

Allen County Soil and Water Conservation District Board Meeting
Wednesday, Sept. 27, 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, Tom Miller, Jain Young, Tom Crowe, Tyler Stieglitz (Virtual)

Absent:

Associate supervisor: Dick Crowle, Don Rekeweg

SWCD Staff:

ISDA: Lindsey Bloom, Sandra Hoffarth (Virtual)

NRCS: Tim Bomba

SJRWI:

MWA: Jackie Buck

Purdue Extension:

County Council:

Others:

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order at 8:01 AM by Chad Shaw.

Approval of Minutes

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

Approval of Claims and Treasurer's Reports

August: 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

- Review final draft of SWCD Strategic Plan
 - Chad and several staff members met on 9/21/23 to make some final edits on the Business Plan.
 - The draft will be sent out via email for final approval.
- Demonstration Farm Contribution Agreement with NRCS (C. Taylor)
 - This has been approved and is moving forward.
- SBOA Audit Exit Meeting review
 - Everything went well. Only one document was uploaded improperly, and the issue was addressed.

- SWCD support for CISMA project in Allen County
 - Kickoff meeting last week. Seems to be good interest. November 2nd is the next call out meeting at the Botanical Conservatory.
 - SWCD staff is in support of being the fiduciary.
 - Needs to be a discussion on if there is financial compensation for the administration of the financials.
 - Tom Crowe moved to approve being the fiduciary for the CISMA with a contingency to review annually and create an agreement, Jain Young seconded, all in favor.
- Recap of Soil Health Field Day
 - 220 people attended, including staff
 - Seems to be interest in local universities
 - May have new hosts next year

0. Ongoing Projects/Grants

- CRP Contribution Agreement with NRCS (G. Curtis)
 - Gabe got a list of completed fields to Courtney.
 - At a manageable level
- NACD Contribution Agreement -New application (C. Taylor)
 - Mark has been working with a handful of amish growers for soil testing and discussing soil health practices.
- NRCS Contribution Agreement for Urban / Small Farms (Joelle N.)
 - Update on outreach efforts
 - Bloomingdale gardens will have a cover crop demo there on Oct. 18th to meet project deliverables. One of the garden boxes at Bloomingdale garden was planted in cover crops. Some of the boxes also need fixed.
 - In addition, some pontoon tours will be done this fall to meet deliverables.
 - Joelle and Jackie presented at Huntington University.
 - Jesus is putting together a seed saving workshop that will be presented at the library on 4 different dates.
 - The Coffee and series has started again. The next will be on vermacasting.
 - Oct. 12, panel discussion on native plants at Electric Works. An urban farmer Gary, Freya, and Chad will be part of it. Talking about the importance of native plants in urban environments.
 - Oct. 14, Winterizing Garden workshop at Jenny Weiss' farm.
 - Partnering with Human Agriculture Coalition on Oct. 21 to inform the public on available resources
- Soil Carbon Research Project with IUPUI (G. Curtis & C. Taylor)
 - Jesus is starting to take over the project.
 - Project is scheduled to end in October
- Development of SWCD Mobile Education Trailer and Displays (Joelle N.)
 - Watershed display design with New Tech Academy update
 - Joelle visited New Tech academy to check out plinko board. Plan is to complete the end of the fall semester. Students came up with an idea with the ability to change the background of plinko board.
 - Ending and future work with Exhibit Farm

- Future work of creating a water quality display and other displays.
- USGS-GLRI Project (M. Cook)
 - Edge of Field project update
 - Project will only be on the east side of the road as a comparison study. Leaving the weather station on the west side of the road.
 - 2-stage Ditch project update
 - Blue Creek WQ Auto-Sampler deployment
- Auglaize Watershed (J. Neff)
 - MRBC commitment to stream flow profile
 - Evaluate local interest in pursuing streambank stabilization project
 - Did not receive Great Lakes Commission Grant
 - We had a great application but were not ready to go
 - Going to meet with Auglaize group in the next couple of months on the next steps
- Agricultural Nutrient Resource Recovery Project (M. Cook)
 - Proposed next steps
 - H2Ohio Technology Advancement Project (H2Ohio TAP)
 - In the next phase.
 - Waiting on Ohio EPA before next step.

0. Other Reports

- IJC Manure Nutrient Management Collaborative
 - Project update (no report)

0. Partner Reports and Updates

- ISDA
 - Election season
 - Soil Sampling Program for the Mississippi Basin, for those who haven't sampled in the last 4 years.
 - Hosted a moc manure spill in Adams County. Taught how to handle a manure spill.
 - RCPP is moving forward with sign up
- MRBC UMWA,
- Save Maumee
 - Fundraiser was this past weekend. Wasn't as good a turnout as hoped for, so their looking for opportunities to make money.
- SJRWI
 - No one present.
- MWA
 - Jackie working on roundtable report. Hope to have a preliminary release beginning of 2024.
 - Will pull the pontoon out soon. Voted not to use for hire but just on educational basis. Will allow for lower insurance costs.
- NRCS
 - Hoping for a bigger RCPP sign up for 2024.
 - It's a high potential NRCS will work through the government shut down.

- Trying to get an early fall signup for EQIP so there is a double sign up
- No word on office relocation
- Local EQIP ranking needs done today.
- Resource Concern or Priority
 1. Nutrients transported to surface water
 2. Plant productivity and health
 3. Sediment transported to surface water
 4. Compaction
 5. Ephemeral gully erosion
 6. Emissions of greenhouse gasses (GHGs)
 7. Soil organism habitat loss of degradation
 8. Energy efficiency of farming/ranching practices and field operations
 9. Terrestrial habitat for wildlife and invertebrates
 10. Plant structure and composition
- Purdue Extension
 - No one was present.
- [FW Parks Dept.](#)
 - Phase 2 of river front started last week. Working with PUBLIC works to remove low head dam at Lawton Park

0. New Business

- 2024 Farm Show plans
 - First planning meeting on 9/25.
- JA Job Spark -November 7-8, 2023 booth display
 - Could fit under the Urban grant or general funds to pay the \$500 fee
 - Meets the strategies of the business plan
 - Tom Miller moved to spend \$500 on the JA JobSpark event, Tom Crowe seconded, all in favor.
- Annual Conference registration / participation / booth display
 - Recap what our District has accomplished this year
 - \$350 cost for a booth.
 - Send 2 employees
 - Tom Crowe moved to send 2 employees to Annual Conference and have a booth display, Tom Miller seconded, all in favor.
- Potential for additional county employee
 - Missed the deadline.
 - Need to get paperwork into HR as soon as possible. It takes 6 months so it won't be ready until Spring 2024.
- District interest in acquiring cover crop roller crimper
- Election Committee & Appointed Supervisor (Due Nov. 1)
 - Chad Shaw is up for re-election and cannot be on the election committee
 - Tom Crowe is appointed
 - Dick Crowle is willing to help lead the election committee, Tyler Stieglitz will also serve on the committee,

- The election committee also takes care of the appointed supervisor.

0. Upcoming Events

- Next Board Meeting –October 25, 2023
- Meeting adjourned by 9:44.