

**MINUTES**

**STEUBEN COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING**

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

**July 14, 2021**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

District Supervisors  
 Kayleen Hart  
 Craig Holman  
 Chuck Howard  
 David Perkins  
 Beth Williams

SWCD  
 Janel Meyer, Administrative Coordinator  
 Aimee Wentworth, Resource Conservationist

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)  
 Arthur Franke, District Conservationist

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The SWCD Board meeting was called to order by Steuben SWCD Chair Kayleen Hart at 5:00 p.m.

**II. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (6-9-21)**

Board Chair Hart asked the Board members to consider the minutes of the June 9, 2021 Board meeting. There being no additions or corrections, the following action was taken:

*David Perkins moved to approve the minutes of the June 9, 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 June 8 to July 9, 2021 period. Bank statements and the financial report were forwarded to the Board Supervisors in advance of the meeting. Supervisors also received a hard copy of the report in their folders.

*Report for period ending July 9, 2021:*

<u>General Fund - All Accounts</u>			
Checking	\$ 64,756.21		
Statement Savings	<u>41,877.38</u>		
Total	\$106,633.59		
<i>Checking account</i>		<i>Savings account</i>	
<i>balance 6/7/21</i>	<i>\$ 60,991.99</i>	<i>balance 6/7/21</i>	<i>\$ 41,877.04</i>
<i>Receipts</i>	<i>\$ 8,100.00</i>	<i>Interest</i>	<i>\$ 0.34</i>
<i>Disbursement</i>	<i><u>(\$ 4,335.78)</u></i>	<i>Disbursement</i>	<i><u>(\$ 0.00)</u></i>
	<i>\$ 64,756.21</i>		<i>\$41,877.38</i>

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 June vehicle log. Janel reported total checking account receipts of \$8,100.00, which included affiliate memberships, rain barrel sales, and the second half of the Steuben SWCD operating budget from the County. Disbursement was \$4,335.78; this included two urban Clean Water Indiana grant cost-share payments for a 4,800 ft<sup>2</sup> (0.1 acre) native-scaping + tree/shrub planting in the Mud Creek-Pigeon Creek sub-watershed and a 0.58-acre tree/shrub planting in the Lake James-Crooked Creek sub-watershed of Fawn River; conservation education supplies; operating expenses; Project Learning Tree workshop registration; Steuben 4-H indoor space rental and award sponsorship; supplies/materials for the Steuben SWCD 7/13/21 conservation camp; and water quality supplies. There being no questions or comments regarding the Treasurer's Report, Board Chair Hart called for a motion to approve.

*Chuck Howard moved to approve the Treasurer's Report for the period ending July 9, 2021, as presented. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.*

Janel advised the Angola, IN Country Mark retail station has closed. Ceres Solutions will continue to invoice the district for fuel purchases made with our card at other locations across the State.

