

Jennings County Soil & Water Conservation District  
May 26, 2015  
Board Minutes

The regular meeting of the Jennings County Soil & Water Conservation District was held at the USDA Service Center in North Vernon, Indiana. Brad Ponsler called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**Supervisors**

Brad Ponsler  
Jerry St. John  
Tom Schneider  
Matt Branham  
Dan Megel

**Staff**

Kelly Kent  
Andy Ertel  
**NRCS**  
Jenny Vogel

**Contracted Technician**

**Associate Supervisor**

Bob Steiner

**Reading of the Minutes**

Jerry St. John made a motion to accept the April 2015 minutes as submitted, with a second from Tom Schneider.

**Financial Report**

Dan Megel made a motion to accept the April 29, 2015 – May 26, 2015 financial reports as submitted, with a second from Matt Branham.

**Correspondence**

**Contribution Agreement with Knox Co. for CRP Status Reviews**

The district received notice on May 5<sup>th</sup> for this contribution agreement and a decision needed to be made by May 20<sup>th</sup>. Andy Ertel and Jenny Vogel agreed that the district should take advantage of this opportunity to review 3 CRP Status Reviews and submit for reimbursement for a total of \$252. The board agreed with this decision.

**IDEA Membership**

This was brought to the board in March but at that time there was personnel changing so it was brought back to this meeting. Dan Megel made a motion for the district to pay the dues for the 2 employees (Andy Ertel & Kelly Kent) for 2015.

**LI-Impacting Community**

The date for the next Leadership Institute is August 28 & 29 at Fair Oaks Dairy Farm. Kelly urged the supervisors and staff that were considering attending this training to let he know so that rooms could be reserved as they will fill up pretty quickly.

## **Resolutions**

IASWCD sent out a letter about submitting resolutions to be heard at the 2016 Annual Conference. The deadline to submit is Thursday, September 10, 2015. Brad spoke to the board that if anyone had anything they would like to see submitted please bring that to our board.

## **Agency & Committee Reports**

### **Staff Reports**

#### **Andy Ertel**

Written report submitted.

#### **Essential Services**

Andy reported that he attended his first Essential Service Committee meeting and items addressed were approving a new cell tower at Vernon and a new storage unit facility on the city's west side near the high school.

#### **Jenny Vogel**

Written report submitted. Jenny also advised the board that due to the Avian Flu being found in Indiana that NRCS employees were instructed by Jane Hardesty that no field work should be completed by NRCS employees on farms that house chickens, ducks, etc.

#### **Kelly Kent**

Written report submitted.

#### **Denise Dailey**

No report given.

#### **HHH RC&D**

Bob reported to the district that HHH RC&D just submitted information required by the IRS on Non-Profits and that there are a few things that need addressed. Those items are document retention and conflict of interest statement. Also he stated that since NRCS is no longer supporting the RC&D's that there had been a MOU created with Ripley Co. SWCD for Technical Assistance.

Bob also brought 2 books (frogs & butterflies) that will be distributed at the Extension Homemakers reading program for kindergartners which the district sponsored.

### **Old Business**

#### **Herbicide Applicator/Weed Wiper**

After more discussion it was decided to scratch this idea at this time.

### **Website Developer/Maintenance**

Kelly asked the board to follow her back to the office and take a look at the old website versus what our new website was going to look like. After viewing the board was very happy with their decision to go with Wolf Creative Services for the website development and maintenance. Kelly advised the board that it would be going live on Wednesday.

### **SBOA – Bond Update**

Kelly checked with Whitkemper Insurance who is the districts' current bond issuer about increasing the bond so that it covers on an annual basis versus continuous. Based on the information received at this time, more insurance agencies are quoting rates and coverage for the district and the topic will be discussed in further detail at the next board meeting.

### **Tractor Display/Parade**

Tom stated he had talked to a few of the city councilmen informally about this event and the main concern is with all the road construction in North Vernon currently. He plans to attend their next meeting to see if it will be possible to host this event this year.

### **Strawblower**

Due to Clancy Tool Rental not operating the North Vernon location on a full time basis the board would like to "buy out" the strawblower and take over the rental and maintenance in exchange for the work Mike had done for our building prep, building deposit and rental balance currently due. Kelly will contact Mike on Wednesday and see if he is agreeable to this arrangement. If not, she will ask for a counter offer to take back to the board. Another company had approached the district about bidding on this and the board agreed that the district should keep and maintain the strawblower themselves.

### **New Business**

#### **Fair Display w/sign-up sheet & shirts/hats**

Kelly passed around a sheet for supervisor volunteers to host at the Wildlife Building each night of the fair. Andy asked the board what they would like to see promoted in the district's space, after some discussion it was decided to promote pollinators.

Andy and Kelly asked the board to purchase shirts and hats for staff, supervisors and associate supervisors to promote the district at functions like the fair, field day and conferences. Jerry St. John made a motion to purchase 2 shirts for supervisors and associates along with a hat if they would like one, and to purchase 5 shirts each for Andy and Kelly. A second was made by Tom Schneider. All approved.

#### **Update Strategic Plan**

Andy brought to the boards attention that we have a very nice, well developed strategic plan but we had not looked at it since its inception. Andy and Kelly updated the staff and supervisor changes since

2012 and Andy spoke about the mission and other important items, then asked the board to indulge him with an exercise of looking at what the district has done in regards to Goal #2, which is education. Andy asked the board to think about what educational events/activities and the number of people it touched. After a lively discussion and numbers crunching the board members listed over 20 items with a total of 18k+ people. His suggestion was the board and staff needs to keep this updated so that it can be used as a tool for promoting the district to the public, county council and commissioners.

### **Geo-Textile Fabric**

The Jennings County Public Library was purchasing 100' of geo-textile fabric for a project that the Jennings County Master Gardeners were working on to control runoff from the library parking lot. Kelly asked the board to donate this fabric to the library and in return the library would allow the SWCD to post a sign stating that the district had donated the fabric and that the fabric was available to public for purchase. Dan Megel made a motion that we donate the fabric with a second from Matt Branham.

### **District Signs**

With the donation to the library Andy and Kelly asked the board to consider getting some signs made to promote the district in other areas of the county where we are involved in conservation efforts. The board asked the staff to check on sizes, materials and cost for the signs and bring that information to the next board meeting for discussion.

### **Budget**

The county budget paperwork will be coming to the office soon so Kelly asked the board if they had anything that they would like changed. The board asked Kelly to tweak it and send out the information for the boards review.

### **Soil Probes**

The district needs to replace soil probes to lone out for soil testing. Jerry St. John made a motion to purchase 2 new probes at a cost of \$50.20 each with a total of \$22.15 for shipping. Second was made by Tom Schneider. All approved.

### **Fish**

Tom Schneider shared that if anyone was interested in fish for restocking their pond that Jones Fishery would be at Schneider Feed and Seed this Thursday to take orders.

### **Conservation Plans**

Andy signed plans as needed.

### **Claims**

Claims were submitted to the board and signed.

### **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dan Megel with a second by Tom Schneider at 9:25 pm

Minutes submitted by Kelly Kent, Administrative Assistant

Minutes approved by:

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Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vice-Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Member