

**STEUBEN COUNTY**  
**SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**  
*Peachtree Plaza 200 – 1220 N 200 W STE L – Angola, IN 46703*      *260-665-3211, Ext. 3 - www.steubenswcd.org*

**MINUTES**  
**STEUBEN COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING**  
**Steuben County Community Center • Multi-Purpose Room • 317 S. Wayne Street, Angola, Indiana 46703**  
**January 13, 2021**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

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| <p><u>District Supervisors</u><br/>         Kayleen Hart<br/>         Craig Holman<br/>         David Perkins</p> <p><u>SWCD</u><br/>         Janel Meyer, Administrative Coordinator</p> <p><u>ABSENT</u><br/>         Gene Diehl, Board Supervisor<br/>         Chuck Howard, Board Supervisor</p> | <p><u>Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)</u><br/>         Arthur Franke, District Conservationist</p> <p><u>Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)</u><br/>         Kate Sanders, Resource Specialist</p> <p><u>Public Attendees</u><br/>         Mary Martin, Regional Director, Office of Senator Mike Braun<br/>         Ken Shelton, Steuben County Commissioner</p> |
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**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The SWCD Board meeting was called to order by Steuben SWCD Chairman Craig Holman at 5:00 p.m.

**II. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (12-09-20)**

The Board members were asked to consider the minutes of the December 9, 2020 Board meeting. There being no additions or corrections, the following action was taken:

*Kayleen Hart moved to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2020 Steuben County SWCD board meeting as presented. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.*

**III. TREASURER’S REPORT**

Janel Meyer provided the financial report for the December 5 to January 6, 2021 period. Financial reports and bank statements were sent to the Board Supervisors for review in advance of the meeting. Supervisors also received a hard copy in their folders.

*Report for period ending January 6, 2021:*

<u>General Fund - All Accounts</u>			
Checking	\$ 48,055.55		
Statement Savings	<u>41,875.31</u>		
Total	\$ 89,930.86		
<i>Checking account</i>		<i>Savings account</i>	
<i>balance 12/4/20</i>	\$ 49,853.99	<i>balance 12/4/20</i>	\$ 41,874.95
<i>Receipts</i>	\$ 7,381.61	<i>Receipts</i>	\$ 0.36
<i>Disbursement</i>	<u>(\$ 9,180.05)</u>	<i>Disbursement</i>	<u>(\$ 0.00)</u>
	\$ 48,055.55		\$41,875.31

Additional information provided with monthly claims for Board review and verification included:

1. Deposit & Check detail report;
2. Checking & Savings account bank statements;
3. Checking & Savings account reconciliations;
4. Staff payroll approval form, time sheets, compensatory time logs and December vehicle log. Janel reported total checking account receipts of \$7,381.61 which included a payment for 2,400 ft. of fencing in the Snow Lake sub-watershed of Fawn. Disbursement was \$9,180.05 which included reimbursement for the cost-share payment (Fawn River LARE grant; see above), office supplies, printing/ mailing fees for the SWCD fall newsletter, website training fees, and operating expenses.

A FY20 profit/loss summary was also presented. This included a detailed summary of receipts and disbursements.

There being no questions or comments regarding the Treasurer’s Report, Chairman Holman called for a motion to approve.

*Kayleen Hart moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report for the period ending January 6, 2021, as presented; seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.*

#### IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### a. Natural Resources/Technical Assistance

Gene Diehl, Chair

##### i. Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (Farm Bill) / NRCS / FSA

1. Talking Points were provided in the Supervisors packets. Main points included Indiana partners for conservation funding and Direct-Hire Authority (DHA) updates. DHA allows USDA-NRCS to fill vacancies for specific occupations, grade levels and locations when it can be proven there is a critical hiring need or severe shortage of candidates. NRCS has received approval for DHA for 1,525 positions throughout the county; several positions are open within NE Indiana, including a soil conservationist for LaGrange/Steuben County.
2. NRCS District Conservationist Arthur Franke reported he will spend the remainder of January and February on Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) work and ranking. Deadline for ranking all eligible applications is March 5. Contract obligation is April 30. He reported Steuben has 46 EQIP applications, but realistically, 39 applications because some have been canceled or converted to the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Steuben has 2 CSP applications. Art anticipates working on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in May and June; early July is the deadline for him to send Farm Service Agency (FSA) the required information/materials.  
Art advised the Angola USDA Service Center remains at operating status Stage 0, restricting in-person appointments.  
Kayleen Hart, FSA Program Technician, reported they are working on CRP general signup and 2021 Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC)/Price Loss Coverage (PLC) signup.

##### ii. Watershed Projects and Organizations/SWCD

##### -Southeastern Lake Michigan Basin: St. Joe River West (HUC 8) (Lake Michigan)

##### Sub-watersheds:

##### 1. Pigeon Creek Watershed

a. FY21-1 Quarterly Report: Janel advised the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) Pigeon Creek Grant FY21-1 quarterly report is due January 14. She will be completing the report tomorrow.

b. GLC Pigeon Creek Grant Updates: Janel received the GLC Pigeon Creek Grant Amendment letter, approving our grant amendment request to change the total acreage for forage/biomass plantings and total amount of fencing. Chairman Holman signed a copy of the letter accepting these modifications for GLC records.

Chairman Holman also signed the contract for the 11.2-acre forage/biomass and 1,573 ft. fencing project in the Pigeon Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek; project approved at the October 21, 2020 Board meeting.

c. Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) Forage/Biomass Application: Janel presented an application for a 30-acre forage/biomass planting in the Silver Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek. The Board discussed the application and approved moving forward with the project.

*A motion was made by David Perkins to approve the 30.0-acre forage/biomass planting in the Silver Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek using the 2020 Pigeon Creek Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) Grant. Seconded by Kayleen Hart. Motion carried.*

d. WLTP Forage/Biomass and Heavy Use Area Protection (HUAP) Contracts: Chairman Holman signed the contract for the 17.24-acre forage/biomass planting in the Otter Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek; project approved at last month's Board meeting. Janel reported the HUAP contract has not been completed since a site visit was still required to verify the project size.

##### 2. Friends of the St. Joseph River Association (FotSJR)

a. The next FotSJR virtual meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2021. Janel reported she will try to participate if her schedule allows.

##### -Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB): St. Joe River East (HUC 8) (Lake Erie)

##### Sub-watersheds:

##### 1. Upper St. Joe River – Includes Fish Creek, Nettle, and West Branch Sub-Watersheds

a. West Branch of the SJR and Fish Creek LARE WLTP Grant Application: Janel advised she has been working on completing the LARE WLTP grant application for the Upper St. Joseph River (USJR). She will request \$30,000 in the grant application. The funding request was kept at a reasonable level since this program always receives more grant applications than they have monies available. Arthur inquired what practices will be eligible within the grant. Janel

explained the practices chosen were best management practices listed within the USJR Watershed Management Plan. Chairman Holman signed the review and application submission page.

iii. Entire County

1. Clean Water Indiana Urban Grant

a. CWI 3-YR Annual Report: Janel advised the next Clean Water Indiana Urban Grant report is due January 28, 2021. She will be working on completing this report for submission by the reporting deadline.

2. Steuben County Lakes Council (SCLC)

a. The next SCLC virtual monthly board meeting is scheduled for February 6, 2020. This meeting will feature a question/answer session with a representative from the lab which is processing the eDNA samples. Janel advised for anyone that has an interest in participating to contact her for the Zoom meeting information.

b. District Operations/Marketing

**Chuck Howard, Chair**

i. SWCD Training/Public Relations, etc.

