

MINUTES

STEUBEN COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING

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

August 11, 2021

IN ATTENDANCE:

District Supervisors

Kayleen Hart
 Craig Holman
 Chuck Howard
 Beth Williams

SWCD

Janel Meyer, Administrative Coordinator
 Aimee Wentworth, Resource Conservationist

Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)

Kate Sanders, Resource Specialist

ABSENT

David Perkins

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 (7-14-21)

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

Chuck Howard moved to approve the minutes of the July 14, 2021 Steuben County SWCD Board meeting, as presented. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.

III. TREASURER’S REPORT

Janel Meyer provided the financial report for the July 10 to August 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. Janel discussed the Steuben SWCD checking account discrepancy of \$.84. Our account was over by \$.84 due to an error with check #6087. Check amount was for \$518.84; check cleared as \$518.00. The SWCD advised Melissa A. Budak, Key Bank Select Licensed Relationship Manager, of this discrepancy on August 10, 2021. Melissa advised that the SWCD Key Bank checking account will be debited \$0.84; debit will not show until August checking account statement has been received and account reconciliation completed.

Report for period ending August 9, 2021:

| <u>General Fund - All Accounts</u> | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Checking | \$ 60,024.91 | | |
| Statement Savings | <u>41,877.74</u> | | |
| Total | \$101,902.65 | | |
| | | | |
| <i>Checking account</i> | | <i>Savings account</i> | |
| <i>balance 7/9/21</i> | <i>\$ 64,756.21</i> | <i>balance 7/9/21</i> | <i>\$ 41,877.38</i> |
| <i>Receipts</i> | <i>\$ 180.84</i> | <i>Interest</i> | <i>\$ 0.36</i> |
| <i>Disbursement</i> | <i><u>(\$ 4,912.14)</u></i> | <i>Disbursement</i> | <i><u>(\$ 0.00)</u></i> |
| | <i>\$ 60,024.91</i> | | <i>\$41,877.74</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 July vehicle log. Janel reported total checking account receipts of \$180.84, which included conservation camp registrations, flag sales, and the \$0.84 discrepancy. Disbursement was \$4,912.14; this included a 1.6-acre windbreak/shelterbelt planting in the Town of Orland sub-watershed of Fawn River, conservation education supplies, operating expenses, promotional materials, supplies/materials for the Steuben SWCD 7/31/21 conservation camp, and water monitoring 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 August 9, 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 each of the Supervisors' packets.
 2. Janel advised that Arthur Franke, NRCS District Conservationist, requested the SWCD schedule a Local Working Group meeting in September. The Local Working Group provides recommendations to the District Conservationist and State Conservationist on local natural resource priorities and criteria for conservation activities and programs.
Kayleen Hart, Farm Service Agency (FSA) Program Technician, reported they are completing Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup. She also shared the new COVID-19 policy from the USDA: (1) effective immediately, all employees, contractors, and visitors must wear masks in all USDA buildings and government owned/leased vehicles, regardless of vaccination status and (2) federal employees and on-site contractors must sign an attestation confirming the truthfulness of their vaccination status, (3) those not fully vaccinated must wear a mask, physically distance, and comply with weekly or twice-weekly screening testing requirements.
- 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: Janel reported the SWCD received only one inquiry from their summer newsletter story regarding the availability of GLSNRP funding for hay and pasture plantings. The landowner did not move forward with an application. She requested approval to pay the three remaining cost-share contracts after all invoices, seed tags, etc. are received and staff have completed site checks.
Chuck Howard motioned to approve (1) the \$3,932.50 Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Project (GLSNRP) grant cost-share payment for the 1,573 ft. exclusion fence project in the Mud-Creek sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek, (2) the \$750 GLSNRP grant cost-share payment for the 5-acre forage/biomass planting in the Pigeon Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek, and (3) the \$12,829 GLSNRP grant cost-share payment for the 10.11-acre forage/biomass planting + 3,925 ft. exclusion fence + alternative watering facility project in the Pigeon Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek after all required paperwork has been received and site visits finalized. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.
 - b. Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) Forage/Biomass, Fence, Pollinator & Tree/Shrub Planting Application: The Board discussed the 1.0-acre forage/biomass planting + 1,100 ft. of exclusion fencing + 1.0-acre pollinator planting + 1.0 acre tree/shrub planting project in the Mud Creek sub-watershed of Pigeon. This item was tabled from the prior meeting to determine the landowner's preference in applying for EQIP or the Pigeon WLTP. Land-owner indicated he would like to move forward with the WLTP program. Board dialogue focused on the property location, resource concerns, and available grant funding. Due to limited funding the Supervisors were supportive of all conservation practices except the exclusion fencing.
A motion was made by Beth Williams to approve the 1.0-acre forage/biomass planting, the 1.0-acre pollinator planting, and the 1.0-acre tree/shrub planting in the Mud Creek sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek using the Pigeon Creek Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Program (WLTP) grant. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.
 2. Fawn River Watershed
 - a. WLTP Pollinator Planting Application: Additional details were provided about the Fremont Park pollinator planting, discussed at the July Board meeting. The Park Board would like to convert a 2.5 – 3.0-acre parcel, currently being mowed/maintained, into a pollinator planting. Janel inquired with the WLTP grant administrator whether any grant restrictions existed for non-agricultural properties; she reported a reply had not yet been received. An extensive discussion occurred whether the project should be funded with Steuben SWCD grant funding (Fawn River WLTP grant or District cost-share) or whether there were other community funding options.
Chuck Howard made a motion to approve the 2.5 – 3.0-acre pollinator planting at the Fremont Park property located in the Snow Lake sub-watershed of Fawn River using the Fawn River Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land

