

Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 24, 2024 @ 8:00 am
MEETING HELD IN PERSON and VIRTUALLY via ZOOM
9602 Coldwater Road, Suite 108, Fort Wayne, IN 46825

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

Absent:

Associate supervisor: Don Rekeweg

SWCD Staff: Greg Lake, Courtney Taylor, Gabe Curtis, Mikila Cook, Mark Rekeweg, Rhiannon Lake

ISDA: Lindsay Blum, Sandra Hoffarth

NRCS:

SJRWI:

MWA:

Purdue Extension:

County Council:

Others:

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 8:02 AM by Chad Shaw

Approval of Minutes

December minutes reviewed. Tom Miller moved to approve claims and Treasurer's report, Jain Young seconded, all in favor.

Approval of Claims and Treasurer's Reports

December: Accounts Payable totaled: \$49,925.41
Visa Charges: \$792.72
Deposits Totaled: \$85,209.53
Accounts Receivable: \$2,530.06
First Source Bank: \$281,243.76
Current Asset Balance: \$235,567.62
CD: \$1,357.37

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

1. Old Business

- Hiring District Funded Employee
 1. Will be discussed later in project/grant updates.
- Opening of CD
 1. Greg suggests that we use 1st source Bank at a 5.15% rate for an 8 month CD. Tom Miller made a motion to move \$100,000 to a 1st Source Bank CD, Tom Crowe seconded, all in favor.
- 2024 Budget
 1. Budget will be reviewed in grant updates.

- Employee Reviews
 1. Internal controls were revised to reflect the process for employee reviews. The revision states that the board of supervisors will review Director and Director will review employees on an annually basis. Board of Supervisors will be available to address questions and concerns with employees on an as needed basis. Tom Crowe suggests that we also have a questionnaire that employees can fill out regarding resources and job dynamics. Tom Crowe would like to be involved in the review process. Reviews are to be scheduled in the next 30 days.
- 2024 IASWCD Annual Meeting recap
 1. The meeting was successful, there is a review form available at IASWCD. Dues were discussed and it was approved that going forward dues will be set at the proposed variable rate. The Board was able to meet with 3 legislators.
- 2024 Farm Show recap
 1. Attendance was down in the majority of educational sessions. There is a recap meeting in the works. SWCD Staff will be meeting with partners to discuss the path going forward. Staff will address partner participation in booth staffing.
 2. Appleseed B will not be available for Farm Show 2025. It is proposed that IN Farm Bureau uses Appleseed A for the luncheon.
- Sale of additional SWCD equipment
 1. There is a spring auction in Willshire, OH. Previously the District has sold equipment during Annual meeting with a sealed bid approach. The board agrees to advertise the equipment for sale at the Willshire auction. If the equipment does not sell the equipment will be kept for the season and be made available for rent. Minimum sale price is \$40,000.00
- 2024 SWCD Annual Meeting
 1. Board will arrive at 7:00ish to start cooking. Staff is working with INDOT to allow them to take a survey. Reuben Goforth is the keynote speaker, followed by MRBC and the Allen County Surveyor.
- 2. Ongoing Projects/Grants
 - [NACD Contribution Agreement](#) -New application (C. Taylor)
 1. NACD funding some through in the amount of \$40,500.
 2. The funding will only sustain the current employees through the quarter.
 - Demonstration Farm Contribution Agreement with NRCS (C. Taylor)
 1. On Farm Demo funding has \$400,000 plus for 26 months. Other counties in the WLEB will be participating in the demonstration. Currently working with Matt Otto with NRCS on the actual demonstrations. DeKalb and Adams county want to rent land and do demos. However, this agreement is intended to work with producers. More info will be available soon.
 - [NRCS Contribution Agreement for Urban / Small Farms](#) (J. Rosario, E. Lewis)
 - Update on outreach efforts
 - See linked notes

- [Auglaize Watershed](#) (G. Lake)
 - Chris Crabtree is working to set up a meeting with OHIO to address issues with the Auglaize.
- [Development of SWCD Mobile Education Trailer and Displays](#) (J. Neff)
 - Watershed display design with New Tech Academy update
 - Update on municipal and residential sewer display repairs
- ~~[Soil Carbon Research Project with IUPUI](#) (G. Curtis, J. Rosario)~~
 - Project concluded
- [CRP Contribution Agreement with NRCS](#) (G. Curtis & C. Taylor)
- [USGS-GLRI Project](#) (G. Lake)
 - Edge of Field project update
 - 2-stage Ditch project update
- [Agricultural Nutrient Resource Recovery Project](#) (G. Lake)
 - Proposed next steps
 - H2Ohio Technology Advancement Project (H2Ohio TAP)
 - Proposed 2024 summer demo project
 - CIG Classic grant application submission

3. Other Reports

- WLEB Livestock Group
 1. IJC just released report. A meeting is set for February to discuss plans moving forward. Greg will be sending the report to the board for review.
- IJC Manure Nutrient Management Collaborative
 - Project update
 - Partner Reports and Updates
- ISDA
 - Sandra is sending the new link for the BCP, supervisor training. Sandra is accepting ideas for trainings.
 - It is AFR time, Sandra is available to help.
 - Mikila is to submit for Reimbursement of Conference expenses.
 - CD length for investments is 12 months. CDs cannot be compounded.
- MRBC
 - N/A
- UMWA
 - Applied for a grant through the Fish and Wildlife foundation for education.
- SJRWI
 - Hired Jackie Buck as Executive Director
- MWA
 - Waiting for work back on CIG Classic application. Closing OHIO Tap grant agreement. Grant should start shortly.
- NRCS
 - N/A
- Purdue Extension
- [FW Parks Dept.](#)
- CISMA
 - Meeting tomorrow evening at 6:30 @ Fox Island.

4. New Business

- MOU with Allen County CISMA
 1. A Change was added to the MOU requiring Allen County Cisma to assume all responsible for any financial occurrences that take place. Tom Miller made a motion to accept MOU, Jain Young seconded, all in favor.
- Internal Controls revisions and approval
 1. Add to section regarding employee reviews that a minimum of two board members be present during employee reviews either in person or virtually.
- [Pay Dirt](#), Elkhart County event, March 5-7
 1. Board agrees to send the Soil Health Display and cover the night of
 2. Tom miller made a motion to approve the stay, Jain Young seconded. All in favor.
- Designation of Depository
 1. The board will keep the depository as 1st Source Bank.
 2. District is looking into switching the Visa out of Greg's name and into a debit card through 1st source. The District will establish a policy.
- Financial review committee
 1. Tom Crowe, Tom Miller and Jain young will review financials.
- Watershed Development Commission Bill
 1. Introduced 6 years ago and was just approved. The bill is intended to allow Commissioners to have regulatory authority within the watershed. The Commissioners would have the right to establish tax fees within the watershed. The MRBC represents parts of four HUC 8s within the basin. The current bill would allow the Commissioners to establish a development commission. This bill primarily focuses on drainage and flood plains. As the bill is currently written the funding will primarily be used around municipalities, causing outlying landowners to be assed a fee to pay for services that will not be beneficial to them The fees are based per acre. Chad believes that the fees should be based off of volume of water vs. acreage, increasing incentives for developers to use imperviable measures. Greg, Tom Miller, and Rod Rinkenberger are meeting with advisors to discuss the plan going forward.
- Grazing Conference
 1. Gabe requested approval to attend Grazing Conference.
 1. Board supports decision
- Next Board Meeting –February 28, 2024
- Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.