



**St. Joseph County
Soil & Water Conservation District**

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MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 18, 2015

- I. CALL TO ORDER - On Tuesday August 18, 2015, at 7:07 pm 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 was called to order by John Dooms, Chairman.**

PRESENT – SWCD/NRCS

John Dooms, Chair/Supervisor
Jeremy Cooper, Vice-Chair/Supervisor
Stacey Silvers, Supervisor
Sandra Hoffarth, SWCD Admin Assistant
Rick Glassman, SWCD EEC
Sarah Harville, SWCD CC

PRESENT – SWCD

Dale Stoner
Dave Vandewalle
Carole Riewe
Richard Schmidt
Jim LaFree

ABSENT – SWCD

Arlene Schuchman, Supervisor
Mike Burkholder, Supervisor
Debbie Knepp, NRCS DC
James Rodriguez, NRCS
Chuck Lehman

ABSENT – SWCD

Randy Matthys
Dave Craft
Paul Williams, III
Joe Long
Dru Wrasse
Jan Ivkovich

- II. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA - n/a**

III. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Legislative Updates – N/A

B. Conservation Moment – Harville explained CRP and what all Harville & Hoffarth are doing for the NRCS agreement.

B. Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates – Hoffarth reminded the board that IASWCD is asking if any district has any resolutions they would like to submit for the 2016 Annual Business Meeting. Deadline for submission is Sept 10. Hoffarth has forms and previous resolutions for those who would like to know more.

C. Minutes: July 21, 2015 board meeting– The minutes were reviewed and approved as submitted.

D. Treasurer’s Report: (7/22/15-8/18/15) – The treasurer’s reports were both reviewed and approved as submitted.

E. Approval of Claims (7/22/15-8/18/15) - A recommendation (Silvers, Schmidt) & motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11024-11029 for a total of \$1638.34 as presented. Both carried.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. St. Joseph Co. Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff Written Reports – The field office report was presented to the board (attached) and reviewed. Hoffarth went over the NRCS talking points (attached).

B. Committee Reports

a. Grants –

i. CWI - Cooper let the board know of 2 CWI grants that St. Joseph County would be participating in. The first one Marshall County will be taking the lead on is with rain gardens and the second St. Joseph will take the lead which is identical to one we applied for in 2013. Recommendation from the grant committee (seconded by Schmidt) is to move forward on both of these grants. Motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made. Both carried.

ii. Prevented Planting Cover Crops Cost Share Program – Cooper let the board know we only had 1 application for this cost share program. The applicant is still in process since they were on vacation. Harville let the board know that there were 4 or 5 others who contacted the office but didn’t have prevented planting needs and was transferred to NRCS to apply for cover crops through them.

b. Forestry

i. Tree Sales – After discussion on previous sales with declining sales and looking into other revenue options it is the recommendation of the Forestry Committee (seconded by Riewe) to not have a tree sale in 2016 and to revisit the idea of a sale next year. Motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made. Both carried.

ii. Forestry Field Day – Harville informed the board that the Forestry Field Day will be on Saturday October 17, 2015 from 9am-Noon at Bob Feitz Farm located at 67998 Linden Rd, Lakeville, IN 46536. Topics to include: Invasive Species Identification, Forest Management/Tree Thinning, Pollinators/Pollinator Habitat, Responsible Lawn Care (Red Hen Turf Farm), Managing Forest for Profit, Wetland Management. More information to come next month.

c. Annual Meeting – Entertainment – Dooms informed the board that after looking at several options it is the recommendation of the committee to hire Fascinating Rhythm for one hour at \$300.

- C. **Board Member Recruitment** – Glassman informed the board that we are in need of new board members and would like to do an official board recruitment meeting. This would include sending out personal invitations, more elaborate refreshments and discussions on what the SWCD is and what we do. Possible date would be our February board meeting. He is asking all board members to talk to friends, neighbors, vendors, etc. who would be good candidates for our board. Please start thinking of people and talking to them, then give their contact information to the staff.
- D. **Annual Report Style** – Hoffarth gave the board the option of either a calendar style like 2014 or to go to a newsletter style like in 2010. It was recommended (Vandewalle, Riewe) to go to a newsletter style that can be mailed/e-mailed this year. A motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made. Both carried.
- E. **Locally Lead Meeting** – Glassman informed the board the 2015 locally lead meeting will be on September 15th at 6pm (an hour before the board meeting). This meeting helps NRCS decide the local resource concerns/needs to help make the ranking system for programs such as EQIP.
- F. **Christmas Party** – Recommendation (LaFree, Vandewalle) was made to have a Christmas Party on December 11th.
- G. **Designation of Depository** – Hoffarth let the board know that it has come to our attention we designate each year what bank/institute we want to use. This will be added to the January APW. A recommendation (Vandewalle, LaFree) and motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made to stay with PNC bank. Both carried.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

