

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** - On Tuesday December 18, 2018, at 11:28 am a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the St Joseph County SWCD at the Logan's Roadhouse, 1320 E Ireland Rd, South Bend, IN 46614 was called to order by John Dooms, Chairman.

PRESENT – SWCD

John Dooms, Chair/Supervisor
Jeremy Cooper, Vice-Chair/Supervisor
Mike Burkholder, Supervisor
Dave Vandewalle, Supervisor
Dave Craft, Supervisor
David Straughn
Chuck Lehman

PRESENT – SWCD/NRCS

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

Present - EX-OFFICIO

PRESENT – Public
n/a

ABSENT – SWCD

Jim LaFree
Dru Wrasse
Richard Schmidt
Randy Matthys

- II. **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA** – add un old business a. iii. NRCS Civil Rights

III. **REGULAR BUSINESS**

- a. **Legislative Updates** – n/a
- b. **Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates** – n/a
- c. **Minutes: November 20, 2018 board meeting** – Minutes were reviewed and approved as presented by motion (Vandewalle/Craft).
- d. **Treasurer's Report: (11/20/2018-12/17/2018)** – The treasurer's report was reviewed and approved as submitted by motion (Vandewalle/Burkholder).
- e. **Approval of Claims (11/20/2018-12/17/2018)** –A motion (Burkholder/Vandewalle) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11401-11410 for a total of \$5,762.73 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 informed the board that Friday December 21 is the FY19 EQIP application deadline. She also informed the board of the potential government shutdown and explained how that would affect the office staff. (attached)
 - iii. **NRCS Civil Rights** – Knepp went over the civil rights checklist and had all the board members sign.
- b. **Committee Reports**
 - i. **Annual Meeting** – Dooms informed the board that we don't have a quorum for the annual meeting. A discussion was made for possible alternative dates. Hoffarth will contact the hall and see when it's available and get with the board ASAP.
- c. **CW12016 Raingarden & Conservation** – A motion (Cooper/Burkholder) was made to release the funds in the amount of \$13,313 to cover 2 demo raingardens a residential raingarden and 2 cover crop applications. Motion passed.
- d. **2019 Budget** – Dooms went over the proposed budget. With no objections from the board, a motion (Vandewalle, Craft) was made to approve the budget. Motion passed.
- e. **2019 Annual Plan of Work** – Dooms mentioned the annual report was moved from November to August and under the Administrative Assistant a task was added in November to update the legislators contact information if it's an election year. A motion (Vandewalle/Cooper) was made to approve the 2019 Annual Plan of Work. Motion passed.

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.
- b. **Education Supplies** – Sablich asked the board to create a vermicompost which she can take for different programs. A motion (Cooper/Craft) was made to release up to \$50 to create a vermicompost. Motion passed.

- VI. **PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR** – Dooms brought up the resolutions that will be voted on at the IASWCD Annual Conference/Meeting. The board told Dooms, who is the delegate, to attend the discussion group and vote at his discretion. Sablich and Longenecker discussed the contractors breakfast which will be held in March. A motion (Cooper/Burkholder) was made to release up to \$750 for the event hall. Motion passed. Dooms presented the staff with Christmas cards.

- VII. **ADJOURNMENT** – The board meeting adjourned at 12:08 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 November 19 – December 14

General/Miscellaneous

Office Work

- Review RMS Conservation Plan for Soil Conservationist
- Newsletter preparation
- Annual Report
- Meet with new Extension Agent

Field Work

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EQIP- Environmental Quality Incentive Program

Office Work

- Processed 11 new incoming applications
- Process payments – 3 Invasive Species, 1 Wildlife Habitat monitoring, 2 cover crop, 1 Seasonal High Tunnel
- Conservation Planning on applications
- Contract cancellation due to illness
- 24 Contract reviews

Field Work

- Practice inspection – 3 cover crop contracts (multiple farms), Invasive Species Control, Seasonal High Tunnel
- Field visit (3 tracts) for conservation planning for new application