Treatment Program (WLTP) grant if the project qualifies for funding or the Steuben County SWCD 2021 District Cost-Share Program if the project does not qualify for Fawn River WLTP funding. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

3. Friends of the St. Joseph River (FotSJR)
 - a. The next FotSJR monthly board meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2021.
4. St. Joseph River Basin Commission (SJRBC)
 - a. The next SJRBC Quarterly meeting is scheduled for September 2, 2021. Janel plans to attend in person. She provided a brief report on the SJRBC proposed long-term water monitoring program at 12 sites throughout the basin, with one site to be located in Steuben County. Additional details will be shared at the next SWCD Board meeting. Janel provided information about the Maumee River Basin Commission holding their meeting in the Steuben County Community Center on Thursday, August 12, 2021 to honor Larry Gilbert. Chuck stated he would attend the 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. West Branch St. Joseph River & Fish Creek WLTP Grant Application: The SWCD was notified that our Upper St. Joseph River Watershed grant application was selected for FY 2021-2022 funding. The grant was fully funded at the \$30,000 request level.
 - b. Janel, Aimee, Kate and Art all attended the July 28, 2021 Agronomy Field Day (AFD) at The Andersons. Janel reported it was well-attended. The SWCD provided a \$500 sponsorship and our new promotional pens for the event.
- iv. Entire County
 1. Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Urban Grant
 - a. Janel reported the final CWI Urban Grant report and final claim was completed/submitted by the deadline. A copy was provided to the Board for review. The District spent all but \$405.56 of the grant funding. She stated the small amount of funding remained since several projects/contracts came in under budget.
 2. Steuben County Lakes Council
 - a. Janel provided a report of the SCLC's August 6, 2021 water quality meeting. Each Supervisor received a copy of the Steuben County Source Tracking document from Bio-monitor in their packets. The SCLC is collecting samples for eDNA analysis to ascertain the source of elevated E. coli concentrations at several locations in the county. The Board had a lengthy discussion regarding the report and results.
 3. Steuben County/Urban (IDEM Rule 5/MS4)
 - a. A copy of the stormwater inspection report conducted at the Ramsey Ventures – Samfred Marketplace on SR 120 in Fremont on July 14, 2021 was provided for review. Corrective actions were required for deficiencies identified during the inspection, including inadequate sediment control measures, lack of a construction entrance, and lack of temporary stabilization measures for areas inactive for 15 or more days.

b. District Operations/Marketing

Chuck Howard, Chair

- i. SWCD Training/Public Relations, etc.
 1. Field Visits/Trainings
 - a. Engineering Boot Camp Training • July 19, 2021 (*virtual*) & July 22, 2021 (*field*): Aimee completed the Engineering Boot Camp training. She reported she has finished taking the post-test and is waiting for the scores from both pre and posts-tests. She reported it was a good opportunity to learn more about engineered conservation practices.
 - b. IASWCD: District Insurance Needs and Liability Training • July 20, 2021 (*virtual*): Janel and Beth participated in this training webinar which included information on the Commercial General Liability Policy which covers all SWCDs, the Indiana Tort Claims Act, and NRCS vehicle use.
 - c. Engineering Boot Camp Training • July 27, 2021 (*virtual*) & July 29, 2021 (*field*): see above.
 - d. Engineering Boot Camp Training • August 2, 2021 (*virtual*) & August 5, 2021 (*virtual*): see above.
 - e. Whitley County SWCD Conservation Camp • August 3, 2021: Aimee participated and served as a group leader. They had a total of 60 campers.
 2. July Tally Sheets were provided in each of the Supervisors' packets.

