

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

January 12, 2022

IN ATTENDANCE:

<p><u>District Supervisors</u> Kayleen Hart Chuck Howard David Perkins</p> <p><u>Absent</u> Craig Holman, Board Supervisor Beth Williams, Board Supervisor</p>	<p><u>Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD)</u> Janel Meyer, Administrative Coordinator Aimee Wentworth, Resource Conservationist</p> <p><u>Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)</u> Arthur Franke, District Conservationist</p>
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I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (12-8-21)

The Board was asked to consider the minutes of the December 8, 2021 meeting. There being no additions or corrections, Board Chair Hart asked for a motion to approve.

Chuck Howard moved to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2021 Steuben County Soil & Water Conservation District Board meeting as presented. David Perkins seconded. Motion carried.

III. TREASURER’S REPORT

Administrative Coordinator Janel Meyer provided the financial report for December 1 to December 31, 2021. Financial reports and checking and savings account bank statements and reconciliations were sent to the Board Supervisors for review in advance of the meeting. Supervisors also received a hard copy of the financial report in their folders.

Report for period ending December 31, 2021:

	<u>General Fund - All Accounts</u>		
Checking	\$ 54,400.22		
Statement Savings	<u>41,879.50</u>		
Total	\$ 96,279.72		
<i>Checking account</i>		<i>Savings account</i>	
<i>balance 11/30/21</i>	<i>\$ 52,242.77</i>	<i>balance 11/30/21</i>	<i>\$ 41,879.14</i>
<i>Receipts</i>	<i>\$ 10,230.35</i>	<i>Receipts</i>	<i>\$.36</i>
<i>Disbursement</i>	<i><u>(\$ 8,072.90)</u></i>	<i>Disbursement</i>	<i><u>(\$ 0.00)</u></i>
	<i>\$54,400.22</i>		<i>\$41,879.50</i>

Additional information provided with the monthly claims for Board review and verification included 1. December 2021 deposit & check detail reports; 2. Staff payroll approval form, time sheets, compensatory time logs; and 3. December 2021 vehicle log.

Janel advised checking account receipts totaled \$10,230.35 which included sponsorship for 4th grade Youth Conservation Field Day materials from the Steuben County Lakes Council, the Great Lakes Commission (GLC) Pigeon Creek grant final cost-share reimbursement/payment, and a Pigeon Creek Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) cost-share payment for a 52.1-acre pasture planting in the Silver Lake sub-watershed.

Disbursement was \$8,072.90, which included conservation education supplies (contractor workshop), office supplies, operating expenses, petty cash fund replenishment, and the 52.1-acre pasture planting cost-share payment (Pigeon Creek LARE WLTP). Janel reviewed the final 2021 profit and loss statement; she noted the district ended the year with a negative net income due to the higher than expected vehicle repair cost.

Board Chair Hart asked whether there were any questions or comments regarding the Treasurer’s report. Hearing none, she called for a motion to approve.

A motion was made by Chuck Howard to approve the Treasurer’s Report for the period ending December 31, 2021, as presented. Seconded by David Perkins. 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 the Supervisors' packets.
NRCS District Conservationist Arthur Franke reported the FY22 Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) sign-up ended December 17. Thirty-nine applications were received. Applications for enrollment in the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) are due January 28 to be considered for FY22 funding. The availability of the Climate Smart Ag Initiative to help farmers implement conservation practices to help mitigate effects of adverse weather was recently announced. Farmers who have already applied to EQIP will be considered for the initiative for any eligible practices. Indiana will focus the Climate Initiative on soil health practices including cover crops, no-till, conservation crop rotation, and nutrient management.
Art also advised the Angola Service Center was back to "red status"; meaning the office is closed to the public and can only have 25% staff capacity. Art has been teleworking to allow Janel and Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth office access.
Kayleen Hart, Farm Service Agency (FSA) Program Technician, reported FSA staff are rotating schedules working in the office/teleworking to remain in compliance with the reduced staff capacity requirement. March 15 is the deadline for the 2022 Agricultural Risk Coverage (ARC)/Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. Kayleen continues processing commodity loans.

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. Janel presented a copy of the 2022 Pigeon Creek LARE WLTP application for Board review. She reviewed the anticipated practices and acreages with a total estimated cost of \$20,025. Janel asked for a motion to support the \$20,000 grant application. Board Chair Hart and Board Supervisors Howard and Perkins signed the application.

