

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** - On Tuesday May 21, 2019, at 7:08pm 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
Dave Vandewalle, Supervisor
Mike Burkholder, Supervisor
Dave Craft, Supervisor

PRESENT – SWCD/NRCS

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

Present - EX-OFFICIO

Rick Kennedy – Purdue Ag
Extension

PRESENT – Public

ABSENT – SWCD

Jeremy Cooper, Vice-Chair/Supervisor
David Straughn
Jim LaFree
Dru Wrasse
Richard Schmidt
Randy Matthys
Chuck Lehman

- II. **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA** – Old Business Item d. 2019 Annual Report Style

III. **REGULAR BUSINESS**

- a. **Legislative Updates** – n/a
- b. **Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates** – n/a
- c. **Minutes: April 16, 2019 board meeting** – Minutes were reviewed and approved correction under Education Supplies, canopy tent up to \$130.
- d. **Treasurer’s Report: (4/17/2019-5/21/2019)** – The treasurer’s report was reviewed and approved as submitted by motion (Vandewalle/Craft). Motion carried.
- e. **Approval of Claims (4/17/2019-5/21/2019)** –A motion (Craft/Vandewalle) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11464-11469 for a total of \$1,213.63 as presented. Motion carried.

IV. **OLD BUSINESS**

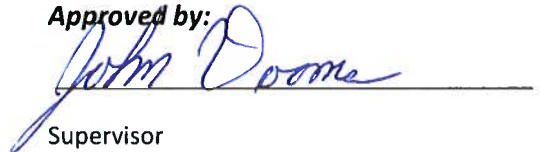
- a. **St. Joseph Co. Soil & Water Conservation Partnership Staff Reports**
 - i. **Field Office Report** – The field office report was presented to the board & reviewed. (Attached)
 - ii. **NRCS Talking Points** – Knepp presented the NRCS talking points to the board. (attached).
- b. **Capital Asset Policy** – Hoffarth presented a capital asset policy put together by a template from ISDA and adjusted to fit our district. (attached) A motion (Vandewalle/Craft) was made to accept the policy as written. Motion carried.
- c. **District Grant/2019 CWI Grant** – Longenecker informed the board that we have a couple applications in and several others coming in soon from producers. A motion (Burkholder/Craft) was made to approve the applications for the CWI grant; 96.5 acres of no-till and 2.8 acres of pollinator habitat for a maximum for both practices of \$3,547.50; and for the district grant; .4 acres of hedgerows, 1.9 acres to establish cool season grasses, and raingardens to be established at Montessori Academy for a maximum for all 3 practices of \$3,759.91. Motion carried.
- d. **2019 Annual Report Style** – Hoffarth found out from the post office that we can mail a newspaper style report with our permit. The quote for a newspaper style report would be 12 pages, 8 pages in full color, 4 pages in black & white; 3,000 Printed, Print Quote \$1,400.00; 1,364 are snail mailed, Postage Quote \$539.26; 1,150 inserted in the Farmers Exchange; 486 extras can then be taken to local businesses; Normal print quantity for the annual reports is 2,750; 2018 printing cost \$955.28, postage \$196.73. With our bulk mail permit, we get the non-profit rate for postage. With this we are unable to have advertisements. Discussion was held on options for being able to have advertisements which could offset the increased costs. Hoffarth will investigate how we can do this and report to the board in June. Discussion was also held on a magazine style which was discussed at the supervisors meeting. Hoffarth will get a quote for printing and mailing this style and will bring to the board in June.

V. **NEW BUSINESS**

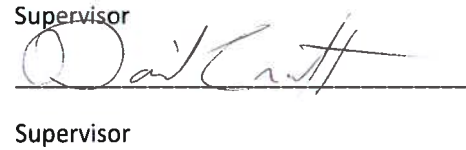
- a. **Schedules/ Upcoming Events / Any Related Claims** - calendars were handed out explaining upcoming special events & holiday schedules on the back of the agenda.
- b. **Department Head updates** – Longenecker attended the latest department head meeting on April 23 where Commissioner Flemming discussed the 5-year plan touching on customer service, economic sustainability, consumer confidence, and safe community. They are also still wanting a better directory at the city/county building. They will be starting more employee training opportunities. St Joseph County was given an award for their energy savings program. The next department head meeting will be May 28, 2019.

