

**MINUTES**

**STEUBEN COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING**

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

**September 8, 2021**

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

District Supervisors

Kayleen Hart  
 Craig Holman  
 Beth Williams

Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

Arthur Franke, District Conservationist

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 Chair Kayleen Hart at 5:30 p.m.

**II. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (8-11-21)**

Board Chair Hart asked the Board members if there were any corrections to the minutes, as presented, for the August 11, 2021 Board meeting.

*Craig Holman made a motion to approve the August 11, 2021 Steuben County SWCD Board meeting minutes, as presented. Beth Williams seconded. Motion carried.*

**III. TREASURER'S REPORT**

Janel Meyer provided the financial report for the August 10 to September 7, 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 provided an update on the Steuben SWCD checking account discrepancy of \$0.84. Our account was debited on the August checking statement to correct the issue with check #6087 (check amount of \$518.84; cleared as \$518.00).

*Report for period ending September 7, 2021:*

<u>General Fund - All Accounts</u>			
Checking	\$ 57,644.63		
Statement Savings	41,878.10		
Total	\$ 99,522.73		
<i>Checking account</i>		<i>Savings account</i>	
<i>balance 8/9/21</i>	<i>\$ 60,024.91</i>	<i>balance 8/9/21</i>	<i>\$ 41,877.74</i>
<i>Receipts</i>	<i>\$ 16,066.63</i>	<i>Interest</i>	<i>\$ 0.36</i>
<i>Disbursement</i>	<i>(\$18,446.91)</i>	<i>Disbursement</i>	<i>(\$ 0.00)</i>
	<i>\$ 57,644.63</i>		<i>\$41,878.10</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 August vehicle log. Janel reported total checking account receipts of \$16,066.63, which included a credit from Amazon, flag and rain barrel sales, a rental payment for the use of the Augmented Reality Sandbox (ARS) Unit at the Indiana State Fair, and grant cost-share payments [Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Urban Grant; Pigeon Creek and Fawn River Lake and River Enhancement Watershed Land Treatment Project Grants]. She advised the ARS rental payment from Elkhart County SWCD was unexpected. Elkhart borrowed our ARS after their unit stopped functioning; payment was provided for the use of our unit. Disbursement was \$18,446.91, which included the \$0.84 check discrepancy, conservation education materials/supplies, cost-share payments [CWI Urban Grant and Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Grant for Pigeon Creek projects], office supplies, operating expenses, State Board of Accounts engagement fees, and vehicle repairs/new tires. Board Chair Hart asked if there were any questions or concerns regarding the Treasurer's report. Hearing none, Hart asked for a motion to

approve the report as presented.

*Craig Holman moved to approve the Treasurer's Report for the period ending September 7, 2021, as presented. Seconded by Beth Williams. 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. Arthur Franke, NRCS District Conservationist, reported he is completing Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Healthy Forest Reserve Program (HFRP) end of fiscal year requirements. Art will be focusing efforts on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) status reviews for contracts expiring in 2022 the next several months. He also reviewed the COVID-19 policy from the USDA: (1) all employees, contractors, and visitors must wear masks in all USDA buildings and government owned/leased vehicles, regardless of vaccination status, (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. The Angola Service Center is open by appointment only.

Kayleen Hart, Farm Service Agency (FSA) Program Technician, reported the YouTube and TikTok videos stating USDA is paying farmers cost-share to destroy their crops is fictitious. She advised letters, stating the same, are being sent by an unknown person/group. FSA has two nominations for the 2021 County Committee Election, Jeff Burlingame and Bill Booth. This year's election is for a representative from LAA 1, which covers Millgrove, Jamestown, Fremont, and Clear Lake Townships. Ballots will be mailed November 1<sup>st</sup> to all eligible voters. Kayleen is currently working on the organic cost-share program.