*David Perkins moved to approve the 2022 Pigeon Creek Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Lake Project (WLTP) grant application for \$20,000.
Chuck Howard seconded. Motion carried.*

2. Fawn River Watershed

- a. Janel presented a copy of the 2022 Fawn River LARE WLTP application for Board review. She reviewed the anticipated practices and acreages with a total estimated cost of \$20,225. Janel asked for a motion to support the \$20,000 grant application. Board Chair Hart and Board Supervisors Howard and Perkins signed the application.

*David Perkins moved to approve the 2022 Fawn River Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Lake Project (WLTP) grant application for \$20,000.
Chuck Howard seconded. Motion carried.*

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

- a. The next virtual FotSJR meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2022.

iii. -Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB): St. Joe River East (HUC) (Lake Erie).

Sub-watersheds:

1. Upper St. Joe River – Includes Fish Creek, Nettle, and West Branch Sub-Watersheds:

- a. Janel presented an application provided by Arthur Franke for a 5.3-acre Tree/Shrub Planting + 1.2-acre Windbreak in the Headwaters of Fish Creek. Project would require \$3,900 of the Upper St. Joseph River WLTP grant. Art shared the landowners' goal to promote wildlife habitat, control erosion, and provide hunting opportunities. Project would convert highly erodible crop ground into permanent vegetation. Landowner would like to hire Forester Tom Crowe for the spring planting. The Board discussed the benefits of adding these conservation practices to the property and approved the project.

David Perkins moved to approve the 5.3-acre Tree/Shrub Planting and 1.2-acre Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment in the Headwaters of Fish Creek using the Steuben County SWCD 2022 Upper St. Joseph River Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) grant. Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.

- b. Janel also presented an application provided by Arthur for a 5.8-acre Warm Season Grass Planting + 1.2-acre Windbreak/Shelterbelt + 0.5-acre Pollinator Planting + 9.0-acre Pasture

Planting in the Headwaters of Fish Creek. Project would require \$6,165 of the Upper St. Joseph River WLTP grant. This project would convert highly erodible land and part of a row crop field into permanent vegetation. Landowner would like to promote wildlife habitat, control erosion, and provide hunting opportunities. The Board discussed the benefits of adding these conservation practices to the property and approved the project.

A motion was made by David Perkins to approve the 5.8-acre Warm Season Grass Planting + 1.2-acre Windbreak/Shelterbelt Establishment + 0.5-acre Pollinator Planting + 9.0-acre Pasture Planting in the Headwaters of Fish Creek using the Steuben County SWCD 2022 Upper St. Joseph River Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) grant. Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.

iv. Entire County

1. District Cost-Share

a. Janel presented a 50' x 20' Heavy Use Area Protection application in the Mud Creek sub-watershed of Pigeon for Board discussion. She explained District cost-share is the only program available for funding since all monies in the Pigeon Creek WLTP grant were obligated. However, she could run the project through the Pigeon WLTP since progress on the 20-acre pasture planting project, approved at the September 8, 2021 Board meeting, has stalled. That project was split between the Pigeon grant and District cost-share. The Board discussed the benefits of adding this conservation practice to the property and approved the project using Pigeon or District cost-share or a combination of cost-share funds. Funds from the 2022 District cost-share program would be used for the 20-acre pasture planting.

Chuck Howard moved to approve the 50' x 20' Heavy Use Area Protection project in the Mud Lake Sub-Watershed of Pigeon Creek using the remaining funds available in the 2020 Pigeon Creek Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Watershed Land Treatment Project (WLTP) grant and, or, in addition to funding from the Steuben County SWCD 2022 District Cost-Share Program, if necessary. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.

2. Steuben County Lakes Council (SCLC)

a. The next meeting of the SCLC has been scheduled for February 5, 2022. Janel received the SCLC 2022 Membership Campaign request to renew our business/professional membership. Cost is \$40.

David Perkins moved to approve renewing the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District's \$40 business/professional membership with the Steuben County Lakes Council for FY22. Chuck Howard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

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

a. A copy of the AZZ Galvanizing Storage Yard Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan was provided for review. Project is a building expansion to their Hamilton stone yard.

b. District Operations/Marketing

Chuck Howard, Chair

i. SWCD Training/Public Relations, etc.

1. Field Visits/Trainings

a. IASWCD Urban Soil Health Update • Dec. 14 & Jan. 11, 2022. Janel and Aimee participated in these virtual meetings regarding updates/accomplishments of the Urban Soil Health Program team.

b. Smithsonian Water/Ways Exhibit Planning Meeting • Dec. 14 & Jan. 10, 2022: Staff continue to participate in planning meetings to assist with the production of a local companion display. Janel provided an update on the challenges the group is facing due to the short production timeline. The planning committee was recently advised the exhibit will be arriving one week earlier than expected. She asked the Board to consider providing a sponsorship to help with the production of the local display. The Board discussed various levels of support.

