

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

- I. CALL TO ORDER - On Tuesday March 19, 2019, at 6:30pm a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the St Joseph County SWCD at the Centre Township Branch of the St Joseph County Public Library, South Bend, IN 46614 was called to order by John Dooms, Chairman.**

PRESENT – SWCD

John Dooms, Chair/Supervisor
Jeremy Cooper, Vice-Chair/Supervisor
Dave Vandewalle, Supervisor
Dave Craft, Supervisor
David Straughn

PRESENT – SWCD/NRCS

Debbie Knepp, NRCS DC
Sarah Longenecker, SWCD CC
Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD AA
Jane Sablich, SWCD EEC

Present - EX-OFFICIO

Jennifer Thum – DSS, ISDA
PRESENT – Public

ABSENT – SWCD

Mike Burkholder, Supervisor
Jim LaFree
Dru Wrasse
Richard Schmidt
Randy Matthys
Chuck Lehman

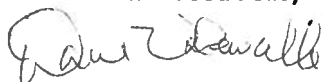
- II. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA – n/a**

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

- a. **Legislative Updates –HB 1266** Prohibits an MS4 from requiring erosion and sediment control measures that are more stringent than IDEM. Provides that a review authority to which a construction plan is submitted must make a preliminary determination whether the construction plan is substantially complete before the end of the fifth working day after the day on which the construction plan is submitted to the review authority. Provides that an individual who reviews and makes a conclusive determination concerning a construction plan submitted to an MS4 community: (1) must be a registered professional civil engineer, registered architect, or registered surveyor; (2) must have successfully completed either of two particular MS4 training programs or a comparable training program; or (3) must be working under the direct supervision of an individual described in (1) or (2). Passed the House, currently in the Senate. Senator Niezgodski is on the committee overseeing this house bill. Working to put plan review at 10 days instead and lessen the certification requirement. Longenecker will put together talking points for supervisors to contact legislators.
- b. **Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates** – n/a
- c. **Minutes: February 19, 2019 board meeting** – Minutes were reviewed and approved as presented by motion (Cooper/Craft).
- d. **Treasurer’s Report: (2/18/2019-3/19/2019)** – The treasurer’s report was reviewed and approved as submitted by motion (Cooper/Vandewalle).
- e. **Approval of Claims (2/18/2019-3/19/2019)** –A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11451-11456 for a total of \$2,258.66 as presented. Motion carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **St. Joseph Co. Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff Reports**
 - i. **Field Office Report** – The field office report was presented to the board & reviewed. (Attached)
 - ii. **NRCS Talking Points** - Knepp went over the NRCS talking points (attached).
- b. **2019 Committee List** – Dooms went over the 2019 sign up list. (attached) If anyone needs to be added or removed from a committee let the office staff know.
- c. **2019 Budget adjustments** – A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to approve raising the following budget items; D303 Annual Meeting legal ad to \$36, D312 Annual Mtg Security Guard to \$140, D312 Annual Mtg Awards to \$270.08, D303 Annual Report printing to \$955.28. Motion passed. It was noted to keep these new amounts in mind when working on the 2020 budget next fall.
- d. **Contractors Breakfast** – Longenecker updated the board that we have roughly 40 participants tomorrow mornings workshop. As discussed in previous meetings, we have sponsors for the breakfast and with the additional vendors we have \$75 towards the hall rental.
- e. **St Joseph River Basin Commission Update** – 2019 Symposium will be at Pokagon State Park on May 10th. Matt Meersmen has been approached by WNIT to do a docuseries on the St Joseph River Watershed like Everglades of the North. Looking for interesting, historical sites, throughout the watershed. Budget has been \$52,487 for two-year period has been doubled for the next two years. Wanting to get water testing and monitoring throughout the watershed. Looking for other projects. If anyone has ideas, contact Longenecker. Jennifer Thum mentioned EPA is focusing on Lake Michigan next year and will be looking for shovel ready projects in the Lake Michigan Watershed. Longenecker and Thum will connect and get more details and ideas together.
- f. **Food Policy** – Dooms went over the policy that was enacted at the April 2016 board meeting. (attached)



V. NEW BUSINESS

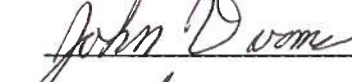
- a. **Schedules/ Upcoming Events / Any Related Claims** - calendars were handed out explaining upcoming special events & holiday schedules on the back of the agenda.
 - i. **Landfill Inspection** – Longenecker asked for supervisor volunteers and those who would like to attend the spring inspection in early to mid-April. Cooper, Craft, & Straughn have volunteered. Longenecker will coordinate a date that works with them and the landfill.
 - ii. **Quarterly Supervisors Meeting** – After some discussion it was decided to hold the next meeting on April 1st at 9am at the Plymouth office.
- b. **Election of Officers** – Through paper ballots John Dooms was voted as Chairman and Jeremy Cooper as Vice Chairman for 2019. Through a unanimous vote, Sandra Hoffarth was appointed as Treasurer for 2019.
- c. **2014-2018 Budget Comparison** – Cooper went over the budget vs actual amounts spent on the cost share portion of our budget from 2014-2018. Because of the CWI grant the last 3 years only a minimal budget amount has been used. After some discussion the board would like the staff to provide questions that they need to look at to use the money for cost share this year.
- d. **2019 Annual Report Style** – tabled to the supervisors meeting

VI. PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR – Dooms read a thank you card from Gene & Linda Matzat. Jennifer Thum showed an Anti-Harassment video and went over some updates; Leadership Institute Communication will be offered this fall, CWI 2020 will be announced soon, NE region meeting is in the plans for this fall after rafting is done, technical training workshop will be held on June 27th, ISDA division of soil is looking for a new director, and employee evaluations need to be completed if not already done.