- c. **Education Supplies** – Sablich is requesting to purchase a first aid kit to take to programs and to refill the Hoosier Riverwatch Kit supplies as needed. A motion (Craft/Burkholder) was made to release \$10 for the first aid kit, to get band aids and other supplies as needed for the first aid kits (office and new program kits) and to allow the supplies to be refilled as needed for the Hoosier Riverwatch Kit. Motion carried. It was noted that Marshall County SWCD also uses the Hoosier Riverwatch Kit and will refill supplies as needed as well.
 - d. **Notice of Destruction of Nonpermanent Documents** – A motion (Burkholder/Vandewalle) was made to approve the destruction of copies of time cards from 12/31/2014 and older and employment applications of those not hired from 2014 and older. Motion carried. Hoffarth will send the notices to the appropriate offices and after June 30, 2019 will destroy the documents by shredding or burning the files since they contain private protected information.
- VI. PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR** – Dooms shared the memo from April 18, 2019 (attached) outlining the final summary of HB 1270. Sablich is asking for volunteers for the May 29 and June 2 outreach events. See Sablich for details and to register to help. Kennedy informed the board that since the greenhouse hasn't been installed yet at the location for the raingarden workshop, they are postponing that until late summer or early fall 2019. He also asked that if any landowners would like to participate in a land value survey to send their e-mail addresses to him.
- VII. ADJOURNMENT** – The board meeting adjourned at 8:20 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
April 15 – May 17, 2019

General/Miscellaneous

Office Work

- Develop cover crop information for landowner
- Develop wildlife planting and food plot mixes for landowner
- Complete conservation planning for 3 projects – critical area seeding; cover crops and gully stabilization, wildlife area and pollinator habitat
- Develop Individual Development Plan
- Compliance Reviews _ prepare field information for soil conservationist
- Preparation for LaPorte’s Women’s Learning Circle
- Preparation for WRP promotional video taping at Pokagon’s site

Field Work

- Field Visits to 4 sites – crop field erosion; Forest management/pollinator; wildlife/pollinator

EQIP- Environmental Quality Incentive Program

Office Work

- Modify contract and process payment for Invasive Species Control
- Process payment for cover crops
- Assemble reports and documentation for US Fish and Wildlife regarding the Emergence bat survey
- Process new application for a Forestry Conservation Activity Plan
- Sent approval letter for General EQIP signup

Field Work

Conduct the Emergent bat Survey
Field check cover crops and wet areas

WRE- Wetland Reserve Program

Office Work

- Obtain required signatures for 3 applications
- Receive and process new application
- Develop contract for 12 acres of Invasive Species Control
- Meet with landowners regarding bids for wetland construction

Field Work

CSP- Conservation Stewardship Program

Office Work

Contact 2 potential Forestry applicants
Process new Forestry application

Field Work

-

CRP-Conservation Reserve Program

Office Work

Modify mid-contract management items in contract

Field Work

-

CWI- Clean Water Indiana

Office Work

- Developed application for new grant period, emailed applications to potential applicants

Field Work

- Met with producer in field to discuss no-till and pollinator habitat

Wetland Determinations / Highly Erodible Land Determinations

Office Work

- 74 Highly Erodible Determinations were made
- 10 wetland determinations were completed

Field Work

-

Rule 5/ Rule 13

Office/Field Work

- 3 SWPPP reviews; 4 site visits, numerous communications, and 1 sit down meeting regarding sediment loss at 1 site

Education

Age	Total # Programs	Total # People
Youth Education	19	803
Adult Education	-	-

- Took the sandbox to the zoo for Earth Day.
- Committee Member for NAI Region 4 conference
- Met with Career Academy for Rain Garden/Native Planting Planning

Meetings & Trainings

Staff Meetings – 3 County Department head Training Food and Agriculture Council meeting NRCS Area Meeting Soil Health Team meeting NAI Region 4 Conference	Women’s Learning Circle Refresher Certified Planner Course CSP – Grassland Conservation Initiative Training
Webinars	Dates
Equipment for Mechanical Cultivation in Organic Systems Intercropping in Organic Systems Doing Cover Crop Research Right Improve Soil with Cover Crops in vegetables Black Oats Mycorrhiza Fungi Monarch series: Biology and Ecology Habitat Design Site Preparation Habitat Management	May 7 th – County Holiday

Comments from the Community

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DC Talking Points

May 2019

CHIEF'S PRIORITIES

The next field office level cycle time survey will run from April 29th to July 26th. While this takes staff time, this survey helps USDA measure the amount of work being done for customers across the nation. By doing so, NRCS is able to staff field offices more efficiently and continue to provide outstanding customer service.

FARM BILL

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

CSP 2019-1 General Signup: NRCS is has announced a signup and is accepting applications for CSP for fiscal year 2019. The application deadline is May 10, and the deadline to meet eligibility for this signup is May 27.