Chuck Howard moved to approve a \$500 sponsorship to assist with the production of a local companion display for the Smithsonian Water/Ways Exhibit the Carnegie Public Library of Steuben County and Steuben County Lakes Council is hosting from May 28 to July 17, 2022. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.

c. The Culture of Adoption (BMPs) Webinar • December 16, 2021: Aimee participated in this webinar featuring information on impacts of farmer decision making when it comes to conservation practice adoption.

d. NE Urban Soil Health Specialist Meeting • January 4, 2022: Janel and Aimee met with Jamie Perry, the new NE Regional Urban Soil Health Specialist with the Urban Soil Health Program. Staff advised they would like to host a spring urban soil health workshop on Saturday, April 9,

2022, in lieu of the spring garden series. The workshop will focus on urban soil health principles. The Board shared their support and discussed a workshop budget.

Chuck Howard moved to support up to \$400 for refreshments/food for the April 9, 2022 Urban Soil Health Workshop as this event furthers the mission of the Steuben SWCD. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.

e. Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy (IWLA) • January 5, 2022: Aimee attended the first virtual session of the Watershed Leadership Academy and submitted her first assignment.

f. From Watershed Planning to Field-Level Implementation • January 12, 2022: Janel participated in this virtual training from the Ohio State University Extension which featured the watershed planning process and new watershed planning tools available.

2. December tally sheets were provided in the Supervisors folders. Supervisors also received a copy of the 2021 tally totals.

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

1. Janel asked the Board for an official motion supporting Supervisor Beth Williams attendance and travel expenses for the 2022 IASWCD Annual Conference. Registration fee of \$385 (early bird discount expired in December) and hotel cost of \$112 plus taxes/night. Beth would travel with staff to the meeting on Sunday, January 23rd.

Chuck Howard moved to approve registration expenses, \$385, plus travel expenses for Board Supervisor Beth Williams to attend the January 23-25, 2022 Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts Annual Meeting. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.

Janel reviewed the IASWCD procedures for conference and Covid-related precautions. She also advised the Legislative Breakfast invitations were mailed on January 7.

iii. Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA)

1. District Support Specialist/Resource Specialist update: Janel reported ISDA and IASWCD are evaluating training content and delivery methods to provide a better experience for SWCDs. The survey responses will help guide future training opportunities. Janel will forward a copy of the link to the Supervisors. She advised the survey is different from the training method survey Supervisors recently completed.
2. Steuben SWCD Annual Meeting Planning: Janel reported SWCD annual meeting invitations would be mailed shortly.

c. Budget and Finance

Kayleen Hart, Chair

i. Treasurer/Depository

Appointment of fiscal officer and financial institution are determined at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Chuck Howard moved to designate Administrative Coordinator Janel Meyer as Treasurer/Fiscal Officer for the Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and keep Key Bank as the Steuben SWCDs financial institution/depository. Seconded by David Perkins Motion carried.

ii. Encumbrance

Janel submitted the encumbrance form to carry forward remaining FY21 funds used to pay part time clerical employee Lisa Ledgerwood to FY22.

iii. District Budget and Finance Committee Audit

Board Chair Hart and Board Supervisor Howard volunteered to perform the District Budget and Finance Committee Audit. The group will work together on scheduling.

iv. 2022 Affiliate Memberships

2022 Affiliate Memberships will remain at the 2021 levels. Janel will complete the Affiliate Membership letter which accompanies the form mailed to businesses/individuals. Aimee will be completing the mailing.

David Perkins moved to approve the 2022 Affiliate Membership levels of Bronze - \$25, Silver- \$50, Gold - \$75, and Platinum - \$100 and above. Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.

v. 2022 Indiana District Employee Association (IDEA) Dues

Janel requested approval to pay 2022 IDEA membership dues.

Chuck Howard moved to support 2022 Indiana District Employee Association (IDEA) membership dues for Steuben County Soil and Water Conservation District staff (Administrative Coordinator and Resource Conservationist), \$25/employee. Seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.

