

Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District Board Meeting Wednesday,
April 26, 2023 @ 8:00 am
MEETING HELD IN PERSON and VIRTUALLY via ZOOM
9602 Coldwater Road, Suite 108, Fort Wayne, IN 46825

Supervisors; Present: Chad Shaw, Tyler Steiglitz, Tom Miller, Tom Crowe, Jain Young

Absent:

Associate supervisor: N/A

SWCD Staff: Greg Lake, Courtney Taylor, Mikila Cook, Joelle Neff, Gabe Curtis, Roxy Lake

ISDA: Lindsey Bluhm, Sandra Hoffarth (virtual)

NRCS: Tim Bomba

SJRWI: N/A

MWA: Jackie Buck

Purdue Extension: N/A

County Council: Don Wyss

Others: N/A

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 8:07 AM by Chad Shaw

Approval of Minutes

- March minutes reviewed. Jain Young moved to approve minutes, Tom Miller seconded, all in favor

Approval of Claims and Treasurer's Reports

March: Accounts Payable totaled: \$20,426.27
 Visa Charges: \$12,252.00
 Deposits Totaled: \$44,870
 Accounts Receivable: \$850.00
 First Source Bank: \$353,935.50
 Current Asset Balance: \$335,736.23
 CD: \$1,357.37

Tom Crowe moved to approve claims and Treasurer's report, Jain Young seconded, all in favor

1. Old Business

- Update on IASWCD's 2023 CWI funding request
 - Come out of Senate 3 million less than anticipated. The additional request will be made during this week's session. Dave Heinie is currently working on the ask. Les Zimmerman is leading the efforts to get the increase. The increase is huge for the Districts, the question is being asked if the Districts have the ability to spend and managed the increase. Previous conversations have been had with Rep. Dave Heinie regarding the restructuring of Districts. Ray Chatten, president of the State Soils Board has together a group to examine District structures and where we go from the future. A previous plan was laid out in 2015, which was based on watersheds. All those options were rejected. At that time Districts were rejecting the change. There was a previous bill introduced to

have the Maumee Watershed pilot a program that devoted additional resources to watershed areas. That was also rejected.

- IRA funds are now becoming available and will be trickling down to the district. The potential dollars to Districts are much higher than the CWI monies currently proposed. The majority of this funding is for NRCS staffing, which will bring TA monies into the District. The IRA funding has five large buckets with dozens of programs in each bucket. The programs are large and broadcast over virtually every industry.
- Update on Watershed Improvement Commission legislation
 - Bill 1639- Any area that has an existing basin is excluded from this new bill, meaning that the MRBC area will not be eligible for this funding.
 - Bill 242- Putting a 2-year hiatus on Best Available Data on flood plain mitigation. The language in the bill is being changed to removed the BAD language and refocused on flow, discharge.
- Update on Native Plant Sale
 - 51 kits @ 12 each were sold. Pick up date is May 13th at Bloomingdale Gardens where additional kits will be available.

2. Ongoing Projects/Grants

- CRP Contribution Agreement with NRCS (G. Curtis)
 - Finished DeKalb County. Currently working on Allen County. Currently mapping and prepping the sites. Allen County will have over 400 field visits this year. Adams County does not have any field checks that will need conducted. Joelle ahs reached out the other counties to get the workload for the remainder of the year. Jay County is anticipated to be high this year.
- NACD Contribution Agreement TA #4 (G. Lake)
 - Update on potential replacement for Mike Werling
 - Hired Roxy Lake. An offer was extended to Matt Burkholder but upon consideration he opted to not take the position due to the drive time. The position will be posted on the Allen County website hopefully this week. With the change up with the position we are now able to hire an intern to assist on Tuesdays for Water Route. The SJRWI will be covering half the cost for the intern.
- NRCS Contribution Agreement for Urban / Small Farms (Joelle N.)
 - Update on outreach efforts
 - Completed the last deliverable for the first round of the Urban Grant. Next month there is a program with Washington Elementary. Black Loam Conference is May 6th.
- Soil Carbon Research Project with IUPUI (G. Curtis)
 - Project update
 - Greg reached out to IUPUI and they want to continue the project if an agreement can be reached.
- Development of SWCD Mobile Education Trailer and Displays (Joelle N.)
 - Watershed display design with New Tech Academy update
 - Received an email from the teacher of the students- they have the board finished, some of the art, and have began on the coding of the project. They a projected to complete by May 23.
 - Need for additional displays
 - Ideas from New Tech can be used to create additional displays.