WRP- Wetland Reserve Program

Office Work

- Pollinator planting – maps and information to contractor, process payment for 12-acre planting
- Modify contract to extend expiration date

Field Work

CSP- Conservation Stewardship Program

Office Work

- Process payments for 12 contracts
- Process 3 modifications, and non-compliance agreements
- Process 12 contract reviews

Field Work

- Field inspection of 2 CSP participants

CRP-Conservation Reserve Program

Office Work

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Field Work

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CWI- Clean Water Indiana

Office Work

- Practice completion and payment documentation

Field Work

- Demo Rain Garden Field Check x3

Wetland Determinations

Office Work

- 2 Highly Erodible Determinations

Field Work

- Field review for HEL appeal

Rule 5/ Rule 13

Office Work

- 1 SWPPP Review
- Site visit to investigate complaint per IDEM's request

Education

Age	Total # Programs	Total # People
Youth Education	1	47
Adult Education		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Met with St. Mary's to plan for a composting workshop• Visited Locations for contractor's breakfast• Sent out education newsletter to teachers		

Meetings & Trainings

Staff Meetings – 4
St. Joseph County Department Head Meeting
NAI Region 4 Meeting
MSP
SBOA Financial Training
IDEA Meeting
Soil Health Team
St. Joseph River Basin Commission
Conservation Desktop Training

Webinars

Vehicle Maintenance Tool
Steve Groff Cover Crop – 2
Soil Health Assessments

Dates

Office Closed – Nov 22, 23
Federal Holiday – Dec 5

Comments from the Community

DC Talking Points

December 2018

Potential Shutdown

FARM BILL

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Application Deadline Indiana's agricultural producers who want to improve natural resources and address resource concerns on their land are encouraged to sign up EQIP by December 21, 2018. Included in this sign up are several special initiatives including: National Organic Initiative, National On-Farm Energy Initiative: Monarch Butterfly Habitat Development Initiative, Working Lands for Wildlife Initiative 2.0, Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Resource Conservation Partnership Program projects. In addition, EQIP offers financial assistance for payment of practices and conservation activities involving the development of plans appropriate for the eligible land. The conservation practice associated with plan development is known as a Conservation Activity Plan (CAP).

Participants in EQIP must meet eligibility requirements. NRCS staff will work with producers to determine eligibility and complete necessary worksheets and rankings in order for the applicant to compete for funding. Applicants must meet EQIP participant eligibility requirements by February 1, 2019 for an application submitted by December 21, 2018.

CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT AND RANKING TOOL (CART)

Development of the new ranking tool for NRCS programs has been delayed due to uncertainties of the Farm Bill and to allow states to roll out EQIP in fiscal year 2019 without further delay.

NRCS STAFFING

NRCS headquarters is currently working with the Department on our FY19 hiring strategy. We anticipate moving forward with vacancies in FY19 but timing will depend on the federal budget and Farm Bill decisions.

VEHICLE MANAGEMENT TOOL (VMT)

The VMT is being launched in Indiana beginning December 5. The final webinar trainings will occur on December 5. The VMT is a web-based tool that will now be used to reserve vehicles and serve as our tracking system for mileage and other items captured through the vehicle log process. While the VMT goes "live" December 5, vehicle logs are still required to be maintained through December 31. Indiana is a pilot state for this new tool.

CONSERVATION DESKTOP

NRCS continues to move forward with development of the agency's web-based planning and contracting software, Conservation Desktop. Conservation Desktop integrates a number of independent systems such as Conservation Client Gateway, Document Management System (DMS), as well as Customer Service Toolkit, and ProTracts.

Conservation Desktop is now available with some functionality. Additional releases of Conservation Desktop will be coming in the winter and spring of FY19 to introduce additional functionality in the system. Indiana NRCS will be providing initial face to face training on Conservation Desktop this November and December. Additional training opportunities will be provided in calendar year 2019 as more functionality is released.

INDIANA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP WORKING AGREEMENTS

The current partnership agreements expire on December 31, 2018. The Indiana Conservation Partnership have reviewed and finalized the new agreement. SWCDs will receive instructions for signing the new agreement by the end of November.