- ii. Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD)
 - 1. Janel reminded the Supervisors of the upcoming IASWCD virtual training opportunities for Indiana SWCD staff and supervisors.
 - 2. Janel reviewed the IASWCD request for resolutions to be considered at the January 25, 2022 IASWCD Annual Business meeting.
- iii. Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP)
 - 1. Janel reminded the Supervisors of the upcoming August 17, 2021 ICP webinar.
- iv. Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)
 - 1. District Support Specialist (DSS)/Resource Specialist Update: Kate reported the prior Northeast District Support Specialist (DSS) Jennifer Thum has been promoted to ISDA Deputy Director. Jennifer was also the Northeast Team Leader; this position is now occupied by Heath Hurst. The acting Northeast was Katie Secrest who recently returned to her former duties as a Resource Specialist. A formal announcement for the DSS replacement will be forthcoming. Kate also shared information from the Indiana Invasive Species Council; she is an ISDA Governor Appointed council member. Highlights included: additional species will be added to the terrestrial plant list and spotted lanternfly has been found in Indiana along the Ohio River. Spotted Lanternfly is a major pest of concern across most of the United States; it has a recorded host list of over 100 species, including fruit trees and grapes. She reported a webinar geared toward vineyards will be forthcoming.

c. Budget and Finance

Kayleen Hart, Chair

- i. Steuben SWCD Capital Assets

The SWCD asset/inventory list has been updated and the information transferred to the appropriate State Board of Accounts Capital Assets Ledger form. Aimee reviewed the current inventory list and added recent purchases for in-house use. Per the Steuben SWCD District Capitalization Policy, SWCD owned property worth at least \$2,500 must be inventoried once per calendar year prior to December 31. The District vehicle is the only property worth at least \$2,500. The Board requested the asset information be added to our 2022 annual plan which is approved yearly.
- ii. Steuben County Ordinance No. 947

Janel reviewed Steuben County Ordinance No. 947 which amended the 2021 salary ordinance. Results from a 2019 wage comparison study found some county employees were below the base pay of other similarly classified jobs within county government. Due to the study, the county council agreed to adopt a new base pay for each job classification at the specified amount plus a 3% increase. The SWCD was notified the Resource Conservationist position was one of the positions identified under the base pay. The 2021 wages for this position were increased, effective retroactive to the July 1 through July 14, 2021 pay period.
- iii. Ford Expedition Maintenance

Janel requested a motion to approve maintenance on the Ford Expedition, including an oil change, tire rotation, and assessment of a new grinding noise on the passenger front side. Cost likely to exceed the SWCDs SOP purchase limit of \$100 without prior Board approval.

Craig Holman motioned to approve the maintenance on the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation Districts' (SWCD) 2010 Ford Expedition; seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.
- iv. Postage Stamps

Janel requested a motion to approve the purchase of stamps; purchase will exceed the SWCD's SOP purchase limit of \$100 without prior Board approval.

Beth Williams motioned to approve the purchase of stamps; seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.
- v. Office Supplies/SWCD Apparel

Janel updated the Board on the current status of our Microsoft Office license for the District laptop. She advised updated software is required and asked for approval to purchase/download a new license. The purchase will require a personal credit card (allowable per the Steuben SWCD credit card policy) and will need to be completed at a personal residence. The SWCD is prohibited from utilizing USDA internet for non-USDA computers. Janel also requested approval to purchase office supplies (i.e., filters).

Chuck Howard motioned to approve the purchase and download of updated Microsoft Office software and office supplies; seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.

Aimee reported on prices for Steuben SWCD apparel from various vendors. Aimee and Janel requested additional/replacement clothing for SWCD functions. New Board Supervisor Beth Williams also requires SWCD apparel for events.

A motion was made by Beth Williams to approve the purchase of additional Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) apparel for the Administrative Coordinator, Resource Conservationist, and any Board member in need of apparel, up to \$300 for all items (including shipping fees). Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.

d. Information and Education

David Perkins, Chair

i. Drainage Board

Staff are attending the twice-monthly county Drainage Board meetings. In the interest of time, no report was provided.

ii. September 14, 2021 4th Grade Youth Conservation Field Day (YCFD)

The Board discussed the September 14th YCFD and potential challenges with holding the event. The Board of Supervisors and staff determined the best choice was to cancel the field day since the risk of holding the event outweighed the benefit (s). Most of the event is held outside; however, there are scheduled times inside Potawatomi Inn when there are over 250 students and adults from five different schools closely interacting. Janel requested approval to purchase/supply the 4th grade classes with educational materials and backpacks if schools express an interest. The Board was supportive of the purchase.