d. Information and Education

David Perkins, Chair

- i. Drainage Board
Staff are attending the twice-monthly county Drainage Board (DB) meetings. Janel advised Alexander Steele replaced Mike Ruff.
- ii. 4-H/Purdue Extension/SWCD/Other SWCDs
Aimee Wentworth report:
 - Aimee requested approval to travel to McCormick's Creek State Park the night before the IWLA March 29, 2022 meeting; meeting begins at 9:00 a.m. and the drive is 4 hours. She advised there would be an additional cost for the hotel room, price yet to be determined.
A motion was made by David Perkins to approve travel expenses (hotel and per diem) for Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth on March 28, 2022 for the Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy's March 29, 2022 in-person meeting. Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.
 - Aimee requested approval to travel to Fort Harrison State Park the night before the IWLA May 25, 2022 meeting; meeting begins at 8:45 a.m. and the drive is 3-hours. The cost of the hotel room is \$100.
Chuck Howard moved to approve travel expenses (hotel and per diem) for Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth on May 24, 2022 for the Indiana Watershed Leadership Academy's May 25, 2022 in-person meeting. Seconded by David Perkins.
 - The Midwest Women in Agriculture Conference is being hosted in Shipshewana from February 8-10, 2022. During the preconference on February 8, there is a Women4theLand Women's Learning Circle session. Aimee requested approval to attend the preconference for guidance and planning a similar program in Steuben County. The registration fee is \$25, which includes lunch.
David Perkins moved to approve the \$25 registration fee for Resource Conservationist Aimee Wentworth to attend the February 8, 2022 Women4theLand Women's Learning Circle in Shipshewana, Indiana. Seconded by Chuck Howard. Motion carried.
 - The Steuben County SWCD and Pokagon State Park received approval from the Indiana Master Naturalist (IMN) Council to host the IMN workshop at Pokagon in the spring. It is being advertised on our website, Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Master Naturalist workshop page, and on Pokagon State Park's Facebook page. She had three emails requesting information on Monday. A copy of the IMN registration form was provided in the Supervisor's folders. Janel shared the class is also being advertised on the Steuben SWCDs Facebook page.
 - All of the geocaches are in place and are live on geocaching.com. Two completed passports were returned to Tami Mosier, Purdue Extension. Those geocachers were awarded two 4-H rodeo tickets per completed passport.
 - Aimee was contacted by Mark Heifner, 7th grade science teacher at Angola Middle School, to possibly present information about erosion and the Steuben SWCD to his class.
 - The soil health principle graphic has been updated so it resonates more with urban and small-scale farmers, in addition to larger agricultural producers. She also shared additional details about Jamie Perry, new Region Soil Health Specialist.Janel discussed additional projects Aimee is working to complete, including the development of a Steuben County self-guided conservation tour and a Steuben SWCD promotional video.

iii. Upcoming Regional / National Events

1. **Martin Luther King Jr. Day • January 17, 2022***
2. Fort Wayne Farm Show • January 18-20, 2022
3. 2022 Stewardship Network Conference • January 26 – 28, 2022 (virtual)
4. Northern Indiana Grazing Conference • February 4 – 5, 2022 (LaGrange, IN)
5. Steuben County Lakes Council Meeting • February 5, 2022 (Angola, IN; subject to change)
6. Midwest Women in Agriculture Conference • February 8 – 10, 2022 (Shipshewana, IN)
7. Steuben SWCD Monthly Board Meeting • February 9, 2022 (Community Center)
8. **President's Day • February 21, 2022***

**Angola USDA Service Center Closed*

V. CLAIMS

5820	Terry Dailey (52.1-acre Forage/Biomass Planting in Pigeon Creek; LARE)	\$ 7,815.00
5821	CMC Global (IASWCD Jan. 23-25, 2022 Annual Conf. Registration-Supervisor)	\$ 385.00
5822	USPS (1099MISC Form Postage & IRS Certified Mail)	\$ 19.76
5823	Ceres Solutions (Fuel for Expedition – January 2022 Statement)	\$ 58.10
5824	Lakeside Meats (50% Deposit for March 9, 2022 SWCD Annual Meeting Meal)	\$ 321.71

Chuck Howard moved to accept the claims for January 12, 2022; seconded by David Perkins. Motion carried.

VI. NEXT BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, February 9, 2022 – 5:00 p.m.

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

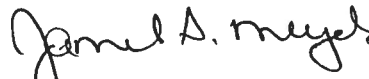
VII. ADJOURNMENT

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

David Perkins moved to adjourn the January 12, 2022 Steuben County SWCD Board meeting. Seconded by Chuck Howard; motion carried.

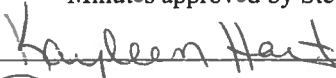
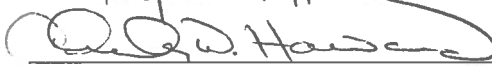
Meeting adjourned by Board Chair Hart at 6:06 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by:



Janel S. Meyer, Administrative Coordinator

Minutes approved by Steuben County SWCD Board

2/9/2022 (Date)