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 10, 2021

IN ATTENDANCE:

<u>District Supervisors</u> <u>Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)</u>

Kayleen Hart Arthur Franke, District Conservationist

Craig Holman

Beth Williams Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)

Kate Sanders, Resource Specialist

SWCD

Janel Meyer, Administrative Coordinator Aimee Wentworth, Resource Conservationist

Absent

Chuck Howard, Board Supervisor

David Perkins, Board Supervisor

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (9-8-21)

The Board members were asked to consider the minutes of the September 8, 2021 Board meeting by Board Chair Hart. There being no additions or corrections, the following action was taken:

Beth Williams moved to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2021 Steuben County SWCD board meeting as presented. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT

Disbursement

Janel Meyer provided the financial reports for the September 8 to November 5, 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. Janel noted October claims were paid using the Steuben SWCD April 12, 2020 approved motion for the unit fiscal officer to coordinate with the Board Chair for payment of claims in the event the Steuben SWCD Board of Supervisors are unable to meet (SWCD October 2021 meeting was canceled).

Disbursement

\$41,878.80

Report for period ending October 8, 2021:

- Francisco			
-	General Fund - All A	Accounts	
Checking	\$ 40,311.04		
Statement Savings	41,878.44		
Total	\$ 82,189.48		
Checking account		Savings account	
balance 09/07/21	\$ 57,644.63	balance 09/07/20	\$ 41,878.10
Receipts	\$ 1,977.62	Receipts	\$.34
Disbursement	(\$ 19,311.21)	Disbursement	<u>(\$ 0.00)</u>
	\$ 40,311.04		\$41,878.44
Report for period endi	ng November 5, 2021:		
	General Fund - All A	Accounts	
Checking	\$ 40,049.82		
Statement Savings	41,878.80		
Total	\$ 81,928.62		
Checking account		Savings account	
balance 10/08/21	\$ 40,311.04	balance 10/08/21	\$ 41,878.44
Receipts	\$ 3,425.78	Receipts	\$.36

\$ 40,049.82

Additional information provided with monthly claims for Board review and verification included September and October 2021: 1. Deposit & Check detail reports; 2. Checking & Savings account bank statements; 3. Checking & Savings account reconciliations; 4. Staff payroll approval form, time sheets, compensatory time logs and vehicle logs. Janel reported total checking account receipts of \$5,304.40, this included the City of Angola sponsorship of 4th grade Youth Conservation Field Day (YCFD) educational materials, 2021 Steuben County Life registrations, a Pigeon Creek LARE watershed land treatment program (WLTP) cost-share payment, and reimbursement for the Steuben SWCD 2021 Conservation Camp.

Disbursement was \$22,998.21, which included conservation education supplies (4th grade YCFD educational booklets and backpacks; September 14, 2021 Ryan Park 4th grade YCFD; Steuben County Life program supplies; October 16, 2021 Forestry Field Day), conservation cost-share payments [Great Lakes Commission (GLC) Pigeon Creek grant; Pigeon Creek LARE WLTP), dues and memberships, newsletter printing/mailing, office supplies, and operating expenses. She noted in the profit & loss the District is down \$15,250.00 net ordinary income due to the requirement to pay GLC conservation cost-share payments; SWCD will be reimbursed, shortly. Board Chair Hart asked if there were any questions or comments regarding the Treasurer's Report. Hearing none, she called for a motion.

Craig Holman moved to approve the Treasurer's Report for the periods ending October 8, 2021 and November 5, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Natural Resources/Technical Assistance

Beth Williams, Chair

- . Agricultural Improvement Act of 2018 (Farm Bill) / NRCS / FSA
 - 1. Talking Points were provided in the Supervisors' packets.
 - 2. NRCS District Conservationist Arthur Franke reported Indiana has completed obligations for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Reserve Program (CSP) for FY 2021. He has started signing-up producers/landowners for the first round of next year's EQIP funding; applications are due December 17. Arthur Franke shared funding is also available for farmers through the Western Lake Erie Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP); all applications for funding consideration must also be received by December 17, 2021.

