

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
November 12, 2020

IN ATTENDANCE:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <u>District Supervisors</u> | <u>Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)</u> |
| Gene Diehl | Arthur Franke, District Conservationist |
| Kayleen Hart | |
| Chuck Howard | <u>Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)</u> |
| David Perkins | Kate Sanders, Resource Specialist |
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| <u>ABSENT</u> | <u>SWCD</u> |
| Craig Holman, Board Supervisor | Janel Meyer, Administrative Coordinator |
| | Tara Lee, Resource Conservationist |

I. CALL TO ORDER

The SWCD Board meeting was called to order by Steuben SWCD Vice Chairman Chuck Howard at 5:00 p.m.

II. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (10-21-20)

The Board members were asked to consider the minutes of the October 21, 2020 Board meeting. There being no additions or corrections, the following action was taken:

Kayleen Hart moved to approve the minutes of the October 21, 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 October 17 through November 12, 2020 period. The financial report and bank statement was provided to the Board Supervisors for review at the meeting. Janel reported documents were not sent in advance as she was still awaiting for information from the Indiana State Board of Accounts regarding the \$.89 checking account discrepancy (ProFed Credit Union error when entering check #6008). The SWCD checking account was credited \$0.89 on the October checking account statement.
Report for period ending November 12, 2020:

	<u>General Fund - All Accounts</u>		
Checking	\$ 50,455.37		
Statement Savings	<u>41,873.92</u>		
Total	\$ 92,329.29		
<i>Checking account</i>		<i>Savings account</i>	
<i>balance 10/16/20</i>	\$ 56,641.60	<i>balance 10/16/20</i>	\$ 41,872.15
<i>Receipts</i>	\$ 40.89	<i>Receipts</i>	\$ 1.77
<i>Disbursement</i>	<u>(\$ 6,227.12)</u>	<i>Disbursement</i>	<u>(\$ 0.00)</u>
	\$ 50,455.37		\$41,873.92

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 October vehicle log. Janel reported total receipts of \$40.89 which included a 2020 Steuben County Life program registration and the \$0.89 account credit. Disbursement was \$6,227.12 which included Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Urban Grant conservation cost-share payments for native-scaping projects in the Prairie River Watershed and in the City of Angola, conservation education (Augmented Reality Sandbox (ARS) welding expenses, 4th grade YCFD educational booklets, Steuben County Life program expenses, and operating expenses. There being no questions or comments regarding the Treasurer’s Report. Vice Chairman Howard called for a motion to approve.

Kayleen Hart moved to approve the Treasurer’s Report for the period ending November 12, 2020, 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.
2. NRCS District Conservationist Arthur Franke reviewed the application deadlines for Farm Bill programs [*Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)*]. Tara Lee also provided a USDA news release announcing the open signup for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and CRP Grasslands Program. Art stated the Angola USDA Service Center operating status remains the same; public allowed via appointment only.

Kayleen Hart, Farm Service Agency (FSA) Program Technician, reported the deadline to apply for the 2nd round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP2) is December 11th. Corn, soybean and wheat Marketing Assistance Loans (MAL) are available now.

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) Fencing Contract: Janel shared the landowner with the fencing application in the Otter Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon, approved at the October 21, 2020 Board meeting, would like to establish/re-establish approximately 3-acres of pasture. A discussion on the erosion control benefits of seeding/re-seeding the area and the need for a rotational grazing plan ensued. The Board approved the planting.

A motion was made by Kayleen Hart to modify the approved 1,100 ft. fencing application in the Otter Lake Sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek using the 2020 Pigeon Creek Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) Grant, by adding the forage/biomass planting and rotational grazing plan to the contract/conservation plan. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.

Vice Chairman Chuck Howard signed the contract application.

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

a. Tara provided an update on the FotSJR October 22, 2020 virtual Board and Watershed Council meeting.

- The Friends Board implemented a new bylaw allowing Board members the ability to approve actions/motions via email.

- The trailer for the St. Joseph River documentary will be available soon, date to be announced.

- They are working on film screen partnerships for the Netflix documentary "Kiss the Ground". Tara recommended all Supervisors and staff watch this informative film.

- The 2021 FotSJR Watershed Celebration has been scheduled at the Sturgis Young Auditorium on March 19, 2021. If a live celebration is not feasible, a virtual meeting will need to be discussed.

b. The next FotSJR Board meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2021.

3. St. Joseph River Basin Commission (SJRBC)FotSJR) Association

a. The next SJRBC Quarterly meeting has been scheduled for December 3, 2020. It will be a virtual meeting.

