

MINUTES

STEUBEN COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING

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

May 12, 2021

IN ATTENDANCE:

District Supervisors

Kayleen Hart
 Craig Holman
 Chuck Howard
 Beth Williams

Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)

Kate Sanders, Resource Specialist

Public Attendees

Ken Shelton, Steuben County Commissioner

SWCD

Janel Meyer, Administrative Coordinator
 Aimee Wentworth, Resource Conservationist

ABSENT

David Perkins, Board Supervisor

I. CALL TO ORDER

The SWCD Board meeting was called to order by Steuben SWCD Chair Kayleen Hart at 5:01 p.m.

II. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (4-14-21)

The Board members were asked to consider the minutes of the April 14, 2021 Board meeting. There being no additions or corrections, the following action was taken:

Chuck Howard moved to approve the minutes of the April 14, 2021 Steuben County SWCD Board meeting as presented. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT

Janel Meyer provided the financial report for the April 9 to May 11, 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 May 11, 2021:

<u>General Fund - All Accounts</u>			
Checking	\$ 62,395.97		
Statement Savings	<u>41,876.68</u>		
Total	\$104,272.65		
<i>Checking account</i>		<i>Savings account</i>	
<i>balance 4/8/21</i>	\$ 53,998.48	<i>balance 4/8/21</i>	\$ 41,876.34
<i>Receipts</i>	\$ 10,100.00	<i>Interest</i>	\$ 0.34
<i>Disbursement</i>	<u>(\$ 1,702.51)</u>	<i>Disbursement</i>	<u>(\$ 0.00)</u>
	\$ 62,395.97		\$41,876.68

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 April vehicle log. Janel reported total checking account receipts of \$10,100.00 which included affiliate memberships, flag sales, Steuben County Life registration and the 2021 Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Matching Grant. Disbursement was \$1,702.51 which included operating expenses, Project Wild registration for the Resource Conservationist, Regional Science Fair conservation award sponsorship, and Soil and Water Stewardship material printing.

There being no questions or comments regarding the Treasurer's Report, Board Chair Kayleen Hart called for a motion to approve.

Chuck Howard moved to approve the Treasurer's Report for the period ending May 11, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Natural Resources/Technical Assistance

Beth Williams, Chair

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

1. Talking Points were provided in the Supervisors packets.
2. Janel provided NRCS District Conservationist Arthur Franke's update since he was unable to attend the meeting. She reported: Jennifer Walker is Acting NRCS District Conservationist for Steuben County this week, May 10 - May 14, 2021; NRCS Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contract obligation is due May 28, 2021 – Steuben County has 21 pre-approved applications; and Art plans on working on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) re-enroll contracts and new offer contracts this summer.
Kayleen Hart, Farm Service Agency (FSA) Program Technician, reported FSA is beginning to certify crops for the year; July 15th is the deadline. Producers will be required to schedule an appointment.

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. Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) Updates: Janel requested approval to make the cost-share payment for the completed 17.24-acre forage/biomass planting in the Otter Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek, once the field verification has been completed. Total cost of the project was \$2,586.00. Janel will invoice the state for the payment.

A motion was made by Chuck Howard to approve the \$2,586.00 payment for the completed 17.24-acre forage/biomass planting in the Otter Lake-Pigeon Creek sub-watershed. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

- b. WLTP Wildlife Habitat Pollinator Planting Application: Janel presented an application for a 1.75-acre pollinator planting on a property located in the Silver Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon. Landowner would like to convert the area into wildlife habitat specific to pollinator species. The area is currently in switchgrass. Arthur Franke and Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth performed a site visit to assess the property and provide conservation planning assistance. Landowner was also provided information on how to properly establish a pollinator plot.

Chuck Howard moved to approve the 1.75-acre wildlife habitat pollinator 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 Beth Williams. Motion carried.

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

- a. Aimee Wentworth participated in the April 22, 2021 meeting virtually. She reported meeting highlights, including the FotSJR Board action to sign the coalition letter for Senate Bill 389; the formation of a committee to review/discuss the St. Joseph River watershed inventory project (funding discussion tabled to May meeting); and a board action for a gold-level sponsorship (\$5,000) of the St. Joseph River documentary for public television.
- b. The next FotSJR has been scheduled for May 27, 2021.

