

**Piscataquis County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors.  
Meeting Minutes**

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**January 11, 2024 at 4pm.**

Attendance:

Staff: Sarah Robinson, Kacey Weber

Supervisors: Jensen Bissell, Jim Ferrante, Carolyn Ziegra, Kent Black, Molly London

Assoc. Supervisors: Kim Merritt, Sam Brown, Toby Hall, Mike Pouch

Guests: Caley Rentz, Seth Jones

The Meeting was conducted via Microsoft Teams.

**Establish a Quorum:** Chair Jensen Bissell opened the meeting at 4:02 pm. Quorum was established.

**Consent Agenda** - Motion and second to approve the consent agenda. Unanimous to approve. This includes the previous minutes, grant reports and staff reports.

**Finance Report** - End of the year surplus was \$17,822.00. Loss in NRCS only because payments are delayed and because of 25% in-kind contribution. Will always be a loss in TNC as well due to admin being reimbursed at 3%. Loss in Law Farm Building is an expense that has been covered and Cheryl is working to fix this. \$12,500 from the State transferred into a savings account. Need to take Toby Hall off the savings account and add Jim Ferrante. Grant savings includes Onion and MCF funds. Motion and second to approve financial report.

**NRCS Update** - Caley Rentz started in the office and she is a welcomed addition to the office. Seth has been training Caley and we are readying applications for obligations. Lots of new people coming through the doors.

**Executive Director Report** - Painting and construction at the office starting this Friday, so staff working from home. December was quiet. Got grants stuff going with Bill. T-shirt sales slowed and the fit of the shirt will lead us to search for other options when it's time to reorder. Planning to bring them to outreach events. Field season for TNC has come to a close. Completed Mark's year review. Storm didn't do too much damage to Williamsburg, but the Law Farm was significantly impacted. Volunteer efforts cleared the trails in no time! Community has provided feedback that the trail looks great. Went to that Maine Ag Trades Show and did a shift at the MACD booth. A great annual outreach event.

**New Business - Tree Nursery** - Patty Cormier's idea. Sarah talked to Jessica Leahy today about this. Need for tree nursery in Maine. There would be 4-6 throughout the state and would be strategically scattered throughout the state. Greenbush State facility exists currently, but it's not looking promising to restart. Could be an opportunity for federal funding, staffing through the Correctional Facility and through UMaine. Soils good for nurseries? Any money in it for our group? Nursery with the focus on genetics. Could incorporate office and/or the forest immersion program. Could it incorporate the Christmas trees? Both options fit our mission. No pressing timeline? Len Price is looking to plant 5,000 seedlings in the next few years and is eager. Molly agrees it could be a good thing, although worries about the costs. If we get the new position, that person could be incorporated. We wouldn't be managers, but we would provide the space. Nursery would benefit the county more than the Christmas trees. Jensen will see Patty and ask more questions. Sam said to ask why the Greenbush facility didn't work out?



