

Jennings County Soil & Water Conservation District

Board Minutes

Tuesday June 25, 2024

The regular meeting of the Jennings County Soil and Water Conservation District was held at the USDA conference room. Brad Ponsler called the meeting to order at 6:04AM.

Board Members

Brad Ponsler
Dan Megel
Matt Branham

Associate Board Members

Staff

Becca McClellan
Deanna Jackson
Andy Ertel

Partners

Laura Fribley

Reading of the Minutes

Matt Branham made a motion to accept the April & May 2024 minutes as submitted, with a second by Dan Megel. All were in favor.

Financial Report

Dan Megel made a motion to accept the financial report as submitted, with a second by Matt Branham. All were in favor. The Balance Sheet & P&L submitted has been signed off on by all board members. Deanna presented to the board to consider transferring funds from the checking account to the savings for safety reasons. The board agreed to leave roughly a \$30,000 balance in the checking account and the rest would be stored in the savings account. Dan Megel made a motion for Deanna to transfer funds to and from the checking account to the savings account. With a second by Matt Branham. All were in favor.

Correspondence

IASWCD Dues: -The IASWCD annual dues that are due in September have a variable due structure that allows districts to further contribute to the association's mission. If 10% more is contributed on top of the 2024 annual dues a district will receive one complimentary conference registration. The board agreed to add the additional 10% contribution to the cost of the dues to benefit from the complimentary annual conference registration since Becca & Deanna will both be in attendance. Dan Megel made a motion to add the additional 10% with a second by Matt Branham. All were in favor.

Ongoing/Old Business

The Garden: -Becca gave an update on "The Garden" that is located at the Muscatatuck County Park. Becca informed the board that the garden was moving along nicely and that the Avis McGovern, president of the park board has joined the project and has presented ideas to help make it more successful. Avis is reaching out to business to ask for money to help with various items that will be needed along the way. Also, Becca would like to create a short video of the garden to post on social media to spread the word.

3rd Grade Field Day: -Becca updated the board that this year's field day was a success. She also let the board know that Richard Winegarden was retiring as a volunteer. Becca would like to order him a JCSWCD jacket to show appreciation for the many years he served as an educational volunteer and present it to him. Matt Branham made a motion to purchase a jacket. With a second by Dan Megel. All were in favor. Becca asked if she and Deanna could order a few short sleeve t-shirts and a few long sleeve shirts with the SWCD logo on them to wear when working at the pathway or other hands-on field day/events. Matt Branham made a motion to purchase shirts

Fair Recap & Updating Snake Boxes: -Becca recapped the 2024 Fair was a success, she felt like there was a lot of traffic in & out of the conservation building all week. The door prizes had 40-60 sign-ups each night. Becca has been researching snake boxes to update in the conservation building. She will continue to research and reach out to FFA to see about building something if that is needed when plans are finalized.

Watershed: -Andy gave an update on the Watershed. It is in the works to get people ranked to receive money. 5-7 people need to be allocated before another grant can be received.

Pasture Walk: -Andy asked the board to approve providing food to the attendees of the pasture walk. Dan Megel made a motion with a second from Matt Branham. All were in favor.

Purchases: -Supplies for the conservation building and plants for the pathway were purchased prior to the fair. Dan Megel made a motion with a second by Matt Branham to approve those purchases. All were in Favor.

IRS update: -Deanna showed the board the recent notifications that the district has received from the IRS. Deanna let the board know that in the last conversation with the IRS on June 18th, it appeared that the amount owed has been reduced, meaning that the IRS has been reviewing the account but there still are several errors. Deanna also let the board know that she has made an appointment with the IRS in Indianapolis for July 11, she doesn't know if the district will receive any help at that appointment, but the board agreed that it was worth a try.

New Business

County Budget: -Becca informed the board that the county budget is due June 28th. Becca stated that the RICOH contract needed to be reviewed and would ask NRCS if the District could use their copier. Becca will keep the board updated on when the budget hearing will be.

CWI Grant: -Becca informed the board that the CWI grant was due September 5th. Laura Fribley stated that last years grant application needed work and the lack of data needed to improve. Its was also discussed to check with Ripley County about partnering for the grant.

IDEA Fall Conference: *The IDEA Fall Conference is October 23-25, 2024.* Becca asked the board for approval to stay the night before conference started since the travel time is over four hours one way. Dan Megel made a motion for Deanna and Becca to attend the fall conference and go up the day before with a second by Matt Branham. All were in favor.

Monarch Sign at Tripton Park: -Becca let the board know that the sign at the Tripton Park was in need of replacement due to weather. The new cost of the sign would be around \$120.00. The board said to bill the city for the cost since the park is owned by the city, if they were not willing to pay, the district would cover the cost. Matt Branham made a motion with a second by Dan Megal to go ahead with the purchase of a new sign. All were in favor.

Local Working Group: -Jennifer Kipper was not able to attend this meeting but wanted the board to be aware of the upcoming Local Working Group, Jennifer wanted to see if the board wanted to schedule a time during a board meeting, or a separate time altogether, Matt made a suggestion of other possibly ways to conduct the survey, such as at the Pasture Walk or the next SEPAC meeting. No decision was made but will be revisited at the July board meeting.

Progress Reports

Becca McClellan -SWCD

Written Report

Deanna Jackson -SWCD

Written Report

Jennifer Kipper -NRCS District Conservationist

Written Report

Claims

Deanna Jackson prepared a packet including a financial report and April & May board meeting minutes for the board members to review and sign.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dan Megel, with a second from Matt Branham at 7:49 AM. All were in favor.

Minutes taken by: Deanna Jackson

Chairman -Brad Ponsler

Vice Chairman -Dan Megel

Member -Matt Branham

Member -Kevin Morin

Member -Kameron Garlitch