Kayleen Hart, Farm Service Agency (FSA) Program Technician, reported FSA is continuing training for the new organic program. The 2022 Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC)/Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program enrollment opened on October 18, 2021 and runs through March 15, 2022. Wheat certification is in progress.

ii. Watershed Projects and Organizations/SWCD

<u>-Southeastern Lake Michigan Basin:</u> St. Joe River West (HUC 8) (Lake Michigan) Sub-watersheds:

1. Pigeon Creek Watershed

a. Janel provided copies of the final quarterly and final report for the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) Pigeon Creek Sediment & Nutrient Reduction grant. Reports were submitted by the deadline. She noted \$1,679 remained in the grant due to the cancellation of a forage/biomass + fencing project. While the SWCD was able to find an exclusion fence project that fit within the scope of the grant, a planting project could not be identified. She also noted grant administrators required the SWCD to report the amount of dissolved reactive phosphorous saved within the final report; however, no model exists to provide this information. She was able to find a model specific to the Western Lake Erie Basin, but noted the numbers presented in the report were based on a model intended for other purposes and were not relevant to the Pigeon Creek Watershed in Steuben County.

b. Janel reported she received a request from a landowner to build on a portion of property which was included in a 2010 Pigeon Creek WLTP tree planting contract. Approximately 200 trees would be impacted by the construction. She contacted the LARE grant administrator who advised no fine would be charged since the contract was set to expire shortly. It was recommended the landowner replant what was being removed elsewhere on the property. She also reported about receiving water quality complaints on Big Turkey Lake (high sedimentation and high E. coli readings). The Board discussed potential sources of sediment and E. coli; no specific area was identified. Supervisor Beth Williams volunteered to investigate further and provide a report at a future board meeting. Janel also reported she received notification from City of Angola Engineer Amanda Cope that the city received an application for lot vacations for several county owned properties within the block encompassed by South Martha, Wall Street, etc. for building a new judicial center. She reported it was unknown whether the two rain gardens, implemented through

a 319 Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) non-point source grant, would be impacted. The contract for the rain gardens expires in 2026. Janel advised she would check with Commissioner Lynne Liechty at the next Drainage Board meeting to confirm whether any impacts to the rain gardens would result.

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

a. The FotSJR held a virtual meeting on September 23, 2021. Aimee Wentworth reported the documentary about the St. Joseph River has been released and can be viewed by typing in "celebratethestjoe" on the WNIT website. The FotSJR will be drafting a letter of support for a Berrien Springs State Game Area along the St. Joseph River. For the mainstem inventory, 43 sampling river days were completed, which covered the area from Hillsdale to Benton Harbor. Aimee also noted that there are FotSJR t-shirts available for purchase for \$10.00. She is planning to attend the next virtual meeting on November 18, 2021.

3. St. Joseph River Basin Commission (SJRBC)

a. The next quarterly SJRBC meeting will be held on December 2, 2021, in person. Janel plans to attend.

iii. <u>-Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB):</u> St. Joe River East (HUC 8) (Lake Erie)

Sub-watersheds:

- Upper St. Joe River Includes Fish Creek, Nettle, and West Branch Sub-Watersheds:
 a. Arthur, Kate Sanders, and Janel participated in an October 19, 2021 WLEB Stakeholder Partner meeting, which was held virtually. Kate provided updates:
 - 3 targeted funds are available in the WLEB: EQIP, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), and the RCPP. Conservation technical assistance is also available through the GLRI.
 - Purdue University Ph.D. candidate Jennifer Rackliffe introduced her research which focused on anaerobic digestion; looking at ways to bring in farmers and ag producers to make manure anerobic digestion more feasible on more farms.
 - A pilot WLEB program through the Conservation Technology Information Center (CTIC) has begun. The program is funded privately and operates similar to carbon credit programs, but for phosphorus (P). The program can handle 5,000 acres; however, 10,000 acres have already been signed-up.
 - The St. Mary's River has been identified as the P hot spot for both the St. Mary's and St. Joseph Rivers. The recent St. Mary's channel stability and flood risk assessment revealed it's not bedload contributing to P, rather, very fine particles coming off the land that remain suspended for long periods of time.
 - Indiana Ag Nutrient Alliance reported 4 retailers went through the pilot Indiana 4R certification program; several more are looking to go through certification audits this fall.
 - IDEM is still trying to determine the effects of Senate Bill 389 (wetlands); what is and is not regulated and how to implement 401 Certification.

