



MADISON COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
January 15, 2026 12:00 PM
Regular Board Meeting

Present:

Board:

Ric Barnes, Chairman & At-large Farming Public Rep.
Allen Hough, Vice-Chairman & Farm Bureau Rep.
TJ Stokes, County Legislator
Charlie Pace, Non-Farming Representative

Staff:

Steve Lorraine, District Manager
Amy Hayduke, District Clerk/Treasurer
Other:
Maryellen Sheehan, CCE
Alisha Cook, FSA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Barnes at 12:01PM.

2. Approval of Minutes – Minutes for the December 2025 meeting were emailed to the board members in advance and were also included in the board packets. *A motion was made by Pace, seconded by Stokes, to approve the December 2025 Minutes. Motion carried.*

3. Treasurer's Report – Amy Hayduke

The Treasurer's report, excluding the payroll reports, was sent to the directors in advance.

The board packets included the following reports for December 2025:

Bank Account Report, Unpaid Bills Detail, Paid Bills Detail, Check Detail, Deposit Detail, Payroll Journal, Vacation & Leave by Employee.

A motion to approve the December 2025 Treasurer's report was made by Hough and seconded by Pace. Motion carried.

Bills – Steve Lorraine added a late-arriving bill to the list of Unpaid bills. It was for S&G Companies in the amount of \$22,500. *A motion was made by Hough and seconded by Stokes to approve payment of 17 bills in the amended amount of \$267,630.10, which includes the additional late-arriving bill. Motion carried.*

In addition to the report, Amy Hayduke reported that we have taken 77 tree sale orders so far, amounting to about \$14,000, which is in-line with last year's numbers. She also reported that W-2's have been issued and 1099's are almost ready to be issued. The district credit card was compromised yesterday. It has been reported to the credit card company, the charges were disputed and they will send a new card.

4. Manager's Report – Steve Lorraine

- Jess is working on CAFO annual reports that need to be submitted to DEC by the end of March.
- Ryan is working on CNMP's for some non-CAFO farms – updating some older ones and writing a couple of new ones so he can get certified.
- Andrew and Tom have been working on stream and lake permit applications for landowners.
- Carl and Andrew are working on designs for projects coming up for construction this summer or fall.
- Tom has been taking care of most of the Ag Assessments as they come in.

- We have been working on the ranking for the Stream Program through the county. Steve will bring it to the next meeting for the board to review.
- The RFP for the RD 31 AGNPS is out and due in April.
- Amy and Steve are working on the annual reports that are due to the state by February 15th. They will bring the reports to the meeting after they are completed.
- Our new engineer started on 1/5/26.
- A question was asked about lake shore stabilization – whether we have seen an increase. Steve replied that we have seen an increase, mainly for Lake Moraine dredging permits and shoreline restoration. Other lakes are typically shoreline restoration.

5. FSA – Alisha Cook

- The DMC (Dairy Margin Coverage) started Monday and runs through February 26th. It is a newly revised program. Production history will need to be re-established for existing farms.
- The ARC/PLC Base Anchor program has been revamped. They will be taking bases that were established in the 1980's and moving them forward to what is planted or what has been planted from 2019-2023. In doing so, the workload in Alisha's office has increased significantly. They need to do a history-dig for any holes that are in the reports that the national office ran and fill them in. They cannot do any recons for 2026. The deadline is unknown. They are doing owner-operator updates, boundary corrections of every farm crop land.
- They haven't heard anything about the Conservation Reserve Program. NRCS has been charged with the task of starting the review process. They asked for 2026 and 2027 expiring contracts.
- The Supplemental Disaster Relief Program Stage 2 has been opened. There have been several trainings on this and is very extensive. The deadline is April 30th.
- The Farmer Bridge Assistance Program – they wanted crop reports for 2025 completed by December 19th so they could gauge the costs and get the payment factors completed. Applications will be available soon.

6. NRCS – Steve Lorraine reported that Evan Sweeney has been very helpful with guidance for the SWCD staff with the new program for GIS.

7. CCE – Maryellen Sheehan

Maryellen sent a report that was in the director packets. She discussed items from the report and also the following topics:

- They are in the beginning stages of organizing a “Beyond Grants” workshop.
- There will be a DEC workshop for berries & brambles in March with a specialist from Cornell.
- There will be a test prep session in February.
- They have a big push on crop scouting this year. Let them know if anyone comes across any flower or specialty crop farmers that are interested in having someone come to do crop scouting.
- A new Dairy Educator will be starting in May.
- They are planning a tree seminar. There may be forestry credits available for that.
- Ag in the Classroom program is starting in March, if anyone is interested in reading books about farming to 2nd to 4th graders.
- Steve Lorraine expressed an interest in being part of the Beyond Grants workshop. Maryellen will keep him in the loop.
- There was a conversation about the Augusta Amish auction.
- There is a Corn & Soy Day next week in Hamilton, that CCE is involved in.