##### 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 all invoices from the remaining cost-share contracts were received and all site visits completed. She is finishing processing payments and will begin working on the final grant report, due October 29, 2021.
- b. Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) Updates & Forage/Biomass Applications: The Board discussed two forage/biomass applications; a 15.24-acre planting in the Otter Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon and a 20-acre planting in the Mud Creek sub-watershed of Pigeon. Janel advised the Otter Lake property is located approximately 300-ft. from Pigeon Creek. The landowner would like to establish a grass-legume mixture for erosion control. He contacted the SWCD inquiring about cost-share availability prior to the 20-acre request. Board dialogue focused on the location of each property, resource concerns, and available grant funding. Janel advised approval of the 15.24-acre planting would leave about \$600 in the Pigeon WLTP grant. She stated the 20-acre forage/biomass planting could be split between the Pigeon grant and District cost-share if the Board wanted to approve both applications.

*Beth Williams moved to approve the 15.24-acre forage/biomass planting in the Otter Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek using the Pigeon Creek Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Program (WLTP) grant and the 20-acre forage/biomass planting in the Mud Creek sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek using the Pigeon LARE WLTP and 2022 District Cost-Share. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.*

Janel reported the 15-acre forage/biomass planting in the Little Turkey Lake-Turkey Creek sub-watershed has been completed; project approved at the April 14, 2021 Board meeting. Janel requested approval to pay the \$2,250 cost-share payment. She advised LARE has been invoiced.

*Craig Holman made a motion to approve the \$2,250 Pigeon Creek Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Program (WLTP) grant cost-share payment for the completed 15-acre forage/biomass planting in the Little Turkey Lake-Turkey Creek sub-watershed. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried..*

2. Fawn River Watershed

a. WLTP Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment and Forage/Biomass Planting: Janel presented two applications for cost-share funding in the Snow Lake sub-watershed of Fawn River. A 1.0-acre windbreak/shelterbelt establishment to serve as a wildlife corridor and help mark the property boundary line and a 20 to 30-acre forage/biomass planting on highly erodible fields for erosion control and to benefit the landowner economically. Janel advised \$3,340 was available within the grant. The Board discussed grant funding and resource concerns; they agreed to utilize the remaining Fawn River WLTP monies.

*Craig Holman moved to approve the 1-acre windbreak/shelterbelt establishment in the Snow Lake sub-watershed of Fawn River using the Fawn River Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Program (WLTP) grant. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.*

*Beth Williams moved to approve the 20 to 30-acre forage/biomass planting in the Snow Lake sub-watershed of Fawn River using the remaining funds available in the Fawn River Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Program (WLTP) grant. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.*

Janel reported the WLTP grant administrator advised there are no grant restrictions regarding non-agricultural properties. Therefore, she used the Fawn grant to fund the Fremont Park pollinator planting, approved at the August 11, 2021 Board meeting.

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

a. Aimee did not attend the FotSJR August 26, 2021 monthly board meeting since it was moved to Saturday, August 28<sup>th</sup>.

b. The next FotSJR monthly board meeting has been scheduled for September 23, 2021.

4. St. Joseph River Basin Commission (SJRBC)

a. Janel attended the SJRBC September 2, 2021 quarterly meeting and provided a brief update: (1) Sites are still being identified for the SJRBC long-term water monitoring program (12 sites total). One site will be located on Turkey/Pigeon Creek near the Steuben-LaGrange county line and (2) Environmental Consulting Firm INTERA provided a presentation on a proposed Steuben County water availability study to identify how much water is needed where/when; how much water is in the basin and where/when it's available; define water users and how use has changed over time, etc. They performed a similar assessment in central Indiana. The study was initiated by the City of Angola; City is currently securing funds to move forward with the project.

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. All parties have signed the SJR (Ohio) Watershed (Steuben County) grant agreement. Cost-share funding is now available. Janel stated she is expecting the contract forms from the grant administrator shortly.

2. Maumee River Basin Commission

a. Chuck Howard attended the August 12, 2021 meeting.

iv. Entire County

1. District Cost Share

a. An update on the 200-acre cover crop planting in Fawn River (approved April 14, 2021) and the 16-acre cover crop planting in the Otter Lake sub-watershed of Pigeon Creek (approved July 14, 2021) was provided. Janel reported the landowner with the 200-acre planting has still not identified which highly erodible fields he would like included in the contract. Landowner has been contacted several times (phone, email). The producer with the 16-acre planting is not moving forward with his project as he double-cropped beans on the field.