VII. ADJOURNMENT – The board meeting adjourned at 7:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Hoffarth
Administrative Assistant
St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District
2903 Gary Drive, Plymouth, IN 46563
Email: Sandra.hoffarth@in.nacdnet.net
www.stjosephswcd.org

Approved by:



Supervisor



Supervisor



Supervisor

Field Office Report

February 18 through March 15, 2019

General/Miscellaneous

Office Work

- Legislative Notebook
- Office Clean-up
- OSHA checklist

Field Work

- Look at pasture to decide on any renovation needed
- Meet with new producer who wants to farm organic, interested in Hoop House
- Look at ditch erosion and flooding issues with producer
- Conservation planning visit to 15 ac site – develop wildlife plan

EQIP- Environmental Quality Incentive Program

Office Work

- Planning and ranking of 9 applications
- Work with contractor on bid for structure
- Discussed wildlife monitoring with landowner and provided documentation form
- Sent information on 2 pollinator sites to the Farm Bill Biologist
- Process payment for Pollinator Habitat

Field Work

- GPS pond for design of Filter Strip practice
- Field verify pollinator habitat planting

WRE- Wetland Reserve Program

Office Work

- Landowner contacts for Ownership monitoring (2)
- Develop restoration contract for 43-acre site
- Work with landowner to get deed and other documents
- Monitoring activities - 6

Field Work

Wetland Determinations / Highly Erodible Land Determinations

Office Work

- Process 5 wetland determination requests
- Process 2 Highly Erodible Land determination requests

Field Work

-

Rule 5/ Rule 13

Office Work

- 3 Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan Reviews (SWPPP)

Education

Age	Total # Programs/Hours in Program	Total # People
Youth Education	20	560
Adult Education	1	13

- Met with Purdue Extension 4-H

Meetings & Trainings

Staff Meetings – 4 MSP NAI Region 4 Meeting County Department Head Meeting Youth County Leadership Meeting NRCS Area Meeting	Elkhart Soil Health Workshop PSS Teleconference PSS 1-on-1 training for Whitley County St. Joseph River Basin Commission Meeting Michiana Stormwater Partnership Meeting
Webinars	Dates
Tips Too Plant Green (2 different webinars) No-till, Cover crops with ruts in the field, Reduced Nitrogen with Cover Crops Best Spring Cover Crops Conservation Desktop - 2	Office Closed – Feb 18

Comments from the Community

DC Talking Points

March 2019

WHAT'S NEW IN 2018 FARM BILL

Conservation Overview

- Strengthens and expands support to producers who address significant natural resource concerns through adoption of conservation practices and activities.
- Ensures that voluntary conservation programs balance farm productivity with conservation benefits so the most fertile and productive lands remain in production while land retired for conservation purposes favors more environmentally sensitive acres.
- Supports conservation programs that ensure cost-effective financial assistance for improved soil health, water and air quality, and other natural resource benefits.
- Encourages entry into farming through increased access to land and capital for young, beginning, veteran, and underrepresented farmers.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

- Authorizes assistance to partners who pursue 'Buy-Protect-Sell' transactions.
- Requires a conservation plan for highly erodible land that will be protected by an agricultural land easement.
- Increases flexibility for partners to meet cost-share matching requirements.
- Identifies water quality as a program purpose for enrollment of wetland reserve easements.
- Expands wetland types eligible for restoration and management under wetland reserve easements.

Conservation Stewardship Program

- Increases payment rates for adoption of cover crop rotations and advanced grazing management activities.
- Authorizes contract extensions to facilitate renewal under new program authority.
- Transforms funding mechanism for program contracts, authorizing specified annual funding levels.
- Provides specific support for organic and transitioning to organic production activities.
- Includes special grassland conservation initiative for certain producers who have maintained cropland base acres.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Adds potential resource concerns related to beneficial cost-effective operation changes.
- Raises cap for organic producers to \$140,000 over six years.
- New enrollment option through incentive contracts to address priority resource concerns.
- Requires advance payment option be offered to historically underserved producers.
- Authorizes direct program assistance to irrigation districts, including acequias and other entities, for purposes of improving water use efficiencies.

Healthy Forests Reserve Program

- Expands enrollment options for Indian tribes.

Regional Conservation Partnership Program

- Simplifies funding authorities for program implementation.



- Authorizes Regional Conservation Partnership Program contracts rather than requiring enrollment through other program authorities.
- Expands flexibility for alternative funding arrangements with partners.
- Expands availability of watershed program authorities to projects outside critical conservation areas.

