

Orleans County Natural Resources Conservation District

Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 10, 2025

Offsite Meeting

In Attendance: David Fox, Alyssa Conn, Jared Nunery, Walter Medwid, Emily Dehoff, Bruce Urie,

Staff: Sarah Damsell, Will Mariner, Jason Tankersly, Ted Sidell

Absent Members: Joanna Lidback, Chris Steel

Site Visit

The Board visited a tree planting project conducted by the District off of Creek Road in Craftsbury. This will be one of the sites for an upcoming public tour. After the site visit the Board convened for the July meeting at the home of David Fox in Albany.

Planning for Tri-District Meeting

Walter Medwin proposed that the upcoming tri-district meeting focus on opportunities for collaboration between the NEK districts, for example sharing policies or procedures. Currently no other districts have undertaken similar efforts. Although a vote was not taken, the Board was generally supportive of exploring options for mutual support with the other NEK districts at the upcoming meeting.

DM Report

There have been 30 applicants for the re-posted communications position with the District. Sarah has been discussing an additional practice with the Trees for Streams program that would allow “harvestable buffers” -specifically fruit and nut crops that might encourage more active landowner maintenance of buffers. The Board suggested the term “harvestable buffer” might be confused with allowing forestry harvesting of the buffer plantings. Sarah has hired a consultant to develop a soil sampling SOP, after the SOP is complete Sarah would like to have the same consultant evaluate the 10 years of data the District has on soil sampling, which will help with the report on the USDA RCCP funding. Joanna and Sarah discuss the house available at the Orleans County Fairgrounds. The Fair Association is interested in continued discussions around the District working from the Fair Grounds. Sarah expressed some concerns about the conditions of the house. The Board discussed pros and cons of both moving out of the NRCD office in general and specifically moving to the Fair Grounds. The Board was generally in favor of continuing to explore options for where the District operates from, but did not vote on any specific course of action.

Capital Funding Allocation from VACD

The District has received \$17,500 from VACD for capital expenses. Sarah proposed the following allocation for Board approval: \$9,000 for cost share for a rock picker (primarily already funded), \$3,500 for repairing an eroding ditch on a former project site; \$2,000 cost

share for septic maintenance at priority lakes, and \$3,000 for aerial drone imagery stitching software (a one time cost, not a perpetual license).

Motion: Fox motioned to approve the capital expense allocation as proposed. Approved unanimously.

Open Items

The Board differed discussion of requesting a 50% landowner match of materials for lake shore projects to a future meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 a.m.

Minutes submitted by David Fox, Board Secretary on 07/20/25