iv. Entire County

1. District Cost-Share

a. Janel presented an application provided by Arthur Franke for a 1.9-acre Wildlife Habitat/Pollinator Planting in the Crooked Creek sub-watershed of Fawn River. She advised all available funding for the Fawn LARE WLTP grant has been obligated. She also advised \$3,778.50 of funding remains available in the 2022 Steuben SWCD District cost-share program. Art shared that the landowner would like to create monarch habitat on land that was previously pasture. The Board discussed the project and determined if funded through the District, it would be paid with 2023 District cost-share funds (due to a year requirement for site preparation; planting and payment would not be completed until 2023). The Board did not approve the application since EQIP timeline would work for the project. Art will contact the landowner to discuss the EQIP option.

b. Janel also presented an application provided by Arthur Franke for a 2.0-acre Tree/Windbreak Planting in the Little Turkey sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek. She advised all available funding for the Pigeon Creek LARE WLTP grant has been obligated. Project would require \$1,200.00 of 2022 District cost-share funds. Art advised the landowner would like to plant in the spring, so waiting for the EQIP application process was not an option. Two areas were identified, a windbreak surrounding the property and a wetter area within the property (area currently growing cottonwoods). The Board discussed the resource concerns and whether the windbreak was more of a privacy screen rather than a resource concern. The Board was supportive of the tree planting, but not the windbreak installation.

Craig Holman moved to approve up to a one-acre tree planting in the Little Turkey Sub-Watershed of Pigeon Creek using the Steuben County SWCD 2022 District Cost-Share Program. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.

Art will advise the landowner of the Board's decision and determine whether they would like to pursue District cost-share funding or EQIP funding.

2. Steuben County Lakes Council (SCLC)

a. Janel attended the October 2 and November 6, 2021 meetings and shared highlights with the Board: Crooked Lake landowners are trying to raise funds to support legal action against the Casey's Cove Marina housing development, which the BZA approved; the Department of Natural Resources boat ramp project has been completed at Fox Lake; the SCLC's 50th anniversary is in 2022 - they would like to celebrate with a large event; there was discussion about moving SCLC monthly board meetings to the Steuben County Community Foundation; Big Turkey Lake Association received a LARE grant to dredge a sediment trap, with an estimated cost of \$160,000 - the Association must have matching funds to complete the project; Lake Arrowhead reported increased E. Coli readings; Little Long Lake reported contamination issues, which may be due to a dairy farm located on the Michigan side of the lake - the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is requiring the Association to provide a watershed map before they will report the issue to the Michigan Department of Agriculture; Kris Thomas discussed the revised general construction and MS4 permits, which was mandated by the EPA; the Smithsonian Water/Ways travelling exhibit will be hosted by the Carnegie Library in 2022 – as part of the privilege to host the display, the local community must create their own display reflecting the theme. Janel advised the SWCD may be approached to donate funds toward the development of the local display.