Beth Williams motioned to approve the purchase of the Youth Conservation Field Day booklets (“Search for Soil; “Learn About Water Conservation”, “The Surprising Story of Storm-water”) and backpacks for the 4th grade students of Carlin Park, Fremont, Hendry Park, Pleasant Lake and Ryan Park Elementary schools. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

iii. 4-H/ Purdue Extension / Other SWCDs

Aimee updated the Board on the completion of the lesson kits. Tami Mosier, Purdue Extension, reviewed the kits to ensure they met Indiana state education standards. She brought one of the kits for the Board to review.

iv. Upcoming Regional/National Events

1. LaGrange County SWCD Pasture Walk • August 12, 2021 (*Middlebury, IN*)
2. Steuben County Lakes Council Annual Meeting • August 14, 2021 (*Angola, IN*)
3. Steuben County Lakes Council Monthly Meeting • September 4, 2021 (*Angola, IN*)
4. **Labor Day Holiday • September 6, 2021 (*Angola USDA Service Center Closed*)**
5. Understanding Algal Blooms: State of the Science Virtual Conference • September 8, 2021
6. Roemke Soil Health Field Day • September 8, 2021 (*Harlan, IN*)
7. Steuben County SWCD Monthly Board Meeting • September 8, 2021 (*Angola, IN*)
8. LaGrange County SWCD Pasture Walk • September 9, 2021 (*TBD*)
9. Steuben County Life Program • every Tuesday evening, September 14 – October 19, 2021

V. CLAIMS

| | | |
|------|---|-------------|
| 5750 | Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (2021 Dues) | \$ 2,000.00 |
| 5751 | Walmart (Conservation Education Materials/Supplies for Education Lesson Kits) | \$ 64.84 |
| 5752 | Indiana Farm Bureau Ins. (Commercial Auto & Fire Policy; 8/31/21 – 8/31/22) | \$ 784.00 |
| 5753 | Jay Yoder (1.6-ac. Windbreak in Town Orland sub-watershed of Fawn; LARE) | \$ 960.00 |
| 5754 | USPS (2021 Steuben SWCD Summer Newsletter Postage – 1,561 pieces) | \$ 217.50 |
| 5755 | JY Design & Print Inc. (Steuben SWCD Thank-You Card Printing – 100 Cards) | \$ 60.14 |
| 5756 | DeKalb County SWCD (July 28, 2021 Agronomy Field Day Sponsorship) | \$ 500.00 |
| 5757 | Pokagon State Park (July 13, 2021 SWCD Cons. Camp Nature Center Fee) | \$ 17.00 |
| 5758 | Graphics 3 inc. (2021 SWCD Summer Newsletter Printing w/Mailing Services) | \$ 786.35 |
| 5759 | Ceres Solutions (Fuel for Expedition – August Statement) | \$ 193.30 |
| 5760 | Staples (Material/Supplies for Conservation Education Lesson Kits) | \$ 47.01 |
| 5761 | Amazon (ACH Payment – Materials/Supplies for Conservation Education Kits) | \$ 116.36 |
| 5762 | Oakley Studio, LLC (Managed Website Hosting – July through December 2021) | \$ 104.00 |

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 August 11, 2021; seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

VI. NEXT BOARD MEETING
Wednesday, September 8, 2021 (5:30 p.m.)
SWCD Board Meeting

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

Janel reported she reserved the multi-purpose room in the Steuben County Community Center through the end of the year.


VII. ADJOURNMENT

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.

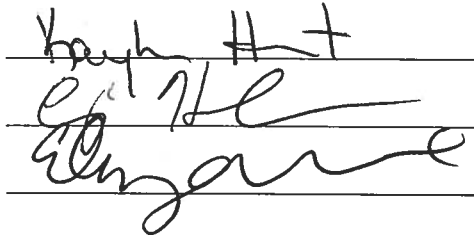
Meeting adjourned by Chair Kayleen Hart at 6:27 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:



Janel S. Meyer
Administrative Coordinator

Minutes approved by Steuben County SWCD Board



09/08/2021 (Date)