-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. Janel and Kate Sanders participated in the October 22, 2020 WLEB Indiana Stakeholders virtual meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss partner updates and capture accomplishments for the WLEB action plan. Kate provided an overview of the Science and Solutions group. The intent of the group: (1) to have a multidirectional conversation with researchers, conservation agency partners, and farmers and (2) to find a unified message about conservation practices that are effective to reach water quality goals in the basin. So far, they have had great discussions between conservation agency partners from IN, MI, OH and researchers. They have also created a continuum of conservation practices and are working on finalizing the list. The next goal of the group is to loop in a wider variety of stakeholders, including farmers, to include in their discussions.

- b. Janel and Kate participated in the November 9, 2020 Domestic Action Plan (DAP) virtual committee meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to review the website and DAP revisions along with discussing revisions to the action/milestone table. Kate provided additional information about nitrogen and how it relates to algal bloom toxicity and streambank phosphorus and land phosphorus components/contributions.
- c. Steuben SWCD staff have been invited to participate in a virtual Urban & Small Farms Contribution Agreement Steering Committee meeting on November 16, 2020. Allen County SWCD has a contribution agreement with NRCS to provide technical assistance to the Indiana portion of the WLEB. Overall goal of the project is to assist small, urban, socially disadvantaged and limited resource farms in the basin. Staff will provide more information at the December SWCD Board meeting.
- d. 2021 WLEB Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Grant Application: Janel asked the SWCD Board to weigh-in whether they had an interest in her submitting a 2021 application for the WLEB portion of Steuben County. Applications are due January 15, 2021. The Board was supportive of moving forward with an application as this is the only portion of the county the SWCD does not have dedicated cost-share grant funding available.

iii. Entire County

- 1. Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Urban Grant
 - a. Vice Chairman Chuck Howard signed the native-scaping contracts for the Clear Lake Town Hall and Lake Gage property projects. Both projects were approved at the October SWCD Board meeting.
 - b. October 30, 2020 CWI Urban Grant Audit: Janel reported the audit conducted by District Support Specialist Jennifer Thum went well. An audit report should be available by the end of December/early January.
- 2. Steuben County Lakes Council (SCLC)
 - a. November 7, 2020: Janel attended and shared meeting highlights:
 - The SCLC application to host the Smithsonian's *Water/Ways* exhibition in 2021-2022 was not selected for funding. Bill Schmidt is currently in discussion with Carnegie Public Library staff regarding the development of their own display depicting how the community was shaped by its relationship to water. Bill will keep county environmental organizations apprised of his discussions and partnership opportunities.
 - The second round of eDNA testing occurred on October 22, 2020 after a 0.75 inch rainfall [Carpenter and Palfreyman ditches (9 sites), Lake George (3 sites), Hamilton Lake (2 sites), Clear Lake (1 site) and Crooked Lake (1 site)]. The eDNA analysis is pending. Eleven of the sixteen sites exceeded the maximum *E. coli* IDEM water quality target of 235 CFU (Colony Forming Units)/100 mL.

b. District Operations/Marketing

Chuck Howard,

Chair

i. SWCD Training/Public Relations, etc.

- 1. Field Visits/Trainings
 - a. Purdue Extension Meeting • October 22, 2020: Tara met with Crystal Van Pelt to discuss education and outreach, including a virtual Ag conservation tour featuring no till, cover crops and other conservation best management practices. More details TBA. They also discussed hosting a virtual rain garden tour and/or video for educational purposes. Tara was asked to present for a session in February 2021 for Annie's Project. This is an Ag program Purdue offers for women only. Presentation will cover the SWCD mission and programs offered.
 - b. ARS Unit Programming/Set-Up • October 22, 2020. Jordan Shedd was at the office to finish programming and train Tara on hardware operation (i.e., computer, camera, projector, etc). Jordan was able to get the unit running; however, Tara discovered an issue where the projector/camera was mounted. The frame required modification; work approved by Kayleen and completed by Steuben Co. Welding & Fabricating. Jordan still needs to hard program the computer and Tara will be working on projector ratio problems.
 - c. NE IN Farm to School (F2S) Virtual Team Meeting • October 27, 2020. Tara participated. They discussed the next steps for the implementation stage of the grant. Topics discussed: school gardens pros/cons; events; buy-in from the schools, parents and producers; maintenance and staffing events, and evaluation efforts. For the Power of Local Food Series, Harvest of the Month videos, Tara reached out to Zac Martin to discuss the aquaculture/aquaponics operation

at Solar Usage Now, along with a potential partnership for a Harvest of the Month video. More details forthcoming.

d. IASWCD Virtual Lunch & Learn Series [*Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) Permitting Tool*] • October 27, 2020. Janel and Tara participated in session which focused on what activities IDEM regulates, what permits required for various projects, floodway permitting requirements and the new Waterways Inquiry Request which assists Indiana citizens in determining when a permit may be necessary to complete a project that may impact a waterbody.

e. Pollinator Habitat Restoration Planning Virtual Workshop • October 27, 2020. Janel and Tara participated and experienced internet connection problems.