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

a. Janel attended the September 23, 2021 MS4 Advisory Group Meeting, which she reported may be the final meeting for the group under provisions in the new MS4 general permit. Kris Thomas, City of Angola/Trine University MS4/Engineering Assistant, completed an audit with IDEM and was advised Trine University will be required to have their own MS4 permit. Janel briefly reviewed the six minimum control measures required in the current MS4 permit. b. A copy of a third stormwater inspection report conducted at the Ramsey Ventures – Samfred Marketplace (SR 120 in Fremont) on September 22, 2021 was provided for review. Corrective actions were required for deficiencies identified; Janel reported these are the same corrective actions identified in the July 14th and August 22nd inspections. She reported sediment has been discharged to the wetland adjacent to the project site.

c. Final details for the Contractor Workshop were provided. It is scheduled for December 3, 2021 with a snow date of December 10. Aimee forwarded a news release to the Herald Republican; staff were waiting for the article to be printed in the newspaper to promote the event. Aimee mailed one hundred thirty invitations to local contractors; very few responses have been received.

b. District Operations/Marketing

Chuck Howard, Chair

SWCD Training/Public Relations, etc.

- 1. Field Visits/Trainings
 - a. Angola Middle School Field Day September 8, 2021: Janel provided the thank-you notes the SWCD received from students for Board review.
 - b. Steuben County SWCD Forestry Field Day October 16, 2021: A total of 17 individuals participated in the 2021 Forestry Field Day (this included staff and presenters). Janel advised she purchased lunches from Bon Appétit (approval was received from Board Chair Hart) and the Lion's Club didn't charge for the chairs since they were already in the area for a different event.
 - c. Steuben County Life Session 6 at the T. Furth Center/Club Z October 19, 2021.
 - d. Indiana Conservation Partnership Tree & Shrub ID Workshop October 20, 2021: Janel, Aimee, Arthur, and Kate participated in this training workshop at the Allen County Purdue Extension Office.
 - e. Coffee & Tillage Webinar October 26, 2021: Aimee participated in this morning educational series about agricultural tillage. Presentation and minutes available at the Allen County SWCD website.
 - f. NACD How to Record Videos Session 2 Webinar October 28, 2021. Aimee participated. g. ISDA Soil Sampling Training November 3, 2021: Janel and Aimee assisted Kate with soil sampling for this ISDA grant program. Steuben County landowners located in the WLEB are eligible for the program.

- h. ISDA District Support Specialist (DSS) Meeting November 4, 2021: Janel and Aimee participated in this virtual meeting where the open NE DSS position and position responsibilities were discussed.
- i. IDEA NNE Regional Meeting December 9, 2021 was cancelled due to scheduling conflicts with the host county.
- 2. August, September, and October tally sheets were provided in the Supervisors folders.

ii. Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

1. The IASWCD Annual Conference is to be held January 24-25, 2022. The registration fee is is \$330.00 per person with the early bird discount. Janel requested a Board motion for the approval of staff to register/attend the conference.

Beth Williams moved to approve registration expenses, \$330/person, for Administrative Coordinator Janel Meyer and Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth to attend the January 24-25, 2022 Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Meeting.

Janel advised staff would like to travel to Indianapolis for the conference on Sunday, January 23, 2022, to avoid driving in bad weather early in the morning on January 24. She requested a Board motion for approval of staff to stay 2 nights for the IASWCD Annual Meeting at a cost of \$112 plus, taxes/night.

Beth Williams moved to approve travel expenses (separate hotel rooms for January 23 and January 24, 2022 plus per diem) for Steuben SWCD staff to attend the IASWCD Annual Conference. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

2022 Annual Conference / Delegate: Janel inquired whether any Supervisor planned to attend the
conference; each county typically sends a delegate. Janel will need to know by January 14, 2022.
The Board reviewed the one resolution submitted by Kosciusko County SWCD to set term limits
for members serving on the State Soil Conservation Board.