1. Field Visits/Trainings

a. NNE Indiana District Employee Association (IDEA) Region Teams Meeting • December 11, 2020: Janel participated in this virtual meeting where various NNE SWCDs provided updates on their Districts' activities and upcoming financial reporting deadlines were reviewed. Janel advised Elkhart SWCD has proposed NE Indiana SWCDs collaborate on creating educational videos on a regional scale as opposed to each District created their own since we all have the same mission/message to reach more people with limited staff.

b. Steuben County Virtual Stakeholder Meeting • December 15, 2020. Janel participated in this meeting where an update on the Steuben County Strategic Assessment and Alignment Process was provided. HPG Network was hired by Steuben County to work with county departments involved in the development process; overall goal is to have a documented, aligned process and roles where gaps/overlap between departments is eliminated. Janel reminded the Board the Steuben SWCD was only invited to the initial stakeholder meeting in January 2020, where all attending departments and HPG Network staff were advised the Steuben County SWCD had no regulatory authority. She reported one of the key recommendations listed in the presentation involved local processing of Rule 5. Many stakeholders felt the process would be much more efficient if completed locally by the SWCD. Janel explained she questioned the stakeholders about the definition of efficiency. She expressed her frustration to the Board since the SWCD was not represented in any of the subsequent stakeholder meetings. She explained it was very clear the stakeholder group did not understand the Rule 5 permit process and was surprised to learn departments/individuals who didn't understand Rule 5 processes, roles and responsibilities made this key recommendation. Janel further shared both Andrew Gamble, Indiana State Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) Stormwater Specialist (conducts Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plans for Rule 5 in Steuben County) and the SWCD were contacted by key stakeholders after this meeting regarding the Rule 5 process. She advised the stakeholders the SWCD would have been more than happy to provide/share information during the Strategic Assessment & Alignment process.

c. Department Head Meeting • December 16, 2020. Janel participated in this conference call where service record updates and timecard information were discussed.

Janel reviewed a December 29, 2020 memo from the Steuben County Board of Commissioners regarding the FFCRA (Emergency Paid Sick Leave – EPSL and Emergency Family Medical Leave – EFML); FFCRA expired December 31, 2020 and will not be extended.

d. IASWCD Talking with Legislators Virtual Training • December 16, 2020: Janel participated in the last half of this training.

e. ISDA How to Facilitate a Virtual Meeting Training • December 17, 2020. Janel participated in this virtual training where ISDA District Support Specialists reviewed annual meeting requirements and an overview of conducting an annual meeting using a virtual platform.

f. IASWCD Virtual Annual Meeting • January 11-13, 2021. Art and Janel participated. Janel reported she participated in few sessions due to current workload requirements. She also reported former Resource Conservationist Tara Lee's registration was gifted to Crystal Van Pelt (Steuben County Purdue Extension Ag & Natural Resources Educator). This allowed

Crystal's participation in the INField session; Crystal is the Steuben County InField Advantage program leader.

2. November and December Tally Sheets were provided in the Supervisors packets.
- ii. Indiana State Department of Agriculture
1. Steuben SWCD Meeting Planning Updates: Janel advised she was uncomfortable offering an in-person annual meeting. Since the District was already required to provide a way for landowners to participate virtually for election purposes, she suggested offering this meeting only in a virtual format. The Board agreed. A discussion ensued about available locations for the Board to meet and live-stream the event. Kayleen Hart and David Perkins volunteered to check various sites for internet capability and availability for SWCD use. Kate Sanders reported she would be happy to participate as the meeting greeter or moderator.
  2. District Support Specialist/Resource Specialist Update: Kate provided updates on important deadlines (designation of depository by January 31<sup>st</sup>; annual financial report, etc.) and shared information about new staff and supervisor training being offered January 14, 2021, and Allen County's Coffee & Soil Testing Virtual meeting on January 19, 2021. The Board asked Kate about trainings for private applicator credits; Kate stated she would check whether the meeting scheduled on the 19<sup>th</sup> would be offering credits.

