

Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District Board Meeting Wednesday, Feb. 22

2022 @ 8:00 am

MEETING HELD IN PERSON

Allen County SWCD 9602 Coldwater Rd. Fort Wayne, IN 46825

Supervisors; Present: Chad Shaw, Jeff Stieglitz, Jain Young, Tom Miller, Tom Crowe

Absent:

Associate supervisor: Don Rekeweg, Dick Crowl

SWCD Staff: Greg Lake, Joelle Neff, Gabe Curtis, Mikila Cook, Courtney Taylor (virtual)

ISDA: Lindsey Blum

NRCS: Tim Bomba

SJRWI: N/A

Purdue Extension: N/A

County Council: N/A

Others: N/A

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 8:05 by Chad Shaw

Approval of Minutes

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

Approval of Claims and Treasurer's Reports

January: Accounts Payable totaled: 26,794.75
 Visa Charges: 1037.54
 Deposits Totaled: 263,150.73
 Accounts Receivable:
 First Source Bank: 344,312.28
 Current Asset Balance: 320,993.43
 CD: 1,357.37

February: Accounts Payable totaled: 28,938.04
 Visa Charges: 1,559.44
 Deposits Totaled: 8,475.00
 Accounts Receivable: 68,701.49
 First Source Bank: 323,849.24
 Current Asset Balance: 368,931.88
 CD: 1,357.37

Tom Crowe moved to approve claims and Treasurer's report for January, Jeff Steiglitz seconded, All in Favor

Tom Crowe moved to approve claims and Treasurer's report for February, Jain Young seconded, All in Favor

Jeff Stieglitz made a motion to dismiss the outstanding debt from Conner Salkheld, Jain Young seconded, all in favor.

1. Old Business

- Review Plans for Annual Meeting
- Annual meeting agenda reviewed and revised.

2. Ongoing Projects/Grants

- CRP Contribution Agreement with NRCS (Courtney T.)
- Recent claim has been filed and paid. There is an additional claim that will be sent in the next couple of weeks.

- NACD Contribution Agreement TA #5 (M. Werling).
 - Currently have 20 applicants for Mike's position. Candidates will be sent to the board for input. The candidate must have experience with conservation farming. It is proposed that interviews be conducted the first or second week of March.
- NRCS Contribution Agreement for Urban / Small Farms (Joelle N.)
 - Update on outreach efforts
 - Held two business management seminars at Extension. The topics included business and marketing, sales, and financial planning. The seminars were well received.
 - Held the first Coffee and... of 2023 which was well attended.
 - Next Coffee and... is scheduled for March 15th and will cover land leasing.
 - Working on getting Bloomingdale Gardens up and running. Will be meeting with Chris Walker in March to plan projects for the Garden. The District has partnered with Easter Seals Arc to provide assistance with the garden.
 - Partnering with Riverview Nursery for a Native Plant sale. Kits will sell for \$50 and the cost to the District is \$36.
 - Invoice for just under \$38,000 has been submitted for the last 6 months of work done under the Urban grant.

- Soil Carbon Research Project with IUPUI (Gabe Curtis)
 - Project update
 - Sampling once a month at this point. With the temperature fluctuations in February sampling was done early. The contract expires at the end of May. There is a report that will be presented at the March 1st meeting with USGS at Roemke Farms.

- Development of SWCD Mobile Education Trailer and Displays (Joelle N.)
 - Watershed display design with New Tech Academy
 - Met with New Tech to view final presentations. Instructions were given on how to proceed with displays. The project has been referred to their Key Club that will be working on the actual design. The display will contain a 'plinko' board that will collect factors that affect watershed as the ball drops. The display will also contain a static wall and digital touchscreen that enables users to zoom in on their watershed to see where their water flows to.
 - Other presentations and ideas may be used on upcoming displays. Chad suggested that we work with One Lucky Guitar or reach out in regards to printing and creating content.
 - Currently working on a proposal to rework the septic displays. Greg met with an Amish cabinet fabrication professional in regards to reworking the septic displays to make them easier to transport.

- USGS-GLRI Project (Greg L.)
 - Edge of Field project update
 - Annual producer meeting is being held on March 1st at Roemke Farms. Current agreement and project is scheduled to end on Sept. 30th of this year. Currently trying to find a way to convey that not enough data has been collected and the project should be extended to gather more data. District staff will be drafting a letter to present to USGS recommending that the project be extended.
 - The Maumee River Basin Commission has been providing funding for stream gages. That project has concluded and the gages are being removed.

Instrumentation will hopefully be moved to Black Creek.