NRCS is working on offers to extend the 2014 CSP contracts since the 2018 Farm Bill placed a hold on renewals. Only those participants that expressed an interest will be provided with an extension offer. The extension would add one additional year of payment to the 5-year contract at the same payment. Some participants have expressed interest in forgoing the extension to sign up in the 2019-1 signup. NRCS is currently evaluating if this option will be available.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) 8 Funded

Indiana NRCS anticipates beginning to make approval decisions on FY19 EQIP applications after May 17. There have been a number of national technical issues implementing the 2018 Farm Bill which has delayed approval decisions later than in typical years.

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) 4 Funded

Indiana NRCS received an allocation of \$7.26 million for 2019 ACEP funding on April 18th. Offers for selected applications will be sent to landowners by June 21st.

Big Pine Watershed Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)

Dollars are still available for farmers through the Big Pine Watershed RCPP. The watershed which includes portions of Benton, White, Warren, and Tippecanoe counties and the partnership is working with farmers in the area to increase the number of nutrient and sediment reducing practices on cropland. Applications are accepted year-round, but to be considered for this round of funding, applications must be received by June 21, 2019. RCPP is a partner-led program, with NRCS directing technical and financial assistance to priorities identified by partners.

EQIP Deadline Announced for Western Lake Erie Basin (WLEB)

EQIP dollars will be made available to farmers who want to voluntarily invest in conservation practices to improve water quality in the WLEB. These additional dollars expand on the substantial conservation efforts already underway in the basin area. NRCS plans to work with farmers to install conservation practices such as no-till, cover crops, buffers, agricultural drainage water management systems, and nutrient and pesticide management. While applications are accepted on a continuous basis, June 21 will be the cutoff date this year to be considered for funding for this program. The eligible Indiana portion of the WLEB includes parts of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Noble, Steuben and Wells counties. Landowners with acreage in the following watersheds may be eligible for funding: St. Joseph-Maumee, St. Mary's, Upper Maumee and Auglaize.



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.

Now that the Vehicle Management Tool (VMT) is operating and proven to be effective, you may cease using paper vehicle logs to document your use of GOVs. Information that fleet managers needed from the hard copy vehicle log is now available in the VMT. To ensure that we are capturing the data that is necessary for fleet card audits and USDA utilization reporting, it is important that every FPAC driver log their vehicle use in the VMT for every vehicle trip they make. This will be reflected in policy soon. Even though the requirement to keep paper vehicle logs has gone away, you are still required to keep fleet card receipts for owned vehicle fleet card transactions in accordance with NRCS General Manual 120-406-O (mainly for receipts under \$5 and non-fuel purchases) until further notice.



St Joseph Soil and Water Conservation District Capital Assets Policy

1. All SWCD owned property is accountable to the State Board of Accounts as well as to the citizens and taxpayers of St Joseph County and must be periodically inventoried and accounted.
2. SWCD owned property must be inventoried once per calendar year prior to December 31.
3. The inventory shall include a brief description of each piece of SWCD owned property such that a lay person can tell what is in the SWCD's control and should include serial, registration or similar numbers where appropriate.
4. Capitalized assets, such as land, buildings, machinery, equipment and vehicles, shall have a useful life of more than one year. Capitalized assets are acquired for use in normal operations and are not for resale. These assets are long-term in nature and are subject to depreciation.
5. All assets shall be recorded at historical cost or estimated historical costs. If purchasing a new asset, the cost is the amount paid for the asset including sales tax and freight. It also includes any payment required to place the asset in its intended state of operation. If it is a donated asset, the cost is defined as the fair market value on the date donated.
6. Assets definitions by major category
 - a. Land – Land is defined as specified land, lots, parcels or acreage including rights-of-way regardless of the method or date of acquisition. Easements will not be included in the asset inventory. All land is entered as inventory, regardless of cost; land is not to be depreciated.
 - b. Buildings - All structures designed and erected to house equipment, services or functions are included. All interior mechanical systems are included with the building. Buildings are recorded at the purchase price or construction cost.
 - c. Equipment – Included within the category are office equipment, office furniture, appliances, furnishings, machinery items, maintenance equipment, communication equipment, laboratory equipment, vehicles, emergency equipment, earth moving equipment and data processing equipment. (Supplies are not “Equipment” and are excluded.)
7. Surplus Property – Surplus property is any equipment or other property that is no longer needed in the SWCD. The asset is to be sold at the highest price possible. This will be done by offering the asset to the public through auction, sealed competitive bids, or other means. The inventory is to be edited to reflect the retirement or transfer of the asset.
8. The Capital Asset Inventory shall be presented to the SWCD audit committee for review as part of the year-end annual SWCD audit. When there is a change in office management staff, the SWCD Board of Supervisors will appoint a committee to review the Capital Asset Inventory.
9. The SWCD management staff is responsible for reporting asset acquisitions and disposals.
10. Capital Assets worth \$10,000 or more will additionally be listed on General Form No. 369 (1995). These assets will be reported on an annual basis to the Indiana State Board of Accounts during the Annual Financial Review process.

