

**DRAFT**

St. Lawrence County Soil and Water Conservation District  
1942 Old DeKalb Road, Canton, NY 13617  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES  
For February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at 10:00am

**Board Members Present:** Robert Andrews, Jr. (Chairperson), Adam Cook (Vice Chair), Patrick Smith (Treasurer), Jackie teRiele, John Burke, Anthony Levato

**Board Members Excused:** Ross Kostin

**Guest Present:** Ryan Cunningham NYS SWCC,

**Staff Present:** Alivia Bleau (Manager), Melissa Woods (Secretary/Assistant Treasurer), Heidi Knafelc (Technician), Allycia Foote (Technician) and Aaron Barrigar (Forester)

**I. Call to Order:** at 10:02 am

**II. Introductions**

**III. Agenda** (Attachment A)

**IV. Ryan Cunningham Training Presentation:** Capacity Building & Staff Recruitment & Retention

Smith entered at 10:15 am

**V. Minutes of the Previous Meeting:** *Motion to approve the January 29, 2026 minutes, made by Cook, seconded by teRiele approved by all.*

**VI. Reports**

**A. Board of Legislators** –John Burke

1. Burke stated they had a very long meeting dealing with the proposed ICE resolution. The resolution did pass.
2. Bruke reported that DANC did a presentation on what they do for the county.
3. Burke stated that Public Health proposed a resolution for supporting the encouragement of vaccines as a critical part of the county health concerns. They were asking for BOL support on this issue.

**B. Ag and Farmland Protection Board** – Bob Andrews

1. Andrews talked about various solar projects that are going on:  
Proposed solar farm in Colton; solar project on Hayes property in Canton has broken ground; Rich Road solar project in Canton is on hold till 2027; will discuss Massena solar project next meeting.
2. Andrews reported they are making updates to the Ag Plan; the last time it was done was 2017. They are meeting in March to receive recommendations from partners on what they find important and make changes to meet current status of Ag in SLC.
3. IDA is putting money into the rail road system in Fowler and Massena.

**VII. SWCD Reports:**

**A. Treasurer's Reports:** Melissa Woods

1. Woods made most of the payments talked about last month.
2. Woods has been working on normal monthly procedures, tree sale, and did submit all annual reports.
3. *Motion to allow Woods to transfer up to \$30,000 from Money Market Savings account to the checking account to pay for March expenses, made by Cook, seconded by Burke, approved by all.*

*Motion to approve the January 2026 Treasurers Report, made by Cook, seconded by teRiele approved by all.*

**B. Technician Report- Allycia Foote**

1. Foote reported that all AEM Round 18 paperwork has been submitted.
2. Foote has created an AEM funding flyer and has started distributing them (Facebook, our website, local stores around the county), also created an application and ranking sheet for projects. She has sent applications to participants who were already on the list for AEM Round 19.
3. Foote has also started distributing a sign-up sheet for our Newsletter. Burke stated that all BOD members should receive the newsletter.
4. Foote reported we hosted the Ag Assessment training and all went well. 25 people signed up and had 6 attend in person.
5. Foote and Bleau created a new Cover Crop program flyer and application and discussed changes to the program going forward.
6. Foote stated AgNPS Round 32 applications are due April 20<sup>th</sup> and has 10 farms interested in applying.
7. Foote brought up being put in the Garden Share paper and talked about advertising in this paper in the future.
8. Discussion on NRCS work and expectations on top of her SWCD duties. Has started working on 2026 applications.

**C. Forester's Report – Aaron Barrigar**

1. Barrigar continues to work on Part B Forest Management Plans.
2. Barrigar also continues with landowner assistance and site visits.

**D. Technician Report- Heidi Knafelc**

1. Knafelc reported she took the Pesticide Applicator test; she passed one part and is retaking the other part.
2. Knafelc has also been working on Ag Values (~25).
3. Knafelc went with Barrigar to check Hermon and Russel for ROW completion.

**E. Manager Report- Alivia Bleau**

1. Bleau worked on the SLELO Newsletter about the Blanding's Turtle project we worked on.
2. Bleau worked on all paperwork for CRF 7 & CRF 8 payments.
3. Bleau attended the Ag Assessment training along with Foote and Knafelc. She has been working on Ag Values as well.
4. Bleau did a project write up about our CAFO ENMP project for the CDEA newsletter.
5. Bleau had discussions with Foote about Part C Cover Crop program; did a Tree Sale press release; had team meetings and followed up on items from last BOD meeting.

**VIII. Old and New Business:**

- A.** Discussion on strategic plan and making it more measureable.

***Motion to approve strategic plan with the addition of the maps, made by Cook, seconded by Smith, approved by all.***

- B.** Discussion on growing our staff, and what a new staff member would do and how much benefit they would bring to the county.

- C.** Discussion on paying NYACD dues. Cunningham gave a little run down on what NYACD does. Andrews reached out to Blanche about what they can do for our office. BOD decided to table paying the dues this month based on receiving more information from Blanche.

***Motion to invite Blanche to present to our BOD via zoom at our March meeting, made by Smith, seconded by Burke, approved by all.***

**D.** Discussion on Cyber Insurance and what it covers and who we are covered under. At this time we are not covered under the county.

***Motion to sign up for Cyber Liability through Eastern Shore Insurance for \$1,831.88, made by Cook, seconded by teRiele, approved by all.***

**E.** Table discussion on Reasonable suspicion. Waiting to hear back from county attorney.

**F.** Discussion on CVA contract and working on language for the contract. Will bring to the BOD next month.

**G.** Discussion on hiring a WRP intern or two for the summer. Talked about previous year and what the expectations are for new interns.

***Motion to hire up to 2 interns, made by Cook, seconded by teRiele, approve by all.***

***Motion to pay interns \$20/hour up to 400 hours per intern, made by Cook, seconded by Burke, approved by all.***

**H.** Discussion on check we received from a credit card settlement. BOD comfortable with cashing the check.

**IX. Correspondence:** Mail was available for the Board’s review.

**X. Announcements:** None

**XI. Next Meeting:** March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2026 4:30 p.m.

**XII. Meeting Adjourned:** ***Motion to adjourn at 12:35 p.m., made by Cook, seconded by Smith, approved by all.***

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Robert Andrews, Jr., Chairperson

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Date

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Melissa Woods, Secretary/Assistant Treasurer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date