- Display Install
 - Quote from Kimmell fabrication is \$14,800. They are available as soon as possible. They are bringing a detailed quote and CADD drawing today.
 - Exhibit Farm cannot get us in until August. Chad asked us to inquire about the warranty of the displays if a different company installs the displays.
 - Greg is currently planning on taking the trailer to an Amish builder this afternoon.
- District discussed putting a match amount forward for the completion of the additional displays.
- Tyler Steiglitz made a motion to approve up to 30k in district funds to move forward. Jain Young seconded all in favor.
- USGS-GLRI Project (Greg L.)
 - Edge of Field project update
 - Going well, Roxy will begin training.
 - Potential Blue Creek WQ Auto-Sampler deployment
 - Moving forward. Currently looking for an electrician to unstill a sampler then the Blue Creek will begin.
- Auglaize Watershed (Greg L.)
 - Submission of GLSNRP Application
 - Grant was submitted. Partnership with Allen County Surveyor's office. Winners will be announced in July. Only 300k dollars were available. Only 20% can be used for staff allotting one staff member one day a week to work on the project.
 - Auglaize Watershed Group initially formed
 - MRBC commitment to stream flow profile
 - MRBC will be
- Agricultural Nutrient Resource Recovery Project (Greg L.)
 - Proposed next steps
 - Edge of Field project update
 - Year 2 deployment of KDS / Quick Wash System
 - Second location is up and running.
 - H2Ohio Technology Advancement Project (H2Ohio TAP)
 - Waiting for the answer on region 5. Ohio is working with the federal EPA to finalize the application.
 - Fertilizer Production Expansion Project (FPEP)
 - No updates as of now.

3. Other Reports

- IJC Manure Nutrient Management Collaborative
 - Project update / future direction
 - Final report has been submitted to the collaborative committee. Group agreed that this will be the report that will be sent to the IJC. The group will still meet to discuss findings and make suggestions.

4. Partner Reports and Updates

- ISDA: Transect is uploaded to Conservation Link. Currently looking at Aug. 30th for livestock spill meeting.

- NRCS: Office location is rumored to be moving to Dupont office complex. FSA has not received any additional information. Move is proposed to happen before the end of summer. NRCS is still slowly funding EQUP applications, approx. 22 have been approved. They only applications left in Allen County are forest and crop land outside the WLEB. There is a list of eligible practices coming out that will be eligible for IRA funds.
- IASWCD: Jamie Perry, Urban Soil Health Specialist, covering 21 counties. Jamie is working with Joelle on parallel programs. Last year over 132 state wide events were hosted with over 5,000 attendees. Primary focus is the development of Soil Health Working Groups. Funded through NRCS and CWI. Grant runs through 2025.
- SJRWI: First meeting of a steering committee is meeting today to discuss the Cedar Creek Watershed Management plan. Chad agreed to attend on behalf of the District. The District is currently water sampling with every other week being focused in the Cedar Creek.
- MWA: Jackie has been back from maternity leave for 2 weeks. Currently working on Round Table Series, which will identify strengths and weakness in implementing conservation efforts.
- UMWA: Currently working on River Fest in Defiance, OH. Inquired about having Gabe put together a presentation on Aquatic species. The Pontoon will be available for use during River Fest.
- Save Maumee: Just had a successful Earth Day Event. It was a low turn out but 10 years were put on the trails. Having our public meeting on May 8th at the ACPL meeting room B. Joelle Neff will presenting.
- MRBC: No further updates
- Purdue Extension: N/A
- [FW Parks Dept.](#) : Old Fort bank stabilization project is underway underneath the pedestrian bridge. Hop to have this project wrapped up in the next month. Work at Franke will begin in the middle of May. The tree removal has happened. DNR will be stocking Spy Run and Franke on Friday.

5. New Business

- Demonstration Farm Contribution Agreement with NRCS
 - Finalizing the application. It will go out soon.
- Investment of District Funds
 - Trust Indiana information was given to supervisors. Sandra Hoffarth will put us in contact with District Support Staff for more information. Greg Lake spoke with Rod Rinkenberger, they have an account with Community State Bank of Avilla and are averaging 2.8% returns on a checking account. Greg will be getting more information from Rod.
- Internal Controls Training
 - Board and staff watched Internal Controls Training video and reviewed policy and procedures manual.
 - Add to CC Policy: Discretionary purchases to the District (section 6).
- Purchase of small hand-held Pas
 - Tom Crowe made a motion to purchase, Jain Young seconded, all in favor.
- Business Plan update: Deadline for a rough draft is Aug. 1st
- 319 Grant (Cheryl Jarrett)
 - Starting the second year and there is approx. \$180k in coast share available. Currently working with FSA to find producers in the impact area. Huntington

producers have been contacted. Currently being advertised in the Huntington area and in Farmers Exchange. There are urban and ag dollars to be spent. If there are project/practice recommendations to be made those can be submitted to IDEM. This is a three-year grant with one year remaining. The District will be including the information in our upcoming newsletter. The District will share and promote the grant. Tom Crowe suggested adding a 314 Brush Management practice to this grant. Cheryl Jarret will be checking on that possibility. Tom Crowe also suggested reaching out to ACRES Land Trust. Mikila will send Cheryl information on advertising in the Waynedale News. There is a steering committee meeting Thursday, April 26th in Huntington.

6. Other: Suggested to create a volunteer pool for events.
7. Other: A Budget must be presented to the board for the 2024 year.
8. Other: The District will start looking for an additional truck.
9. Upcoming Events:
 - Next Board Meeting –May 24, 2023
 - Meeting Adjourned 10:15 a.m.