**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. Arthur Franke, NRCS District Conservationist, reported he is finalizing EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) applications/contracts for FY21. Art advised approximately \$489,000 has been obligated in Steuben County for a total of 27 new EQIP contracts and 2 new CSP contracts. There were 9 EQIP and CSP applications that were not funded, were deemed ineligible or cancelled by the participant. The EQIP/CSP contract numbers may change as Art has several still pending participant signatures/approval. He will provide a specific breakdown of the number of acres, acres of each practice, etc. for the SWCD annual report.  
Kayleen Hart, Farm Service Agency (FSA) Program Technician, reported 2021 crop certification is due July 15<sup>th</sup>. She also reminded the Board they are still looking for a representative to fill the open County Committee seat for area LAA 1, which includes Millgrove, Jamestown, Fremont, and Clear Lake Townships.
- 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. Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Project (GLSNRP) Grant Updates: Janel advised the 1,573 ft. of exclusion fencing contract was signed; project approved at the June 9, 2021 Board meeting. The two remaining projects, a 5-acre forage/biomass planting and a 10-acre forage/biomass planting + 3,925 ft. exclusion fence + alternative watering facility, have been completed, or are near completion. She is awaiting invoices from the completed project but has been unable to reach the producer. There are still funds available for a forage/biomass planting; Janel stated she would be sharing this information in the upcoming SWCD summer newsletter.
    - b. A copy of the GLSNRP FY21-3 Quarterly Report was provided for Board review.
    - c. Watershed Land Treatment Program (WLTP) Grant Updates: The heavy use protection area (HUAP) in the Mud Creek sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek has been completed; project approved at the December 9, 2020 Board meeting. Janel reported the 15-acre forage/biomass planting and 400 ft. exclusion fence project in the Little Turkey Lake-Turkey Creek sub-watershed is near completion; project approved at the April 14, 2021 Board meeting. She will invoice the Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) program once all site visits/inspections have been completed. Janel shared the landowner with the approved windbreak project will not be moving forward with the project. She recently suffered a head/neck injury and will be unable to perform the practice installation or required maintenance until she has recovered.
    - d. WLTP Forage/Biomass, Fence and Pollinator Planting Application: The Board revisited the discussion of a 1.0-acre forage/biomass planting + 1,100 ft. of exclusion fencing + a 1.0-acre pollinator planting project in the Mud Creek sub-watershed of Pigeon. The Board tabled the discussion at the May meeting until Janel could confirm whether the landowner with the windbreak project was going forward. Current discussion centered around whether to run the project through EQIP or fund through the WLTP grant. Art will contact the landowner to discuss his preference.
  2. Fawn River Watershed
    - a. WLTP Project Updates: The 1.6-acre windbreak/shelterbelt establishment in the Town of Orland sub-watershed has been completed; project approved at the April 14, 2021 Board meeting. Janel requested approval to pay the \$960 cost-share payment; she advised LARE has been invoiced for the project.  
*David Perkins made a motion to approve the \$960 Fawn River Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Program (WLTP) grant cost-share payment for the completed 1.6-acre windbreak/shelterbelt establishment in The Town of Orland sub-watershed. Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.*  
Janel shared Kayleen Hart recently inquired about cost-share availability for a pollinator planting at Follett Park in Fremont. The Park Board is discussing converting an area that is currently mowed/maintained. The project may qualify for the Fawn River LARE grant; more details to be provided at the next Board meeting.
  3. Friends of the St. Joseph River (FotSJR)
    - a. Aimee Wentworth was unable to participate in the June 24, 2021 virtual meeting due to a schedule conflict with the LaGrange County SWCD Conservation Camp.
    - b. The next FotSJR monthly board meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2021. There is no July meeting.

- 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. Janel attended the June 29, 2021 WLEB Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) teams meeting. The meeting was held to provide an overview of the Tri-State WLEB Phosphorus Initiative. Since the RCPP grant was funded at a lower award amount, grant administrators will be discussing where to cut programs. More information on projects and programs will be shared once the contract has been signed and final details confirmed.
    - b. Janel reminded the group Agronomy Field Day (AFD) is scheduled for July 28, 2021 at The Andersons. The Indiana Corn Marketing Council and the Indiana Soybean Alliance have agreed to sponsor this year's PARP credits (private applicator recertification program for fertilizer material-related instruction or training). Janel requested approval to pay the \$500 invoice from DeKalb SWCD for AFD sponsorship once it's been received.

*A motion was made by Chuck Howard to approve the \$500 sponsorship payment for the July 28, 2021 Agronomy Field Day. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.*
- iv. Entire County
1. Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Urban Grant
    - a. Kayleen Hart signed the approval for payment of funds form for the last four remaining grant projects; the Wohlert Street filter-strip demonstration, the Peachtree Plaza 200 native-scaping demonstration, the 4,000 ft<sup>2</sup> Clear Lake (Fremont) native-scaping planting; and the 400ft<sup>2</sup> Lake Gage (Angola) native-scaping planting.
    - b. CWI Grant Report Deadlines: All conservation projects must be entered into Conservation Tracking by July 2<sup>nd</sup> and the final report deadline is July 31<sup>st</sup>. Janel completed the Conservation Tracking entry by the deadline and is working on the final report and final claim.
  2. District Cost Share
    - a. The Board discussed an application using District cost-share funding for a 16-acre cover crop planting in the Otter Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon. Janel emailed the Board June 22<sup>nd</sup> for project discussion/approval since the producer wanted to plant after wheat. A timely decision was required due to the planting deadline. District cost-share is the only program the SWCD has available to fund cover crop plantings. Janel advised the producer requested to change the planting location because he would be unable to obtain landowner approval on the proposed parcel. The application was still for a 16-acre cover crop planting, but across the road on the producer's personal farm ground.