8. Committee Reports

SWCC – Ryan Cunningham

- The January 2026 SWCC report was included in the director's packets. Steve Lorraine reviewed the report with the board. Steve added that we are working on the close out for AEM Round 18 and the State Aid reports.
- There was a discussion about harvesting water chestnuts in lakes.
- A question was asked about the solar project in Fenner. It has been delayed due to the requirement for a federal permit.

County – TJ Stokes

- Jim Cunningham was re-elected as Chairman to the Board of Supervisors.
- The county's purchase of the building at the former Cazenovia College has closed successfully.

9. NYACD/NACD

- December 31st Director Letter from Blanche Hurbutt - was included in the meeting packets.
- NYACD Legislative Days Booklet - was sent to the directors by email.
- NYACD 2026 Assessment – *A motion was made by Pace to table the decision of the assessment for a future meeting. The motion was seconded by Barnes. Motion carried.*

10. CDEA – Steve Lorraine

The schedule for the upcoming Water Quality Symposium was passed out to the directors. Steve stated that funds are available if they would like to attend.

11. Old Business

Pole barn lease- A discussion occurred regarding the lease renewal offer from the landlord. *A motion was made by Stokes, seconded by Pace, to approve the following terms of renewal: the lease renewal will be retroactive to November 1, 2025; the rent will \$750 a month starting 11/1/25; the rent will be increased each year by \$50 per month. Motion carried.*

2025 Part C budget – An amendment was passed around and reviewed by the board members. *A motion was made by Hough, seconded by Stokes, to approve the amended 2025 Part C budget. Motion carried.*

12. New Business

Employee Handbook Review – a list of potential changes was included in the Director packets. The list was reviewed and discussed. The board did not see any problems with the proposed changes. Steve will send the changes to the company that produces the handbooks and ask them to also include any updates that may have taken effect recently. Steve will bring it back to the board for approval before final acceptance.

Quarterly Grant Review – The report was included in the Director packets. After review, *a motion was made by Stokes to accept the report. The motion was seconded by Hough. Motion carried.*

AEM RD 18 Bank Account and AEM RD 19 bank accounts – *A motion was made by Stokes, seconded by Hough, to allow Amy to close the bank account for AEM RD 18 once the final payment is received from NYS and also to open new accounts for AEM RD 19 Tier 4 and AEM RD 19 Base. Motion carried.*

Computer & Software for District Engineer – After discussion, approval was made to spend approximately \$4,000 on a computer & software. *The motion was made by Stokes and seconded by Pace. Motion carried.*

13. Organizational Meeting

- **Election of Officers**

With no other nominations, the secretary cast one vote to keep the current slate of officers. Pace motioned to appoint Ric Barnes as Chairman, Allen Hough as Vice-Chairman and Amy Hayduke as Secretary/Treasurer. The motion was seconded by Stokes. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Appointment of Records Management Officer**

A motion was made by Barnes, seconded by Pace, to continue Amy Hayduke's appointment as Records Management Officer. The motion carried unanimously.

- **Schedule of Meetings**

A motion was made by Stokes, for the Madison County SWCD Board of Directors meetings to be held the third Thursday of each month at the following times: 7pm for the months of May, June, July, August, September and October and at 12pm for the months of January, February, March, April, October and November. The motion was seconded by Barnes and carried unanimously.

- **Resolution of Monthly Expenses**

A list of monthly expenses was presented to the board. A motion was made by Stokes to accept the list as payable without prior authorization from the board in order to avoid late fees and interest charges. The motion was seconded by Hough and passed unanimously. Resolution #150 titled "Approval of Monthly Expenses to be Paid" was signed by the board members.

- **Designation of Newspaper**

A motion was made by Barnes, seconded by Allen, to continue to designate Oneida Dispatch as the official newspaper to publish notices and other materials. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Designation of bank**

A motion was made by Pace to continue to use NBT Bank as the official banking institution. Motion was seconded by Hough and carried unanimously.

14 Additional Business

- Steve Lorraine stated that he will put together a list of potential AEM RD 19 projects and bring it to the next meeting. A discussion occurred about eligibility. The discussion included that farms that should be in compliance with CAFO requirements but are not in compliance are not eligible.
- A discussion occurred about completed project use and maintenance time for landowners.

15. Next Meeting

February 19, 2026 at 12:00 P.M.

16. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Stokes, seconded by Barnes. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 1:39 P.M.



Amy Hayduke, District Clerk/Treasurer
Date: 1/23/2026



Ric Barnes, Chairman Date: 2/19/25