f. USDA Pollinator Inventory & Design (Part 1) • October 30, 2020. Tara participated.

g. INField Virtual Meeting • November 4, 2020. Tara participated. The Steuben/LaGrange INField group discussed 2021 protocols; they will only promote the cover crops portion of the program. The tillage protocol and nitrogen strip trial will not be promoted due to the continuous sampling and staffing requirements. The group also discussed plant SAP analysis and will be asking the INField program manager whether this analysis/cost can be covered under the program. SAP analysis evaluates plant mineral levels and highlights nutritional deficiencies and excesses; recommendations are provided on nutrients required before a deficiency manifests as a disease or weakness. Instead of winter meetings, there will be two virtual meetings at the end of January 2021.

h. CCSI SARE Advanced Cover Crop Webinar • November 5, 2020: Tara participated.

i. SWCD Website Virtual Training • November 6, 2020: Tara and Janel participated. This was the first training session with Peter Oakley, the SWCD webmaster. Sessions are being recorded.

j. Purdue Cover Crop Adoption Study Focus Group • November 10, 2020. Tara and Art participated. Purdue held this focus group meeting to assist them with their new “Explaining the Variation in County-level Cover Crop Adoption” study. The study focuses on explanations for variation in cover crop adoption across different counties and social capacity factors that lead to cover crop adoption.

2. September and October Tally Sheets were provided in the Supervisors packets.

ii. Indiana Conservation Partnership

1. 2020 Fall Tillage Transect: Transect has been scheduled for Thursday, November 19 and Friday, November 20, 2020.

iii. Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

1. January 11-13, 2021 Annual Conference & Resolutions: The 2021 Conference will be held virtually. Janel requested a Board motion for the approval of staff to register/attend the conference. The registration fee is \$50/person for those registering prior to December 11th.
Kayleen Hart moved to approve registration expenses, \$50/person, for Tara and Janel to participate in the January 11-13, 2021 Virtual IASWCD Annual Conference. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried

Janel reviewed the two proposed resolutions SWCD Delegates will vote upon at the 2021 IASWCD Annual Conference Business Meeting. They included increasing Supervisor per diem and for IASWCD to coordinate resources and develop procedures to allow Indiana SWCDs to immediately have an alternate option to “in person” annual meetings.

2. Janel shared an IASWCD memorandum requesting the SWCD register one delegate to participate in the virtual annual conference business meetings. Meeting scheduled Tuesday, January 12 from 9-10:30 a.m. Subject was tabled to the December SWCD Board meeting.

iv. Indiana State Department of Agriculture

1. Election Committee Updates: Kayleen reported Terry Dailey had an interest in being a Supervisor candidate for the 2021 election. Janel will upload Terry’s information into Conservation Link.

2. Steuben SWCD Annual Meeting Planning: The Board chose March 10, 2021 as the date for the meeting; no snow date was set. The group agreed to utilize the Steuben County Community Center multi-purpose room. Janel will contact Gary Fair to inquire on availability.

3. District Support Specialist/Resource Specialist Update: Kate reviewed upcoming ISDA and Indiana SBOA reporting deadlines. SBOA will be holding a virtual training for SWCDs on December 1, 2020. She reported ISDA’s application submitted to NRCS for a renewal of the 2015 WLEB Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) was not accepted. It is a very competitive process with limited funds. ISDA will be submitting a new RCP

application with Michigan and Ohio as partners. Jennifer Thum will be contacting SWCDs located in the WLEB for in-kind letters of support, similar to the letter we provided for the 2015 WLEB renewal application.

c. Budget and Finance

Craig Holman,

Chair

- i. 2020 Steuben County Budget Allocation & Wages/Salary Ordinance
Janel advised the information was not yet available and would provide a report at the December SWCD Board meeting.
- ii. Office Supply Order
Janel requested a motion to approve restocking the office supply cabinet. She reported they have used many of the supplies that prior Administrative Coordinator Barb Angel amassed. Cost to exceed \$500.
Gene Diehl motioned to approve restocking the Steuben SWCD office supplies; purchase of these items and office supplies already purchased this year may exceed the office supply budget line item for FY20; seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.
- iii. Postage Stamps
Janel requested a motion to approve the purchase of two rolls of stamps; purchase exceeds the SWCDs SOP purchase limit of \$100 without prior Board approval.
Gene Diehl motioned to approve the purchase of 2 rolls of stamps; seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.
- iv. Steuben SWCD Business Plan
Janel reviewed the changes/edits she received to the draft business plan from staff and Kayleen. Janel also reformatted the document. Kate will provide the plan map. Janel will send a copy of the business plan to the Supervisors with the December SWCD Board meeting materials for review. This business plan will need to be adopted at the December meeting.
- v. Internal Controls
Janel shared she will be updating the Steuben SWCD Internal Control (IC) Policy. It will be minor additions and edits to the policy adopted last December (e.g., updates to the Steuben SWCD Risk Assessment Table). The document will be provided to the Board for review in advance of the meeting.

