Approval of Minutes:**
 - A motion by Scott Ryan second by Rollin Pickering to approve December minutes as written.
Carried. **#1/24/2024 = A**
- IV. **Treasurer's Report:**
 - A motion by Jim Brick seconded by Bruce Dolph to approve the December Treasurer's report as provided. Carried. **#1/24/2024 = B**
 - A motion by Bruce Dolph seconded by Scott Ryan to approve the December Bills to be Paid.
Carried. **#1/24/2024 = C**

Ernie provided a report on the income/expenses for December. A discussion took place as to the amount of funds should be left in the checking account as well as where to place funds. Sam and Ernie will research short term C's and report back to the board.

Ernie reported that the 2023 unpaid or parcel paid NYACD assessment invoices would be voided out in QuickBooks to clear 2023 books.

V. Partners Reports:

NYSCDEA' Report: Caitlin Stewart, NYCDEA President reported on the following:

Water Quality Symposium

- Registration closes this Friday January 26. Directors are encouraged and welcome to register for classes or the annual meeting. This will fulfill Performance Measures that make your District eligible to receive State Aid funding. Directors interested in registering can speak with their Districts for more information.
- Register online: <https://www.nyscdea.com/training-sessions/>
- It is my privilege to invite Sam, Blanche, Blake, and Bethany to our Annual Meeting Wednesday March 13, 7 p.m. – 8 p.m. at the Double Tree Hotel (6301 NY-298, East Syracuse, NY 13057) to provide the NYACD report.
- Please submit they NYACD, SWCC, and NRCS written report to me (caitlin@hamcoswcd.org) by Friday February 16 to include in the Annual Meeting Packet.
- Annual Meeting agenda to follow.

CDEA News

- The December edition if hot off the press here: <https://www.nyscdea.com/newsletter/>
- The deadline for the February edition is February 2, 4:30 p.m.
- I welcome all members of the 4-Way Partnership to share reports, updates, and events, and thank Blanche for submitting NYACD news to include in the newsletter.

DEC Seeks District Feedback

- The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation is seeking feedback from Districts.
- I thank Blanche for submitting District feedback to DEC regarding the New York State Reforestation Plan.
- J.J. Käthe, DEC Resiliency Planting Coordinator, Climate Forestry and Carbon Unit met with CDEA today to discuss opportunities to share feedback and recommendations on the Reforestation Plan, and we will develop a survey and send to District.
- DEC seeks District input and participation in shaping guidance to help protect streams and reduce flooding. NYSDEC has released the draft "Guidance for the Review of Bridge and Culvert Projects in Nontidal Waters Requiring a Protection of Waters Permit and a Water Quality Certificate" that impacts Districts in terms of permitting and project implementation. I am working with DEC to schedule a state-wide meeting to discuss the draft document and collect and submit feedback to DEC by the February 9 deadline.

Legislative Day

- A representative from The Nature Conservancy contacted me requesting that New York State's Soil and Water Conservation Districts partner with TNC on a lobby day.
- As CDEA President, I strongly feel that it is essential for NYACD to maintain autonomy during legislative outreach, and not partner with any other organizations because the district message could be confused, misconstrued, or lost. I thank NYACD for supporting this viewpoint.

Cooperative Watershed Management Program bill S7854

- On January 3, 2024, Senator May introduced the Cooperative Watershed Management Program bill <<https://legiscan.com/NY/text/S07854/2023>>.
- I am alarmed by the wording: no reference to Districts, duplicative of District lead watershed coalitions, and funding source.
- This bill does not support the Eastern Finger Lakes Coalition of Conservation Districts. NYACD passes a resolution supporting the Formation of Eastern Finger Lakes Coalition.
- Westchester County District board recommends adding Districts to the definition of a watershed network.
- Bill Title: Establishes the New York state cooperative watershed management program within the department of environmental conservation under which watershed networks may apply for grants for watershed network development and watershed network professionalization, subject to appropriation of funds from the legislature.
Spectrum: Partisan Bill (Democrat 1-0)
Status: (Introduced) 2024-01-03 - REFERRED TO ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION [[S07854 Detail](#)]
Download: [New York-2023-S07854-Introduced.html](#)
- I look forward to the opportunity to work with Blanch on this bill, gather and provide any information she needs from Districts, and learn more about the NYACD process for opposing or supporting legislation that impacts Districts.

NRCS Report: Blake Glover, NRCS State Conservation reported on the NRCS recent retirements; Tom Bielli and Jim Pullano, both have over 30-35 years with NRCS, and it will be hard to replace them.

NRCS is working on a continuous resolution, this is where they can pay bills but have limited travel restrictions.

Blake reported he will be attending the NACD annual event in San Diego, California in February.

State Committee Report: Bethany Bzduch, SWCC Executive Director reported on the Executive Budget and the EPF funds where Soil & Water Districts line item has an increase to \$18 million. Bethany stated this is a testament to SWCD's.