2. Steuben County Lakes Council

a. Janel attended the SCLC's August 14, 2021 Annual Meeting. She reported the keynote speaker was Dr. Jerry Sweeten, Ph.D. who discussed the important distinction between citizen science water quality monitoring and scientifically-designed water quality monitoring studies. Citizen science data can provide educational information; however, using this type of data for management decisions can and will be misleading. Management decisions should only be made with robust scientific data; good science is required to make good decisions. Proper science, funding, project design, and assessment are necessary to truly understand what's occurring in a watershed.

- b. Janel reported she shared SWCD grant and education updates at the SCLC's September 4, 2021 monthly meeting.
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 August 11, 2021 was provided for review. Corrective actions were required for deficiencies identified; these are the same corrective actions identified in the July 14<sup>th</sup> inspection (inadequate sediment control measures, lack of temporary stabilization measures for areas inactive for 15 or more days). Janel reviewed an advisory letter sent to a landowner regarding land disturbance at Lane 200 F on Lake James.
- b. A copy of the Lake View Estates Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan was provided for review. Project is a single-family residential subdivision development.
- c. The next MS4 Stormwater Advisory Group Meeting has been scheduled for September 23, 2021.
- d. The SWCD is working with City of Angola Engineer Assistant/MS4 Coordinator Kris Thomas on a third contractor workshop. It has been planned for Friday, December 3, 2021. Due to the pandemic, a workshop was not held in 2020. Janel advised lunch is being sponsored by the City of Angola-Trine University MS4. She requested approval to purchase light refreshments for the morning of the workshop.

*Craig Holman moved to support up to \$150 for refreshments/food for the December 3, 2021 Contractor Workshop as this event furthers the mission of the Steuben SWCD. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.*

**b. District Operations/Marketing**

**Chuck Howard, Chair**

- i. SWCD Training/Public Relations, etc.
1. Field Visits/Trainings
- a. North Northeast IDEA Region Meeting • August 13, 2021: Janel and Aimee attended this meeting which covered Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) updates, upcoming trainings, and Soil & Water District issues/updates. Ample discussion occurred about the Indiana State Board of Accounts engagements (i.e., audits).
- b. Coffee & Urban Agriculture • August 17, 2021 (*virtual*): Aimee participated. A recording of the webinar is available on the Allen County SWCD website.
- c. IASWCD District Leveraging Sheet Webinar • August 17, 2021: Janel participated. A recording of the webinar is available on the IASWCD website.
- d. IASWCD Meet & Greet • August 30, 2021 (*virtual*): Aimee was invited to participate to learn more about IASWCD and available resources.
- e. USDA NRCS Employee Meeting – Vaccine Verification • August 31, 2021 (*virtual*): Staff participated in this webinar to learn about the new federal government Vaccine Verification program as this program directly impacts staff and visitors that utilize USDA service centers.
- f. Angola Middle School Field Day • September 8, 2021: Aimee, Janel, and LaGrange SWCD staff Jan McGowen and Martin Franke assisted Angola Middle School 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Teacher Sarah Koch with conducting a water quality field day. There were 5 classes with approximately 60 students/class that learned about water quality testing, collecting stream and flow measurements, and assessing water quality through the collection/identification of macroinvertebrates. Steuben and LaGrange SWCDs took the planning lead for the event to ensure a productive field day.
2. August Tally Sheets will be provided next month.
- ii. Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts (IASWCD)
1. The 2022 IASWCD Annual Meeting has been planned for January 23 – 25, 2022 at the Westin in Indianapolis. Janel reminded the Supervisors they will need to designate a delegate for the upcoming conference.
- iii. Indiana Conservation Partnership (ICP)
1. The August 17, 2021 ICP webinar was recorded. Janel will forward the link to the Board.
- iv. Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)
1. District Support Specialist (DSS)/Resource Specialist Update: Janel reviewed a report provided by Kate: ISDA will fill the NE DSS position, but it will take time. In the meantime, the other DSSs have split the NE counties to make sure each is covered. The Steuben SWCD interim DSS is Laura Fribley, from the SE.
2. Each Supervisor received a copy of the Virtual Meeting Updated Guidance memo. A copy of the guidance from Indiana's Public Access Counselor was also included for review.