d. Information and Education

Kayleen Hart, Chair

- i. Drainage Board
Staff are attending the twice-monthly county Drainage Board (DB) meetings. Janel reviewed the 11/2/2020 Drainage Board public notice regarding prior verbal agreements with former Steuben Co. Surveyor Larry K. Gilbert for Steuben County legal drain work.
- ii. Augmented Reality Sandbox (ARS)
Tara asked the Board if they were supportive of compensating Jordan's mileage for the days she traveled to assist with the ARS unit project [3/19; 8/29; 10/22; 4th day (December 2020)].
David Perkins motioned to approve travel compensation for Jordan Shedd for mileage accumulated in the course of assisting the Steuben County SWCD with the Augmented Reality Sandbox (ARS) Unit project, with reimbursement following the applicable county rate; seconded by Kayleen Hart. Motion carried.
- iii. Extension / Farm to School / Other Educational and SWCD Projects
 - Tara shared the 2021 Spring Garden Series will carry over with the 2020 topics; topics outlined in October SWCD Board meeting minutes.
 - The first video "Earth as an Apple" has been completed. The video, along with future videos, will follow Indiana State Standards. Tara created an educational worksheet to accompany the video; worksheets will be created for all videos. She will post the video to the Steuben SWCD website as soon as she's been trained on video posting. Tara shared macroinvertebrate and bee pollination video footage has been taped; she will be working on editing the macroinvertebrate video next. Tami Mosier, Purdue Extension, presented the "Earth as an Apple" video to teachers for review. Tara shared she is investigated ways to make these videos more interactive and engaging.
 - The thank you notes the Steuben SWCD received for 4-H fair sponsorship were shared.
- iv. SWCD Website Training
The first training session occurred November 6. Tara reported she is creating an instruction manual for reference and succession planning. She created an excel spreadsheet tracking tutorial website addresses and informational links offered in the Word Press software. She will update the document regularly and implement new tasks to the website. The next training sessions have been scheduled

for November 13, 18 and 25. More training may be necessary if they have not covered all topics Tara requested training for within the four sessions.

- v. SWCD Fall Newsletter
The fall newsletter has been completed and will be mailed/emailed shortly.
- vi. Steuben County Life Program Evaluations
Due to time constraints, no report was provided.
- vii. Upcoming Regional/National Events
 1. **Thanksgiving Holiday** • November 26, 2020 (*County Offices Closed*)
 2. **Thanksgiving Holiday** • November 27, 2020 (*County Offices Closed*)
 3. **Steuben County Lakes Council Meeting** • December 5, 2020 (*Angola, IN*)
 4. **Steuben SWCD Monthly Board Meeting** • December 9, 2020 (*Community Center*)
 5. **Christmas Holiday** • December 24, 2020 (*County Offices Closed*)
 6. **Christmas Holiday** • December 25, 2020 (*County Offices Closed*).

V. CLAIMS

5680	Steuben Co. Welding & Fabricating Inc. (ARS Unit Frame Modification)	\$ 47.50
5681	Sandy Ostendorf (~2,000 ft ² Native-scaping & Tree/Shrub Planting in Prairie River- 2018 CWI Grant)	\$ 2,750.00
5682	NACD (FY21 Membership Dues)	\$ 775.00
5683	Steuben Co. Welding & Fabricating Inc. (ARS Unit Frame Modification)	\$ 120.00
5684	Lonsbury Garage (2010 Ford Expedition Maintenance – Oil Change & Filter; Tire Rotation)	\$ 56.68
5685	Angola Downtown Coalition (~1,550 ft ² Native-Scaping Planting in Mud Creek – Pigeon- 2018 CWI Grant)	\$ 1,146.52
5686	Ceres Solutions (Fuel for Expedition – November Statement)	\$ 50.31

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

Kayleen Hart motioned to accept the claims for November 12, 2020 as presented. David Perkins seconded the motion. Motion approved.

VI. NEXT BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, December 9, 2020 – 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, Vice Chairman Howard called for a motion to adjourn.

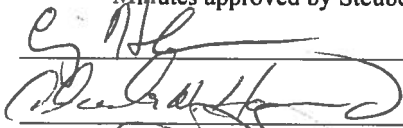
Kayleen Hart moved to adjourn; seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.


Meeting adjourned by Vice Chairman Howard at 6:02 p.m.


Minutes respectfully submitted by:

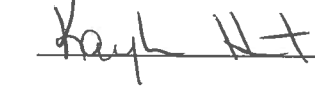

Janet S. Meyer, Administrative Coordinator/Treasurer

Minutes approved by Steuben County SWCD Board









12/09/2020 (Date)