3. St. Joseph River Basin Commission (SJRBC)

- a. The SJRBC will hold their 21st Annual Symposium virtually on May 14, 2021. Staff will not be able to participate due to scheduling conflicts.
- b. The next SJRBC quarterly meeting has been scheduled for June 3, 2021. Janel reported SB 389 was passed and enacted into law. As part of the law (relating to wetlands regulation), the statute created the Indiana Wetlands Task Force, which, includes among its members an individual who is a representative of the SJRBC. Since the recommendation was due June 1, prior to the quarterly meeting for discussion, the Commission's attorney suggested sending a letter to preserve SJRBC representation on the Task Force. At the June 3rd SJRBC meeting, the Chairman will request a retroactive approval of the appointment recommendation.

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

Sub-watersheds:

1. Upper St. Joe River (SJR) – Includes Fish Creek, Nettle, and West Branch Sub-Watersheds:

- a. The Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy asked the Steuben SWCD to provide a letter of support for a Midwest Glacial Lake Partnership application they are submitting. They are requested funds for automated samplers on the Harry Teeters and Cyrus Brouse ditches. The

automated samplers will collect/analyze water samples to assist with identifying what nutrients/sediments are entering Clear Lake and help with developing a plan of action to reduce nutrient inputs. Because the support letter was required prior to the SWCD May meeting, Janel drafted a letter and had Board Chair Kayleen Hart review and approve.

b. Janel shared a thank you note from ISDA District Support Specialist Jennifer Thum. The note thanked us for our continued support of their efforts in the WLEB. ISDA's Tri-State WLEB Phosphorus Initiative proposal was funded; the SWCD provided a letter of support for this project, committing in-kind technical assistance and support for project promotion and education/outreach events. Kate Sanders reported about \$8 million was allocated for this regional collaboration/partnership between Ohio, Michigan, and Indiana to address phosphorus concerns.

iv. Entire County

1. District Cost Share

a. Janel requested approval to make the cost-share payment for the completed 1.0-acre interseeding project in the West Branch of Fish Creek, once the field verification has been completed. Total cost of the project was \$150.

Beth Williams made a motion to approve the \$150 payment for the completed interseeding project in the West Branch of Fish Creek. Seconded by Chuck Howard Motion carried.

2. Steuben County Lakes Council (SCLC)

a. Janel participated in the May 1, 2021 meeting virtually. She reported meeting highlights, including the Crooked Lake dredging project and residents' concerns about lowered water levels during/after the sediment removal.

b. The next SCLC monthly board meeting is scheduled for June 5, 2021.

3. Steuben County/Urban (IDEM Rule 5/MS4)

a. A copy of the stormwater inspection report conducted at the Trine University – Golf Apartments building site on March 18, 2021 was provided for review. Corrective actions were required for deficiencies identified during the inspection, including stabilization and sediment control measures.

b. A copy of the Samfred Market Place Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan was provided for review. It is a commercial development project for storage units on the north side of State Route 120, near the intersection of W State Route 120 and Lane 385 Big Otter Lake in Fremont.

b. District Operations/Marketing

Chuck Howard, Chair

i. SWCD Training/Public Relations, etc.

1. Field Visits/Trainings

a. NACD Urban Conservation Webinar – Soil Trailer • April 15, 2021 (*virtual*): Aimee participated in this webinar which featured information from the West Virginia Conservation Agency.

b. ISDA District Support Specialist Jennifer Thum Meeting • April 16, 2021 (*virtual*): Jennifer Thum scheduled this meeting with Aimee to welcome her to the SWCD and provide training.

c. Urban & Small Farmer Efforts Training Webinar • April 19, 2021 (*virtual*): Janel participated in this meeting which covered the Indiana Conservation Partnership's efforts to address urban/small/specialty new farms. A recording is available as entry was limited to the first 100 attendees.

d. Coffee & Plant Science Webinar • April 20, 2021: Janel and Aimee participated in this educational webinar featuring NRCS District Conservationist Arthur Franke and ISDA Resource Specialist Heath Hurst. They discussed tools available to create the best plan for weed management and cover crop selection/maintenance. A recording is available through the Allen County SWCD website.

e. NE/NW New SWCD Supervisor Training • April 20, 2021 (*virtual*): Beth Williams participated. She reported the training was worthwhile for individuals with no prior knowledge of SWCDs and their role.

f. IASWCD Lunch 'n Learn: Envirothon • April 21, 2021 (*virtual*): Aimee participated to learn about Indiana's Envirothon program for high school students. A recording is available through the IASWCD website.

g. Elkhart County SWCD Rain Barrel Workshop • April 21, 2021 (*virtual*): Janel and Aimee participated.