3. The Board discussed the Steuben SWCD 2022 Annual Meeting and potential meeting locations. The group decided to hold an in-person meeting on March 9, 2022. Aimee will investigate various venues and provide a report at the next Board meeting.
4. Beth Williams and Craig Holman volunteered to serve on the Election Committee. Kayleen Hart's appointed term expires in 2022; Kayleen was asked whether she had an interest in being reappointed. David Perkins term expires in 2022. Craig will check with Dave whether he has an interest in rerunning. Chuck Howard will be the third member, by default. The committee and election discussion will continue at October's Board meeting.

**c. Budget and Finance**

**Kayleen Hart, Chair**

i. Ford Expedition Maintenance

Total cost for the SWCD 2010 Ford Expedition XLT maintenance was \$2,519.53, which included a new serpentine belt, locking hub removal/replacement, new muffler, brake fluid flush, four new tires, tire mounting/balancing, and a front wheel alignment. Vehicle maintenance was approved at the August 11, 2021 Board Meeting; however, staff consulted with Board Chair Hart prior to giving Lonsbury Garage the approval for repairs.

ii. Indiana Woodland Steward

Indiana Woodland Steward sent a request to support the printing of the Woodland Steward Newsletter for Steuben County landowners for FY21-22.

*Craig Holman made a motion to contribute \$300 toward FY21-22 printing costs of the Indiana Woodland Steward Newsletter. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried..*

**d. Information and Education**

**David Perkins, Chair**

i. Drainage Board

Staff are attending the twice-monthly county Drainage Board meetings. Janel provided a brief update about the Parkside Channel silt traps/Highway Department sediment basin.

ii. 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth Conservation Field Day (YCFD)

The SWCD was asked by Ryan Park Elementary to hold a mini YCFD at their school on September 14. Janel asked the Board to support refreshments for the presenters and volunteers.

*Beth Williams moved to support up to \$75 for refreshments/food for the September 14, 2021 Ryan Park Elementary School Youth Conservation Field Day as this event furthers the mission of the Steuben SWCD. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.*

Janel reported she advised the Community Foundation the YCFD was cancelled again; she asked them for guidance on how to handle the \$500 grant funding. Jennifer Danic (President and CEO Steuben County Community Foundation) consulted with the donor who agreed for the SWCD to hold the money and use it towards the 2022 scheduled field day.

iii. Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy (IWLA)

2022 IWLA enrollment is open. Virtual and in-person workshops will be offered for participants to learn watershed and leadership skills. Janel requested approval for Aimee to attend; total cost \$750.

*Beth Williams made a motion to approve Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth's \$750 registration for the 2022 Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.*

iv. 4-H/ Purdue Extension / Other SWCDs

Aimee updated the Board on various educational items:

- The macroinvertebrate sampling video has been posted. Purdue Extension Educator Tami Mosier added demographic and quiz questions. The video can be found at <https://sites.google.com/view/steubenenvironmentalscience/home> Aimee has a meeting with Tami and Nate Simons on September 9<sup>th</sup> to begin planning the next video, invasive species.
- Aimee met with Tami on September 2<sup>nd</sup> to discuss the geocaching project that began with former Resource Conservationist Tara. She is making progress on selecting the final sites.
- Information about the lesson kits has been posted on the SWCD website. Aimee mailed brochures to all Steuben County Elementary Schools for each teacher.
- Aimee asked the Board if they would be interested in co-sponsoring an Indiana Master Naturalist class with Pokagon and possibly Purdue Extension in Spring 2022. A total of 9 sessions would be required; most occurring in the evening with three Saturday sessions. Aimee advised evening and weekend sessions would require schedule adjustments. Additional details to be provided at upcoming Board meetings. The Supervisors were agreeable to SWCD co-sponsorship.