- A. **Schedules/ Upcoming Events / Any Related Claims** - calendars were handed out explaining upcoming special events & holiday schedules.
 - a. **IDEA Fall Conference** – Hoffarth would like to attend this conference October 5-7 in Evansville, IN. Registration is \$125 which can later be added to the reimbursement form. A recommendation (Silvers, Vandewalle) and motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made to cover the cost of registration, hotel and per diem (if needed). Both carried.
- B. **NRCS Admin Services Contract Agreement** – Glassman informed the board of a new NRCS contract agreement for an administrative position that will elevate paperwork from NRCS and allow the DC’s more time in the field putting conservation on the ground. This contract would be for Hoffarth and could include counties other than St. Joseph. Details on time and total costs will be covered later. A recommendation (Schmidt, LaFree) and motion (Cooper, Silvers) was made to move forward with a proposal for this agreement. Both carried.
- C. **State Board of Accounts – Audit Fee Increase** – Glassman let the board know that the fees for an audit have increased from \$45/day to \$175/day. Estimates for average audits run between \$1,200 and \$1,500. This will be added to the 2016 budget.
- D. **Website** – Hoffarth informed the board that our current website is outdated with no hope of updating. Most importantly our website doesn’t have the ability to be mobile ready and the site builder has stated they will not ever be able to do this. This means when someone does an internet search our website will not appear in the search list. It was recommended by the board to get 3 quotes for updating our site. www.kosciuskoswcd.org has recently updated their website for about \$3,000. Hoffarth will work on getting quotes and report back.

VI. **PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR** – Hoffarth included a letter from the IASWCD President (see attached).

VII. **ADJOURNMENT** – The board meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Hoffarth

Administrative Assistant

St. Joseph County Soil & Water Conservation District

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Approved by:

Supervisor

Supervisor

Supervisor

Cover crop establishment is typically limited by late harvest of the crop, which makes cover crop options limited due to seeding dates.

Prevented planting and damaged fields can be seeded with a more-diverse cover crop mix in August/September using better methods (such as drilling) and they will have a longer window with ideal growing conditions to achieve adequate growth to address resource concerns.

Promoting cover crops now will allow farmers to have success at their establishment, help them alleviate the damages to their fields caused by the excess rain, and will start them on the path to full implementation of a complete conservation system to address water quality issues later on.

www.iaswcd.org



**Indiana Association of
Soil and Water
Conservation Districts**

Protecting and enhancing Indiana's soil
and water resources for all Hoosiers



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August 10, 2015

To: All SWCD Supervisors and Staff

Greetings to all of my fellow conservationists:

It seems like yesterday that I updated you in April with all of the happenings with your state association. The intense rainfall events we have had in our state this year have flooded many fields. I am sure many of your districts along with my calendar have been flooded with so many exciting events since spring and what the rest of the summer brings to us.

Here are just a few of the highlights what we have done. The Long session at the Statehouse ended with a full \$1million general fund appropriation for the Clean Water Indiana program along with the dedicated funding from the Cigarette Tax. Thanks to all who personally contacted your Legislators in getting this hard earned effort through! It is our goal now to increase funding especially since the cigarette tax dollars are decreasing. Please keep in contact with your State Legislators and let them know the work and benefits that you are providing for your district.

IASWCD and our great partner, NRCS, have entered into a contribution agreement for CRP status review work. Contracts with over 40 Districts have been implemented to complete the work, providing over \$180,000 in funding to those Districts. In addition, IASWCD and NRCS have entered into a new contribution agreement for program support on agricultural programs. Information has been provided to all SWCD staff. Proposals to do the work are due to the IASWCD office by August 28th.

All District Staff and Supervisors received a letter this summer notifying them of the intention of the ICP leaders to visit with each District by the end of 2016. The first visit began in Hamilton County and others are now being scheduled. This is a major commitment by the ICP leaders and I want to personally commend them for their efforts.

Please mark your calendars for next year's 2016 Annual Conference while work is already well underway for the event. The conference will again be a two day event held on January 14th and 15th packed with many in depth sessions and best of all networking with your peers. Registration materials will be available by the end of September.

THE IASWCD MISSION *is to enable the conservation of natural resources of Indiana.*

Continued...

Ray McCormick, your NACD Delegate, attended the NACD Summer Board Meeting this summer that was held in Spokane, WA. It is always good to hear the report from our NACD Delegate how Indiana is looked upon as THE LEADER in Conservation in the nation! It's very important that we are leaders in conservation not only on a local level but on a national level. It just shows that the grassroots work that you all do is being recognized.

As a nationally recognized leader in conservation, Ray McCormick, who is also the IASWCD S-SW Region Director, hosted the unveiling of the NRCS new Client Gateway program. NRCS Chief, Jason Weller, was there to see sites in Knox County that promote soil health.

As I mentioned to you earlier, my August calendar is flooded with many events that we have. With all of the Conservation Cropping System Initiative (CCSI) workshops and other events that I will be at, the ones that I am looking forward to the most are at our Indiana State Fair. The excitement of the Year of the Farmer theme makes this year's fair even more special. I look forward to attending the River Friendly Farmer awards ceremony, but I am really looking forward to helping at the Pathway to Water Quality exhibit which has changes that will be fun and educating for attendees. Thanks to all who will be there to help out for the 17 day event. I am sure it is very rewarding to you as it is to me as we volunteer for something we have a passion for!

Thanks for all of your hard work and dedication in what you all do. I hope to see you sometime before I get the combine out this fall. And please call or write me or your Regional Director if you have any questions or issues (http://iaswcd.org/?page_id=72).

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mike Starkey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "S".

Mike Starkey
President, IASWCD