MEMORANDUM

To: KRBC Members
From: Scott D. Pelath, Executive Director
Subject: *** FINAL SUMMARY OF HB 1270 ***
Date: April 18, 2019

As I reported earlier, HB 1270 passed the Indiana House of Representatives today by a vote of 84-2. After already passing the Senate by a vote of 40-5 on Tuesday, the measure now moves on to Gov. Holcomb for his signature.

Major bills are never perfect, and even the most ardent supporters would differ with some details. But it would be hard to dispute that this is the most significant piece of legislation pertaining to the Kankakee River Basin in decades.

I already am beginning preparations for when the new law takes effect on July 1. As we look ahead, I wanted to provide a final summary of the legislation for your review:

1. **Regional financing.** According to the official estimate of the Legislative Services Agency, beginning in 2021 the bill will generate \$2.99 million per year for the Kankakee River Basin. Annual funds will derive from amounts based on a \$1 per acre assessment on agricultural property; \$2 on undeveloped commercial parcels; a \$7 per parcel residential assessment; \$50 per parcel on commercial property, and \$360 per parcel on utility and industrial property (50% on each tax bill).
2. **County Options.** County fiscal bodies have four options for participating in the Commission. They are:
 - a. Take no action, and allow state law to impose the fee schedule above;
 - b. Resolve to pay an amount equal to 90% what would have been raised from the state fee schedule;
 - c. Enact a reduced fee schedule supplemented by other payments that total an amount equal to what the state fee schedule would have raised; or
 - d. Enact a fee schedule greater than the state fee schedule, and retain the difference between the state schedule and the county's schedule.
3. **After 2022, an additional 10% of funds is retained by those county fiscal bodies using option "c" and "d".** The amounts must be allocated for storage, flood control, and drainage within the basin.

4. **Mandated regulatory coordination.** The revised bill directs the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Environmental Management, and other state agencies to simplify and carefully coordinate their permitting procedures for the Kankakee and Yellow Rivers.
5. **New responsibilities of the Commission.** After June 30, 2019, the revised Kankakee River Basin and Yellow River Basin Development Commission will have exclusive authority to implement drainage and flood control activities within 75-feet of the Kankakee and Yellow Rivers. Powers include:
 - a. Acquiring land and easements for the construction of levies, flood control improvements, and flood storage;
 - b. Bank stabilization;
 - c. Tree removal;
 - d. Construction and operation of sand traps;
 - e. Sediment removal;
 - f. Construction of access roads and paths; and
 - g. Any other necessary actions.
6. **Counties retain emergency powers on channel.** Counties need not seek Commission approval before responding to emergencies on the Commission's easement.
7. **Stipulations for use of assessment funds.** All assessments received by the commission must be maintained in a segregated account for improvements, acquisitions, flood control, repairs, and the repayment of bonds.
8. **Special fund for landowner reimbursements.** The bill will require the commission to create a special fund to reimburse landowners for damages related to flood storage.
9. **Bonding authority.** The commission will possess the option of using bond financing through the Indiana Finance Authority (IFA).
10. **New governance structure.** As was in the original bill, the county commission in each of the eight counties will appoint one member to the Kankakee River Basin and Yellow River Basin Development Commission. A ninth member will be the DNR Director or the Director's designee. Terms would be four years in length, although in order to create staggered terms, the initial appointment in LaPorte, Marshal, Porter, and Starke Counties would be for two years and four years thereafter. One non-voting member from Illinois could be invited to join the commission.

11. **Technical advisory committee.** In addition to the new nine-member commission, the measure will also establish a formal, nine-member advisory committee consisting of the surveyors and a regional soil and water conservation district director. If a surveyor is appointed to the commission itself, the same commissioners will appoint a member in his or her place to the advisory committee.
12. **Surveyors are “default” appointments to the commission.** If the county commissioners fail to make an appointment by September 1, then the county surveyor would be the automatic appointment to the commission.
13. **Undeveloped public lands for flood storage.** The commission and public agencies will have to coordinate to ensure that public lands maximize flood storage before other land is used.
14. **Preferences for Indiana businesses and workers.** The bill creates a preference for Indiana businesses and Indiana workers on commission projects.
15. **Sixteen public informational hearings.** Before January 21, 2021, the Commission will be required to hold two public informational meetings in each basin county. The purpose is to describe the assessments and intended projects.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 219-861-7999 or email me. I would enjoy the opportunity to discuss the legislation and plan ahead together.