- h. Xerces Society Insect Apocalypse: What's Happening? • April 22, 2021 (*virtual*): Janel participated in this webinar featuring Executive Director Scott Hoffman Black, who reported the latest science on insect declines and how everyone can incorporate invertebrate conservation into their lives.
- i. NE Region Urban Soil Health Program "Meet & Greet" • April 28, 2021 (*virtual*): Janel participated in this meeting sponsored by Urban Soil Health Program Director Eliana Blaine. Meeting was held to provide an overview of the new urban program, introduce program staff, and discuss the Conservation Partnership's role in the program. A recording of the meeting is available through the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI).
- j. CCSI Strategies Moving Forward Webinar • April 29, 2021 (*virtual*): Janel and Aimee participated in this CCSI meeting, held to share their new opportunities for increasing soil health adoption. Janel provided information about funding available through CCSI for outreach/education projects that target farmers who have not adopted soil health systems. Projects must target improved soil health on Indiana cropland with proposals being due July 1, 2021. Janel requested ideas from Board Supervisors as this funding is readily available. The Board discussed cover crop grow tubes or boxes for use at area co-ops and future educational events. Janel will have Aimee find additional resources on this type of educational tool.
- k. Prairie Heights School Day • May 7, 2021: Aimee provided program assistance for the 1st grade class field trip at Prairie Heights Elementary. She lead a station to assist LaGrange County Parks & Recreation Naturalist Leslie Arnold. Aimee had students participate in the "Tree Factory" where they learn about tree needs and survival and act out tree parts.

2. April Tally Sheets were provided in the Supervisor's packets.

- ii. Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts
 - 1. River Friendly Farmer
The Board nominated two individuals for the Steuben County River Friendly Farmer Award, Jacob Willson and Chris Weaver. Janel will contact them and complete the paperwork.
- iii. State Department of Agriculture
 - 1. District Support Specialist (DSS)/Resource Specialist Update: Kate reviewed the DSS May 2021 update, shared information about the 2022 CWI competitive grants, and announced ISDA Division of Soil Conservation promoted Trevor Lauries to the Director position. Trevor was a former Data Analyst Supervisor with the Division.
All Supervisors received a copy of the Indiana District Region Meeting flyer in their packets. Region Meetings are held to provide partner updates and highlight information/projects for District Staff and Supervisors.

c. Budget and Finance

Kayleen Hart, Chair

- i. Annual Plan
Each Supervisor was emailed a copy of the Annual Plan and receive a hard copy in their packets at the April meeting. Janel asked the Board to review/provide feedback prior to the May meeting. She reported Kayleen was the only Supervisor who submitted edits. Janel requested discussion on the Annual Plan be tabled until the June meeting; she was unable to locate Kayleen's edits. Janel will coordinate with Kayleen and provide a final copy of the Annual Plan for approval prior to the June meeting.
- ii. CWI Annual \$10,000 Matching Grant
The CWI \$10,000 Matching Grant was deposited into the Steuben SWCD account on April 23, 2021.
- iii. Conflict of Interest Statements
Conflict of Interest Statements were completed by Chuck, Craig, Kayleen and Beth. The conflict of interest statement for David Perkins will be completed the next Board meeting he is available.
Beth Williams motioned to approve the Conflict of Interest Statement for Chuck Howard. Seconded Craig Holman. Motion carried.

Beth Williams motioned to approve the Conflict of Interest Statements for Kayleen Hart, Craig Holman, and David Perkins. Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.

Craig Holman motioned to approve the Conflict of Interest Statement for Beth Williams. Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.
- iv. State Board of Accounts (SBOA) March 2021 Special Districts Bulletin
Janel reported Jennifer Thum suggested having a policy manual the Board can adopt yearly that includes the approval/authorization of electronic fund transfers (EFT) to pay claims. Since the Steuben

SWCD is still in the process of developing a policy manual, a motion was made to approve claim payments via EFT.