*David Perkins motioned to approve the 16-acre cover crop planting in the Otter Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek using the Steuben County SWCD 2021 District Cost-Share program; seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.*
    - b. Janel shared a picture of a tree planting installed in 2017; funded through District cost-share. She reminded the group of the prior problems with the landowner since project completion (i.e., landowner not performing the required work as outlined in the contract). The planting was still overrun with weeds; landowner was also clearing portions of the property listed within the contract – removing trees which were paid for by the District. The Board decided no action would be taken and the landowner would not qualify for future funding using any grant cost-share program.
  3. Steuben County Lakes Council (SCLC)
    - a. Janel did not attend the July 3, 2021 monthly SCLC meeting. No report provided.
    - b. The next SCLC meeting is their annual meeting, scheduled for August 14, 2021, at Lake James Christian Camp and Retreat Center.

**b. District Operations/Marketing**

**Chuck Howard, Chair**

- i. SWCD Training/Public Relations, etc.
  1. Field Visits/Trainings
    - a. Project Wet & Wild Workshop • June 17, 2021: Janel attended the workshop.
    - b. Oakley Studio LLC Website Training • June 22, 2021: Aimee used the last virtual website training session with Peter Oakley.
    - c. Lagrange County SWCD Conservation Camp • June 24, 2021: Janel, Aimee, and Arthur participated; there were a total of 29 campers and numerous helpers.
    - d. Forecast for Harmful Algal Blooms in Lake Erie (*virtual*) • June 30, 2021: Janel was registered to participate but was unable to connect to the webinar due to our poor Internet quality.

e. Hoosier Riverwatch Monitoring with LaGrange County SWCD • July 2, 2021: Aimee assisted LaGrange SWCD with water quality sampling in the Little Elkhart Creek in Wolcottville.

f. Project Learning Tree Workshop • July 9, 2021: Aimee attended this educational training workshop at Salamonie Lake. Kayleen approved the registration since the training occurred prior to the July Board meeting; registration fees cover the cost of the materials participants receive. Aimee reported it was very productive; she was able to participate in a couple of lessons to see how they work, then the class worked in groups to present parts of a lesson of their choice.

g. Steuben County SWCD Conservation Camp • July 13, 2021: We had 17 campers and 10 helpers. The camp was a success; the rain held off and all campers had a great time.

2. June Tally Sheets were sent to the Supervisors prior to the meeting.

ii. Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD)

1. Janel asked the Supervisors to sponsor the additional River Friendly Farmer (RFF) apparel for our two nominees, Chris Weaver and Jacob Willson (\$72 total).

*David Perkins motioned to approve the Steuben County SWCD's sponsorship for our 2021 River Friendly Farmer's (Chris Weaver and Jacob Willson) additional apparel order, totaling \$72; seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.*

2. 2021 Membership Dues: The SWCD received the annual statement for IASWCD membership dues (\$2,000). Supervisors each received a copy of the IASWCD FY20 accomplishment report in their folders.