- Potential 2-stage ditch project
 - USGS is still waiting on an additional source of funding for the two-stage ditch.
- Auglaize Watershed (Greg L.)
 - EPA sent back additional revision requests. Revisions were made and the plan has been sent back to EPA.
 - An ask was made to Rod Rinkenberger to help with creation of a committee to bring work in the Auglaize.
- Agricultural Nutrient Resource Recovery Project (Greg L.)
 - Current site is at Kenny Schlatter's. Kenny has sold two of the barns. Gearing up to start moving equipment and begin running. Work will remain at the original site for the first 2 months then the project will move to Ohio.
 - H2Ohio Technology Advancement Project (H2Ohio TAP)
 - Application has been submitted to the Ohio EPA. Anticipating that funding will be approved by early summer.
 - Fertilizer Production Expansion Project (FPEP)
 - No new updates

3. Other Reports

- IJC Manure Nutrient Management Collaborative
 - Put together a report that was submitted with comments to the contractors that are preparing a first of a report. A group met to review the report and comments. Additional remarks were sent to the committee for review.

4. Partner Reports and Updates

- ISDA- Adams County hired a new director, Tyler Schumann. Currently working on a manure spill response training.
- MRBC- Currently a bill going through the state house with strong support referred to the watershed development commission. The governance would be set up that each of the county board of commissioners would nominate a member to represent their county. More information on the bill can be found [here](#). Les Zimmerman with IASWCD has requested that District reach out to Liz Brown in regards to revision of the board working on the bill, and that a voice from soil and water district be added to address soil health and water quality issues that may be affected by this bill.
Rod Rinkerberger said that the MRBC is taking a neutral stance due to the MRBC being included in the state budget.
The additional concern is that taxation will occur to residents that will not necessarily be benefitting from the incorporation of the bill.
- UMWA- Hosting an event with the City of Defiance water treatment plant. Currently working with Defiance college to create programming.
- Save Maumee- Public meeting is set for March 13th.
- SJRWI- Working on getting water sampling details worked out.
- MWA- March roundtable overnight event has been cancelled. Annual Meeting is set for the 20th of July.
- NRCS- Currently working with the current owners to redesign the office. As far as programs in the process of funding the 2023 applications. Currently have about 30 applications submitted for funding. Sixteen have currently been approved. Next Friday is the deadline for forestry and cropland that will put another fifteen applications on the books. 2.3 million dollars has been allotted to equip. More GLRI funds have been requested to clear the backlog of applications that have been submitted for funding. Per Tom Crowe there is a backlog in IRA and they currently trying to speed up the process to get more applications funded. A general CRP sign-up was announced and will begin on Feb. 27th.
- Purdue Extension- N/A

- [FW Parks Dept.-](#)

- Upstream stabilization is underway and planning to move downstream under the pedestrian walkway by headwaters park. Also installing an informal boat launch at the Old Fort. Franke park construction is set to start in April.

5. New Business

- Sponsorship of Going Green for Ag and Soil Health Field Day events

Tom Miller made a motion to contribute \$1,000 to sponsor field day events supported by the District, Jeff Stieglitz seconded, all in favor.

- Host Native Plant Sale

- Demonstration Farm Contribution Agreement with NRCS Upcoming Events:

- An aske was made from NRCS to put together a proposal for an on-farm demonstrations. A meeting was held in January with NRCS staff to discuss expectations. This project is being modeled after a similar project in Wisconsin. Courtney is creating a budget narrative. The grant would essentially hosting numerous field fields covering different topics related to conservation farming. \$300,000 is available in Indiana. Targeting a minimum of five demo farms. The demo farms will show a variety of soil health practices with different levels of incorporation.

6. Additional items:

- Establish an audit committee to look over books for 2022. Tom Miller and Jain Young agreed to serve on the committee and Jeff Stieglitz will review.
- Plat books, board agrees to reduce price to \$200 to move the remainder of the books.
- Current account balance is \$300,000 in checking. It is proposed that money be moved into a CD. Lindsey commented that other districts are using Trust Indiana and that we should look into the program. Greg will be researching options to present to the board.
- CWI funding- Greg and Tom Crowe, Tom Miller went to the state house to meet in regards to the current funding proposal. IASWCD looking for an additional 8 million. Les Zimmerman is requesting that districts reach out legislators to seek support for the increased funding. Greg is making a reach out to Liz Brown and will be trying to organize a meeting to discuss.
- The next Coffee and... Speaker requests that an honorarium be presented in the form a scholarship- board agrees.

Next Board Meeting – March 22

Meeting Adjourned 10:21