iii. <u>Indiana State Department of Agriculture</u>

- 1. District Support Specialist/Resource Specialist update: Kate reported during the DSS Webinar on November 4, 2021, participants were informed the NE district coverage was being reorganized, with the new (yet to be hired) North DSS covering the northern 1/3 counties.
- 2. Information about upcoming Soil & Water Conservation District Finance Training was provided in the Supervisor's packets:
 - a. SWCD Finance Basics for Supervisors November 17, 2021 (virtual).
 - b. SWCD Finance Overview for Staff December 1, 2021 (virtual).
 - c. QuickBooks Training December 7, 2021.
- 3. SWCD Election Committee: Beth reported David Perkins would like to run again. Janel asked for suggestion for others who may have an interest. She informed the Election Committee all candidate information must be uploaded into SharePoint by November 30, 2021.
- 4. Steuben SWCD Annual Meeting Planning: Aimee provided an update on the March 9, 2022 Annual Meeting planning she has completed. The Board set March 16, 2022 as the alternate snow date for the meeting. She presented information on various options for venues and menus. The first choice for venue was the Presbyterian Chapel of the Lakes, which requested a free-will donation for the use; staff would be required to set up and tear down the tables/chairs for the meeting. Beth volunteered to have individuals available to help with set-up and tear-down for the meeting. The second venue presented was the Fremont Moose which charged \$50, with a \$50 refundable deposit. Menus and maximum meal prices were also discussed.

Craig Holman moved to approve the Presbyterian Chapel of the Lakes as the March 9, 2022 Steuben County SWCD Annual Meeting venue and a maximum price of \$12.50/person for the Steuben County SWCD Annual Meeting dinner. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.

5. Supervisors completed a training method survey; survey was requested by our current acting DSS.

iv. National Association of Conservation Districts

1. 2021 Membership Renewal: NACD mailed an invoice for FY22.

Craig Holman moved to support dues for the National Association of Conservation Districts 2022 fiscal year at \$775; seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.

c. Budget and Finance Kayleen Hart, Chair

1. Janel presented the \$20,000 Position Schedule Fidelity Bond; bond will be recorded with County. Beth Williams motioned to approve the \$20,000 fidelity bond; seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

- 2. Janel informed the Board she reordered checks for the SWCD through Key Bank. She was advised there would be no charge; however, that is usually not the case.
- 3. Janel shared the 2022 Steuben County Final Adopted Budgets & Wages for Steuben SWCD staff.

d. Information and Education

David Perkins, Chair

i. Drainage Board

Staff are attending the twice-monthly county Drainage Board (DB) meetings. Janel reported there continues to be issues with stormwater for construction activities under one acre in size. IDEM does not have regulatory authority for projects under 1 acre. Janel and IDEM advised County Surveyor Mike Ruff those types of projects would be regulated through county ordinances. She reported the County Commissioners may have signed an ordinance in 1996, but it remains unknown whether there was an official motion in the Commissioners minutes supporting the ordinance approval.

ii. Public Records Request

The SWCD office received a Motion to Produce to a Non-Party request for information regarding a court case involving a dispute for a wetland/pond project causing water issues on neighboring properties. Janel reported she did not sign an Affidavit of Records Custodian, as requested, since she has only been the official office Custodian of SWCD records since April 2015. A certified letter was forwarded to the attorney ascertaining she only has knowledge of chart and record-keeping procedures of the SWCD from 2015 to present, and to the best of her knowledge and belief, the Steuben SWCD does not have records or documents associated with the court case.

- iii. 2022 & 2023 4th Grade Youth Conservation Field Day (YCFD)
 The date for the 2022 YCFD is September 13; in 2023, it is September 12.
- iv. Steuben County SWCD Fall 2021 Newsletter was mailed.
- v. 4-H/Purdue Extension/SWCD/Other SWCDs

Aimee Wentworth reported:

- The Steuben County Soil Science GeoTrial is live; there are two locations that have not been verified, but a location has been chosen: Wild Winds Buffalo Preserve in Fremont Township; Trine State Recreation Area in Jamestown Township. A Herald-Republican article about the new geocache trail was shared.
- Planning for the Indiana Master Naturalist (IMN) class if going well; there are only three more sessions to confirm. Once that has been completed, she can submit the application for the class to be approved by the IMN Council. Advertising and sign-ups will begin after the application has been approved. The first session is scheduled May 3, the final session is June 28, 2022.
- Work continues on two educational videos: Invasive Species and an SWCD promotional video. Filming for the invasive species video is scheduled for November 15, 2021 with John Brittenham of Blue Heron Ministries. Aimee contacted the Steuben County Tourism Bureau and received approval to utilize aerial footage of the county they have for use in the promotional video.

vi. Upcoming Regional/National Events

- 1. Veteran's Day Holiday November 11, 2021*
- 2. IDEM New Construction Stormwater General Permit Webinar November 16, 2021
- 3. Thanksgiving Holiday November 25, 2021*
- 4. Thanksgiving Holiday November 26, 2021 (County Offices Closed)
- 5. IDEM MS4 General Permit Webinar November 30, 2021
- 6. Steuben County Lakes Council Monthly Board Meeting December 4, 2021 (Angola, IN)
- 7. Steuben County SWCD Monthly Board Meeting December 8, 2021 (Angola, IN)
- 8. Christmas Holiday December 23, 2021*
- 9. Christmas Holiday December 24, 2021*
- 10. New Year's Day Holiday December 31, 2021*

 *Angola USDA Service Center Closed

V. CLAIMS

5798	Walmart (Supplies/Refreshments for 10/16/21 Forestry Field Day)	\$ 28.37
5799	Bon Appétit (20 Boxed Lunches for 10/16/21 Forestry Field Day)	\$ 224.73
5800	Bon Appétit (10/19/21 Final Steuben County Life Session Dinner for 40 participants)	\$ 751.14
5801	Dilts Port-A-John Rental, Inc. (ADA Handicap Unit for 10/16/21 Forestry Field Day)	\$ 130.00
5802	Pokagon State Park (Nature Center Fee for 9/14/21 Steuben Co. Life Session 1)	\$ 25.00
5803	USPS (2021 Steuben County SWCD Fall Newsletter Postage – 1,585 pieces)	\$ 229.73
5804	Jacob Insurance (Pekin Ins. Co. Position Schedule Bond Policy Renewal 11/21 – 11/22)	\$ 100.00

5805	USPS (Stout Law Group Certified Mail & 2021 Steuben County Life - Replenish Stamps)	\$	42.18
5806	Amazon (ACH – ARS Unit Keyboard Cover, Tripod Carrying Case, HDMI Cables)	\$	45.01
5807	Justin Eib (400-ft. Fence; Pigeon Creek LARE WLTP Grant)	\$1	,079.20
5808	KPC Media (Herald Republican Subscription Renewal 11/9/2021 – 11/9/2022)	\$	299.00
5809	Graphics 3, inc. (2021 Steuben SWCD Fall Newsletter Printing w/Mailing Services)	\$	796.30
5810	Janel Meyer (Reimbursement per SWCD SOP – Steuben Life 10/12/21 Supplies)	\$	74.64
5811	Ceres Solutions (Fuel for Expedition – November Statement)	\$	44.57
	Beth Williams moved to accept the claims for November 10, 2021; seconded by Craig Holman.	Motio	n carried.

VI. NEXT BOARD MEETING

Janel asked the Board about future meeting locations and whether to reserve the Multi-Purpose Room. It was decided she should reserve it for at least the next six months. Janel will check with Steuben County Community Center Maintenance Supervisor Gary Fair on the availability of the Multi-Purpose Room and report back to the Board.

Wednesday, December 8, 2021 - 5:00 p.m.

- 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.

Beth Williams moved to adjourn. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned by Chair Hart at 6:54 p.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by:

es respectfully subfiltied by.

Aimee M. Wentworth, Resource Conservationist

Minutes amended by:

Janel S. Meyer, Administrative Coordinator

Minutes approved by Steuben County SWCD Board		
es He		
Both Willians	12/08/2021	(Date)