*David Perkins motioned to approve the \$2,000 payment for FY2021 IASWCD membership dues; seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.*

3. Supervisor's received a copy of an IASWCD flyer for Indiana SWCD staff and supervisor's virtual training opportunities this July through October (trainings to focus on district insurance needs & liability; human resource items; records retention and summarizing data).

iii. Conservation Partnership (ICP)

1. Supervisors received a "Save the Date" announcement for an upcoming ICP webinar on August 17, 2021. It will be held from 9-10:30 a.m. and will cover updates on conservation adoption trends, ICP urban ag collaboration, and an update on wetland regulations.

iv. Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)

1. District Support Specialist (DSS)/Resource Specialist Update: Supervisors received a copy of ISDA's District Operations Manual (DOM) table of contents with the document website link in their packets. This manual outlines procedures for day-to-day operations of the district, do's and don'ts, in addition to Indiana Code. Janel recommended all staff and Supervisors review this material; she reported this is the first notification received regarding the availability of this manual.

2. Janel participated in the June 17, 2021 Northeast Indiana District Region Virtual Meeting. Region meetings were held to provide partner updates and highlight information/projects for district staff and Supervisors. A recording of the meeting is available on the IASWCD website.

Janel reported the Clean Water Indiana (CWI) competitive grants program is considering requiring Supervisor participation in the IASWCD Annual Conference. It was stated counties with no Supervisor representation at the conference that submit applications will likely not rank very high for funding.

c. Budget and Finance

**Kayleen Hart, Chair**

i. January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2020 State Board of Accounts (SBOA) Audit

Janel advised the SBOA contacted the District in mid-June requesting information for an audit of Steuben County SWCD 2016-2020 finances. Documentation requests included our Capital Asset Policy, Capital Asset Listing, Internal Control Policy, Internal Control Training Certifications, and a request to explain differences in receipts/disbursements under our Grants and Distribution category. She provided all the requested information. The audit has been completed; their procedures didn't result in any comments. Former Board Chair Craig Holman and current Board Chair Hart signed the required SBOA acknowledgement form. One verbal comment regarding our Capital Assets was received. The SWCD vehicle was recorded on our Capital Asset Listing but was not recorded on the correct State form. Their comment will not appear in the final report. Janel shared all District's were recently advised by SBOA of a Capital Assets training video to assist governmental units in properly

reporting assets and accumulated depreciation in the Annual Financial Report (AFR). Janel will review the training video.

**d. Information and Education **David Perkins, Chair****

- i. Drainage Board  
Staff are attending the twice-monthly county Drainage Board meetings. No report was provided.
- ii. Associate Supervisors  
Janel shared the current Associate Supervisors: Bridget Harrison, Tim Groosbeck, and Dan Oberst.
- iii. Steuben SWCD Summer Newsletter  
The summer newsletter will be completed/mailed by the end of July.
- iv. October 16, 2021 Forestry Field Day  
The Steuben SWCD Forestry Field Day has been scheduled for Saturday, October 16. It will be held at Brad Hamlin’s Farm in Pleasant Lake. The workshop will be the second in a three-part series to provide information on timber stand improvement and invasive species management. This event was cancelled last year due to the COVID-19 public emergency. Aimee provided information on chair and portable toilet rental fees and estimated food costs. The group discussed an official Board motion to support this educational event that furthers the mission of the SWCD.  
*A motion was made by David Perkins to support chair rental, portable restroom facility rental, and refreshments/food for the October 16, 2021 Forestry Field Day, up to \$500; seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried*
- v. 4-H/ Purdue Extension / Other SWCDs  
Aimee thanked everyone for sending the plant arrangement to her stepmother’s funeral and for the sympathy card.  
She provided an update on her progress with various projects:
  - SWCD Education Lesson Kits: Aimee has begun ordering materials/supplies for the kits.
  - 4-H Display: She completed the SWCD display for the Steuben County 4-H Fair. The display featured basic SWCD/watershed information. She created a question and answer format, i.e., What is an SWCD? Who are We? What is our Purpose?, etc. She requested a group photo of staff and Supervisors for the display.
  - Augmented Reality Sandbox (ARS) Unit: Aimee reported after much consternation and forum searches, along with reaching out to Elkhart County SWCD, the sandbox is calibrated and performing correctly, except for the rain/drain aspect. A button still has to be pushed to make it rain or drain, instead of being able to hold your hand above the sand. She is working on a correction for this issue.
- vi. Upcoming Regional/National Events
  1. Steuben County 4-H Fair • July 16 – 22, 2021 (*Crooked Lake*)
  2. Indiana Clean Lakes Program Training • July 17, 2021 (*Long Lake, Fremont, IN*)
  3. Agronomy Field Day • July 28, 2021 (*Waterloo, IN*)
  4. Whitley County SWCD Conservation Camp • August 3, 2021 (*Columbia City, IN*)
  5. Steuben County SWCD Monthly Board Meeting • August 11, 2021 (*Angola, IN*)
  6. LaGrange County SWCD Pasture Walk • August 12, 2021 (*Middlebury, IN*)
  7. Steuben County Lakes Council Annual Meeting • August 14, 2021 (*Angola, IN*)
  8. **Labor Day Holiday • September 6, 2021 (*Angola USDA Service Center Closed*)**
  9. Roemke Field Day • September 8, 2021 (*Harlan, IN*)
  10. LaGrange County SWCD Pasture Walk • September 9, 2021 (*TBD*)