v. Upcoming Regional/National Events

1. DeKalb SWCD Wildlife Habitat Workshop • September 11, 2021 (*LaOtto, IN*)

2. LaGrange County SWCD Pasture Walk • September 13, 2021 (*LaGrange, IN*)
3. Steuben County Life Program • every Tuesday evening, September 14 – October 19, 2021
4. Rivers Summit III • September 15-16, 2021 (*Fort Wayne, IN*)
5. Urban and Small Farm Soil Health 101 • September 16, 2021 (*virtual*)
6. EPA Septic Smart Week • September 20 -24, 2021
7. Allen County SWCD Coffee & Tillage • September 21, 2021 (*virtual*)
8. Indiana DNR Free Fishing Day for Indiana Residents • September 25, 2021
9. Steuben County Lakes Council Monthly Board Meeting • October 2, 2021 (*Angola, IN*)
10. **Columbus Day Holiday • October 11, 2021 (*Angola USDA Service Center Closed*)**
11. Steuben County SWCD Monthly Board Meeting • October 13, 2021 (*Angola, IN*)
12. LaGrange County SWCD Pasture Walk • October 14, 2021 (*LaGrange, IN*)
13. Steuben County SWCD Forestry Field Day • October 16, 2021 (*Pleasant Lake, IN*)

**V. CLAIMS**

5763	Amazon (ACH Payment – HEPA Replacement Filters)	\$ 92.46
5764	Amazon (ACH Payment – Materials/Supplies for Conservation Education Kits)	\$ 63.77
5765	USPS (Stamps – 3 US Flag Coils)	\$ 165.00
5766	Jacqueline Christman (1,573 ft. Fence in Mud Creek-Pigeon Creek; GLSNRP)	\$ 3,932.50
5767	Clear Lake Twp. Conservancy (4000 ft <sup>2</sup> Native-Scaping in W. Branch SJR; CWI)	\$ 1,999.43
5768	Carol Jackson (400 ft <sup>2</sup> Native-Scaping in Tamarack Lake of Fawn River; CWI)	\$ 750.18
5769	City of Angola (0.34-acre Filter Strip in Tamarack Lake of Fawn River; CWI)	\$ 3,500.00
5770	BSATMC LLC (1,855 ft <sup>2</sup> Native-Scaping in Tamarack Lake of Fawn; CWI)	\$ 3,335.73
5771	Menards (Conservation Education – Supplies for Macroinvertebrate Kit)	\$ 15.19
5772	USPS (Postage – Conservation Education Elementary School Mailer)	\$ 7.95
5773	Treasurer of State – SBOA (2016-2020 Engagement/Audit Fees)	\$ 412.00
5774	Lonsbury Garage (2010 Ford Expedition Service – new tires, belt, muffler, etc.)	\$ 2,519.53
5775	Walmart (Materials/Supplies for 9/8/21 Angola Middle School Field Day)	\$ 4.67
5776	Staples (Office Supplies – Velcro, scissors, disinfectant wipes, etc.)	\$ 72.55
5777	Todd Schworm (Heavy Use Areas in Mud Creek-Pigeon; LARE)	\$ 1,500.00
5778	Ceres Solutions (Fuel for Expedition – September Statement)	\$ 70.20

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

*Craig Holman moved to accept the claims for September 8, 2021. Seconded by Beth Williams. Motion carried.*

**VI. NEXT BOARD MEETING**

**Wednesday, October 13, 2021 (5:00 p.m.)**

**SWCD Board Meeting**

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

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Steuben SWCD, Board Chair Hart called for a motion to adjourn. *Beth Williams moved to adjourn. Seconded by Craig Holman. Motion carried.*

Meeting adjourned by Chair Kayleen Hart at 6:55 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:

*Janel S. Meyer 10/13/2021*  
 Janel S. Meyer  
 Administrative Coordinator

Minutes approved by Steuben County SWCD Board

*Kayleen Hart*  
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*Beth Williams*  
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 \_\_\_\_\_ 11/10/21 (Date)