STATE HOUSE BILL 1165 AND MORE

State House Bill 1165 proposed by Pat Bauer would add a state farmland protection program with oversight by ISDA. The program would set up an avenue for state funding to be used alone or in conjunction with federal funding for farmland easements. If there are questions related to NRCS easement programs in relation to this Bill, please direct them to Jerry Roach or Beth Clarizia. The Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts is tracking other bills, including HB 1491 which revises the statement of the purposes of the Clean Water Indiana program. It provides that the purpose of the program is to provide financial assistance to implement conservation practices in accordance with the natural resource priorities of the state soil conservation board. Watch for additional information about state bills of interest to the conservation partnership in IASWCD's Conservation Insight Newsletter.

VEHICLE MANAGEMENT TOOL (VMT)

The VMT is a web-based tool is now in operation in Indiana (we are serving as a pilot state). This tool is used to reserve vehicles and helps track use, mileage and maintenance through the vehicle log process. All partnership staff and service center employees and volunteers are expected to use it for scheduling vehicle use. The tool is accessed using an e-auth account. Staff who missed the instructional webinar will be sent a link to view the recorded version as soon as it is available. Also, a VMT User Guide will also soon be available. The VMT is simply a reservation and tracking tool, it does not replace any established vehicle use policy.

INDIANA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP WORKING AGREEMENT

The Indiana Conservation Partnership working agreement expired on December 31st. The new MOU has been distributed to all SWCDs for review and signature. The new MOU is requested to be returned to the NRCS State Office by March 15, 2019. After March 15 a copy will be returned to each SWCD with a completed signature page from all ICP Leaders. In the meantime, **the Indiana Conservation Partnership will continue working together at the field office level with no changes to how we operate.**



ST. JOSEPH COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
COMMITTEE LIST 2019

ANNUAL MEETING & AWARDS COMMITTEE:

Plans and oversees the Annual Meeting

Staff Advisor:

Administrative Assistant

2019 Committee Members:

Chairman: Dave Vandewalle

John Dooms, Dave Craft

Audit Committee

John Dooms & Jeremy Cooper

EDUCATION PLANNING:

Develops youth programs and water testing programs, displays for Science Alive and other public festivals, and assist other committees on their educational projects

Staff Advisor:

Environmental Education Coordinator & County Conservationist

2019 Committee Members:

Chairman: Jeremy Cooper

Dru Wrasse, Mike Burkholder, Richard Schmidt, Chuck Lehman, Dave Straughn

ELECTION:

Selects new Supervisor candidates, oversees election at Annual Meeting/election of new Chair/Vice Chair

Staff Advisor:

Administrative Assistant

2019 Committee Members:

Chairman: Jeremy Cooper

Dave Craft, Mike Burkholder

GRANTS, MARKETING & SPECIAL INITIATIVES:

In charge of researching, writing & administrative paperwork for available grants. Also assist other committees to carry out projects to spend the grant monies & memorial funds. Undertakes activities such as developing marketing strategies, brainstorming/developing new fundraising ideas and programs for the District, emphasis on legislative - Develops activities related to local, state, and national Legislators, including IASWCD Breakfast and developing/distributing Legislative Notebooks.

Staff Advisor:

Administrative Assistant, Environmental Education Coordinator

2019 Committee Members:

Chairman: Jeremy Cooper

Mike Burkholder, David Straughn, Chuck Lehman

RURAL CONSERVATION:

Develops and implements rural conservation projects, including education and fundraising

Staff Advisors:

County Conservationist & NRCS DC

2019 Committee Members:

Chairman: Dave Vandewalle

John Dooms, Richard Schmidt, Mike Burkholder, Randy Ehninger

URBAN CONSERVATION:

Develops and implements urban conservation projects, including education and fundraising

Staff Advisor:

County Conservationist

2019 Committee Members:

Chairman: Jeremy Cooper

David Straughn, Chuck Lehman

St. Joseph County SWCD District Policy: Purchasing Meals for Activities

1. The District has the discretion to purchase meals for activities ONLY in instances where the activity/activities further the mission of the SWCD.
2. The District will adhere to statutory and prescribed procedures for the receipt and disbursement of funds.
3. District funds cannot be used for personal expenditures. So, for example, two employees cannot use District funds to pay for their personal lunches using the explanation of “discussing district business.”
4. Meal costs, and what activities are eligible for the SWCD to purchase meals, will be approved in advance. Eligible activities might include the District’s Annual Meeting, field days, workshops and other similar events geared to the general public. When approved, the District will clearly state in the minutes that the activity furthers the mission of the District, and state how it does so.
5. If feasible, the District may charge a registration fee to events, and/or utilize sponsors/donations (obtained without exactions or persuasions) to help defray meal costs.
6. Expenditures will be reasonable.
7. If the District provides meals at no cost to certain participants, or if different rates are charged to different classes of participants, the District will develop a written policy that includes the methodology used to determine which participants are provided meals at no cost, or are charged different rates for meals.
8. This policy will be reviewed annually during the January SWCD board meeting.

This policy was adopted on April 19th, 2016 by the St. Joseph County SWCD.

J