Bethany reported that the SWCC is working 2024-28 static plan and will be requesting feedback from SWCD's.

Bethany stated that the State Committee is working on the 2023 annual reports, and it should be completed by April 1, 2024.

Bethany shared information on FLOWPA and the EPF funding is not being increased in this area.

Rob inquired if anyone was attending the February 13th meeting regarding the EPF funding. Rob may attend on behalf of NYACD.

Board Report:

President: Sam reported he would be attending the NACD annual meeting in San Diego in February. Sam also stated he would be attending the DC Fly-In in March.

Sam stated he is working on getting funding for the NYS & the 2024 NCF Envirothon.

Sam reported that Annica McCouirk with NACD is no longer the NE NACD Representative, she will be working in NACD with the forestry efforts. Nika Colley from NYS will be replacing Annika as the NE NACD Representative.

Sam reported on the NYACD By-Law changes and to eliminate the Member @ Large position.

Executive Director: Blanche reported there are 79 appointments scheduled for Legislative Day on March 5, 2024, with fourteen (14) districts participating. On Monday evening there will be a special guest speaker, Howard Schaffer to discuss how to best approach your Legislators and follow-up with them. NYACD will be hosting a table on Monday evening from 5-7 p.m. at the “Taste of New York” Farm Bureau event.

Blanche reported that the 2024 NYACD Annual meeting will be held at the Hampton Inn, Penn Yan again this year. NYACD will be hosting two full days beginning on October 21-22, 2024. Training will take place in the morning on Monday with a tour in the afternoon, Tuesday morning the annual meeting will take place and the awards luncheon in the afternoon.

Blanche reported she attended the CDEA meeting this month and listened to JJ Kathe with NYSDEC Division of Lands and Forests discuss management of forest land, planting, invasive species, and deer.

Director & Representatives –

- a. **Division I:** Jim Brick reported on the Wyoming County SWCD will be making an additional donation to the 2024 NCF Envirothon above the requested \$3,000. Jim reported that they will be hosting their annual Division meeting and will invite Sam to attend.
- b. **Division II:** Rollin Pickering reported that Monroe County SWCD will be hosting their annual tree & shrub sale. Rollin stated that he will be attending NYACD Legislative Days with their District Manager at Monroe County SWCD to express their thanks and appreciation for the Legislators continued support.
- c. **Division III:** No representative. No report.
- d. **Division IV:** No representative, no report.
- e. **Division V:** John M Stortecky reported on a letter dated January 5th related to Senator May’s bill #7854. DEC is not involved with this bill nor is SWCD listed. A discussion took place if NYACD was aware of it and if it would affect the SWCD’s. Blanche will reach out to Senator May’s office and report back to the board. John inquired about the NYACD By-laws, and any changes made to them and who voted. Sam explained that it is up to the NYACD Executive Board. Policy and procedures are full NYACD board to review and determine changes.

- f. **Division VI:** No representative, no report.
- g. **Division VII:** No representative, no report.
- h. **Division VIII:** No representative, no report.

Committee Reports:

2024 NYS Envirothon: Ernie reported the next NYS Envirothon meeting will be on Monday, February 20th by Zoom. Ernie reported all is going well as the committee moves forward in the planning of the May event.

2024 NCF Envirothon New York: Ernie reported that NCF next meeting will be directly after the state meeting. Blanche will be doing a presentation at the NACD event in February during the NCF Envirothon annual meeting highlighting NYS and what folks can expect in July.

VI. Old Business: No old business to discuss currently.

VII. New Business:

Credit Card: Sam has decided not to receive a NYACD credit card to use when he travels. Sam will continue to use his personal credit card and make a request for reimbursement.

- A motion made by Jim Brick seconded by John Stortecky to approve Sam Casella's decline of the NYACD credit card option. Carried. **#1/24/2024 = D**

Mileage Rate: Blanche reported the mileage reimbursement rates are at \$.67 per mile. A discussion on how to manage this each year, and it was determined that NYACD should create a continued resolution to keep the mileage rate at the annual state/federal level as they change.

- A motion made by Rollin Pickering seconded by John Stortecky to keep the mileage reimbursement rate annual as the state/federal rate changes. Carried. **#1/24/2024 = E**

VIII. Adjournment:

- A motion by Scott Ryan, seconded by Bruce Dolph to adjourn the meeting. Carried. **#1/24/2024 = F**

Meeting Adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Next meeting date is **Wednesday, February 28, 2024, 7:00 p.m.** by Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by

Blanche L. Hurlbutt

NYACD Executive Director February 28, 2024

January Motions Meeting:

#1/24/2024 = A Approval December Minutes

#1/24/2024 = B Approval December Finances

#1/24//2024 = C Approval of December Bills to Pay

#1/24/2024 = D Credit Card

#1/24/2024 = E Yearly Mileage Reimbursement

#1/24/2024 = F Approval to Adjourn