**V. CLAIMS**

5735	Steuben Co. 4-H Fair Board (2021 Fair Space Rental & Fair Pass)	\$ 60.00
5736	Kris Thomas (~4,800 ft <sup>2</sup> Native-Scaping&Tree/Shrub Planting; CWI Urban Grant)	\$ 2,750.00
5737	Dareen McClelland (0.58 acres Tree/Shrub Planting; CWI Urban Grant)	\$ 750.00
5738	USABlueBook (Replacement Probe Guard for Dissolved Oxygen Meter)	\$ 23.61
5739	Menards (July 13, 2021 SWCD Cons. Camp Materials/Supplies–Boards, H2O)	\$ 97.76
5740	Walmart (July 13, 2021 SWCD Cons. Camp Materials/Supplies-Refreshments)	\$ 21.08
5741	Steuben Co. 4-H Fair Board (2021 4-H Award Sponsorship)	\$ 50.00
5742	Subway (July 13, 2021 SWCD Cons. Camp Materials/Supplies-Lunch)	\$ 195.72
5743	Walmart (July 13, 2021 SWCD Cons. Camp Materials/Supplies-Snacks)	\$ 15.66
5744	ISEF/PLT (July 9, 2021 Project Learning Tree Registration)	\$ 23.00
5745	iPROMOTEu (SWCD Conservation Education Workshop Pens; 1,010 Total)	\$ 518.84
5746	USABlueBook (Zero Oxygen Standard for Dissolved Oxygen Meter Calibration)	\$ 22.50
5747	Oriental Trading (SWCD Conservation Education Lesson Kit Materials/Supplies)	\$ 53.92

5748 Janel Meyer (ARS Unit Safety Materials/Supplies – Table Protector Bumper) \$ 40.96  
5749 Ceres Solutions (Fuel for Expedition – July Statement) \$ 73.08

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 July 14, 2021; seconded by David Perkins. Motion Carried.*

**VI. NEXT BOARD MEETING**

**Wednesday, August 11, 2021 (5:00 p.m.)**

**SWCD Board Meeting**

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

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Prior to adjournment, Janel reported the idea for a cover crop display for the Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) Soil Education Grant is cost-prohibitive. CCSI reported they extended the deadline for applications. The group discussed a grant application to order additional Purdue Extension cover crop field guides.

There being no further business to come before the Steuben SWCD, Board Chair Hart called for a motion to adjourn.


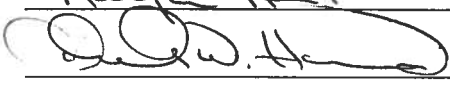

*Beth Williams moved to adjourn; seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.*

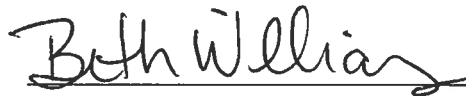
Meeting adjourned by Chair Kayleen Hart at 6:05 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

  
Janel S. Meyer  
Administrative Coordinator

Minutes approved by Steuben County SWCD Board

  
  
08/11/2021 (Date)