**c. Budget and Finance**

**Craig Holman, Chair**

- i. Treasurer/Depository  
Appointment of fiscal officer and financial institution are determined at the beginning of each fiscal year.  
*Kayleen Hart moved to designate Janel Meyer as Treasurer/Fiscal Officer for the Steuben County SWCD; seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.*  
*David Perkins moved to keep Key Bank as the Steuben County SWCD financial institution/depository; seconded by Kayleen Hart. Motion carried.*
- ii. District Budget and Finance Committee Audit  
The Board tabled the discussion of the District Budget and Finance Committee Audit to the February Board meeting.
- iii. 2021 Affiliate Memberships  
Janel advised the 2021 Affiliate Membership will not be mailed until late February or early March, after the Resource Conservationist (RC) position has been filled. The RC typically manages this task in mid-January.
- iv. Associate Supervisors  
Janel reported she was contacted by an individual who had an interest in becoming an Associate Supervisor. She will follow-up with this individual and send the current Associate Supervisors renewal forms as soon as her schedule permits.

**d. Information and Education**

**Kayleen Hart, Chair**

- i. Drainage Board  
Staff are attending the twice-monthly county Drainage Board (DB) meetings. No report provided.
- ii. SWCD Website Training  
Janel inquired with Peter Oakley, webmaster for the SWCD website regarding the payment for five training sessions. Peter will retain a credit on our account, to be used for a future coaching/training session since the 5<sup>th</sup> session was canceled. He offered to use the session to meet and discuss what website updates may be required while working to refill the Resource Conservationist position.
- iii. Spring Newsletter/Annual Report  
Janel requested the Board, Art and/or Kate submit articles for the upcoming annual report. She stated this would be helpful when compiling the report since she will be unable to spend much time on the task due to current workloads. Craig and Kate volunteered to write articles.
- iv. Upcoming Regional/National Events
  1. **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** • January 18, 2021 (*County Offices Closed*)
  2. Coffee & Soil Testing Virtual Meeting • January 19, 2021 (8:30 – 10:30 AM)
  3. InField Advantage Callout Virtual Meeting • January 26, 2021 (10:00 AM)
  4. The 2021 Stewardship Network Conference • January 27 – 29, 2021
  5. Steuben County Lakes Council Meeting • February 6, 2021 (*Angola, IN; subject to change*)
  6. Steuben SWCD Monthly Board Meeting • February 10, 2021 (*Community Center*)
  7. **President's Day** • February 15, 2021 (*County Offices Closed*)
  8. Fort Wayne Farm Show • March 9-11, 2021

V. CLAIMS

5699	USPS Postmaster (Postage – 2020 1099-NEC Tax Forms)	\$ 7.25
5700	Anna Creager (~2,400 ft. Fencing-2018 FAWN LARE; Snow Lake-Fawn River)	\$ 7,236.87
5701	Staples (Epson Portable Tripod Projector Screen)	\$ 149.99

Chairman Holman asked Board members if there were questions or concerns regarding the claims. Hearing none, he asked for a motion to approve claims.

*Kayleen Hart motioned to accept the claims for January 13, 2021. David Perkins seconded the motion. Motion approved.*

VI. NEXT BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, February 10, 2021 – 5:00 p.m.

SWCD Board Meeting

- Steuben County Community Center Multi-Purpose room  
317 S. Wayne Street – Angola, Indiana 46703

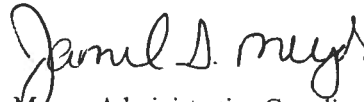
VII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Steuben SWCD, Chairman Holman called for a motion to adjourn.

*Kayleen Hart moved to adjourn; seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.*




Meeting adjourned by Chairman Holman at 6:07 p.m.

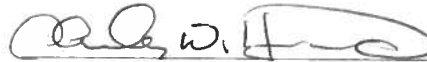
Minutes respectfully submitted by:



Janel S. Meyer, Administrative Coordinator/Treasurer

Minutes approved by Steuben County SWCD Board

  
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02/10/2021 (Date)