Chuck Howard moved to approve an electronic funds transfer method of payment of claims – With electronic fund transfer meaning any transfer of funds other than a transaction originated by check, draft, that is initiated through an electronic terminal, telephone, or computer for the purpose of ordering, instructing, or authorizing our financial institution (Key Bank) to debit or credit the Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District account. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

- v. 2022 Budget Request
 Janel reported 2022 Allocation Requests are due prior to the Steuben County Commissioner’s June 7, 2021 meeting. The Board agreed the 2022 SWCD operating fund request will remain \$16,000. Janel will complete the FY22 budget request and submit to the county.

d. Information and Education

David Perkins, Chair

- i. Drainage Board
 Staff are attending the twice-monthly county Drainage Board (DB) meetings. Janel shared information about the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy’s Cyrus Brouse Regulated Drain 2-Stage ditch project. The Conservancy had a “gentleman’s” agreement with former Steuben County Surveyor Larry Gilbert but were required to present to the Drainage Board for final official approval.
- ii. NACD Stewardship Week Materials & Poster Contest
 Janel advised all the materials were printed and distributed to the Elementary Schools on Earth Day. Poster contest entries are due May 19, 2021.
- iii. Steuben County SWCD 2021 Spring Newsletter
 Janel advised the 2021 spring newsletter has been completed and will be mailed/emailed to our distribution list by the end of the week.
- iv. Food Plot Seed Information
 Janel thanked Chuck for picking up and delivering the food plot seed and donating soybeans.
- v. Associate Supervisors
 Janel will be sending the Associate Supervisor letters to Tim Groosbeck, Bridget Harrison, Dan Oberst, Julie Reynolds, and Crystal Van Pelt.
- vi. 4-H / Purdue Extension / Other SWCDs
 Aimee reported on her progress with the lesson plans and kits. She will be attending Hoosier Riverwatch Training on Saturday, May 15, 2021.
- vii. Upcoming Regional/National Events
 1. 2021 Spring Garden Series • May 4 – 25, 2021 (*Tuesday evenings; Angola, IN*)
 2. Ft. Wayne Catching Rain: Rain Garden Workshop • May 13, 2021 (*virtual*)
 3. St. Joseph River Basin Commission Annual Symposium • May 14, 2021 (*virtual*)
 4. NNE IDEA Region Meeting (*SWCD staff*) • May 14, 2021 (*LaGrange, IN*)
 5. Hoosier Riverwatch Training • May 15, 2021 (*Elkhart, IN*)
 6. Allen County SWCD Coffee & Water Quality Webinar • May 18, 2021 (*virtual*)
 7. **Memorial Day Holiday • May 31, 2021 (Angola USDA Service Center Closed)**
 8. Steuben County Lakes Council Meeting • June 5, 2021 (*virtual*)
 9. Project Wet & Wild Educators Workshop • June 17, 2021 (*Bristol, IN*)
 10. LaGrange County SWCD Conservation Camp • June 24, 2021 (*Par Gil, LaGrange, IN*)
 11. **Independence Day Holiday • July 5, 2021 (Angola USDA Service Center Closed)**
 12. Steuben County SWCD Conservation Camp • July 13, 2021 (*Pokagon State Park*)

V. CLAIMS

5718	NISWMD (e-Waste/Recycling Fees)	\$ 19.00
5719	LaGrange County SWCD (2021 Science Fair Sponsorship)	\$ 100.31
5720	Elkhart Count Parks (Project Wet & Wild Educator Workshop Registration)	\$ 25.00
5721	KPC Media Group Inc. (Soil & Water Stewardship Material Printing)	\$ 1,210.40
5722	Chuck Howard (Travel/Mileage – Wildlife Food Plot Seed Delivery)	\$ 23.08
5723	Joel Conrad (0.1-acre Windbreak Establishment – 2021 District Cost-Share)	\$ 500.00
5724	Ceres Solutions (Fuel for Expedition – May Statement)	\$ 133.69
5725	USPS/Postmaster (2021 Spring Newsletter Postage)	\$ 216.98
5726	Graphics 3, inc. (Spring 2021 Newsletter Reproduction w/Mailing Services)	\$ 782.55

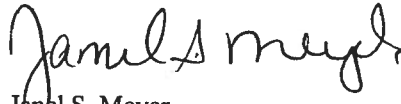
Board Chair Kayleen Hart asked the members if there were questions or concerns regarding the claims. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve.

*Chuck Howard motioned to accept the claims for May 12, 2021. Beth Williams seconded.
Motion approved.*




VI. NEXT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, June 9, 2021 (5:00 p.m.)
SWCD Board Meeting
- Steuben County Community Center Multi-Purpose Room
317 S. Wayne Street – Angola, IN 46703



VII. ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business to come before the Steuben SWCD, Board Chair Hart called for a motion to adjourn.
Chuck Howard moved to adjourn; seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned by Chair Kayleen Hart at 6:01 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:


Janel S. Meyer
Administrative Coordinator

Minutes approved by Steuben County SWCD Board



06/09/2021 (Date)