

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

- I. **CALL TO ORDER** - On Tuesday January 29, 2019, at 9:24 am a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the St Joseph County SWCD at the Farm Credit Services, 5310 South Main Street, 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

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
n/a

ABSENT – SWCD

Mike Burkholder, Supervisor
Dave Craft, Supervisor
David Straughn
Jim LaFree
Dru Wrasse
Richard Schmidt
Randy Matthys
Chuck Lehman

- II. **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA** – n/a

III. **REGULAR BUSINESS**

- a. **Legislative Updates** – n/a
- b. **Indiana Conservation Partnership Updates** – n/a
- c. **Minutes: December 18, 2018 board meeting** – Minutes were reviewed and approved as presented by motion (Cooper/Vandewalle).
- d. **Treasurer’s Report: (12/18/2018-1/28/2019)** – The treasurer’s report was reviewed and approved as submitted by motion (Cooper/Vandewalle).
- e. **Approval of Claims (12/18/2018-1/28/2019)** –A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to approve Claim Nos. 11411-11436 for a total of \$21,307.31 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. **Committee Reports**
 - i. **Annual Meeting** – Vandewalle reminded the board of the date. Hoffarth asked to have ticket numbers in to her today or tomorrow. Silent auction items are to be brought to the office or set up a pick-up time with Hoffarth. Doors open at 5:45pm please be there by then to greet our guests.
 - ii. **Audit – 2018 AFR** – Cooper reported that he along with Stacey Silvers had been looking at the financial records each month throughout 2018. Since Silvers passed away John Dooms stepped up and looked everything over. 2018 financials are in balance and the committee recommends the AFR be accepted as presented. A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to accept the 2018 AFR. Motion passed.
- c. **CWI2016 Raingarden & Conservation** – Longenecker went over the final numbers from both CWI grants. For the raingarden grant St Joseph County spent \$22,419.53 of our \$25,000 allotment and installed 3 residential and 9 demonstration gardens. For the conservation grant, St Joseph County spent \$18,067.88 of our \$25,000 allotment and installed 853.15 acres of cover crops, 270.7 acres of no-till and 3.4 acres of pollinator habitat.
- d. **Designation of Depository** – a motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to keep our checking and savings account at PNC Bank. Motion passed.
- e. **Producers Workshop** – Longenecker informed the board that we currently have \$300 from sponsors and \$1,000 from CCSI to cover the expenses; food & 1 speaker fee. A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to release up to \$1,500 to cover the food since the producer’s workshop furthers the mission on the SWCD by educating the producers on the importance of soil health. Motion passed.
- f. **Contractors Breakfast** – Longenecker informed the board that on March 20th we will be hosting a contractor’s breakfast. Delmar will be catering at \$7.50/person. Three sponsors have offered to cover the cost of food. We will also offer vendor booths at \$75/each to help cover the venue cost.
- g. **Kankakee River Basin Commission** – Dooms and Longenecker attended the Jan. 11th meeting. The commission voted in a new director, Scott Pelath. House Bill 1270 was explained to the commission by Rep Doug Gutwein. Essentially it would reduce the commission to 9 members; 8 who would be appointed by the commissioners of each county in the basin and 1 appointed by the governor of Indiana with an additional 2 non-voting members from IL. (This bill has since passed the House and is awaiting Senate review). A report was presented by

Christopher Burke Engineering regarding the past and current state of the river basin, why it has some of the issues it does, and some solutions to alleviate sedimentation and flooding problems. The next meeting will be on February 14th. Doods & Longenecker will attend this meeting.

V. NEW BUSINESS

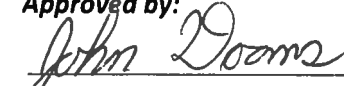
- a. **Schedules/ Upcoming Events / Any Related Claims** - calendars were handed out explaining upcoming special events & holiday schedules on the back of the agenda.
 - i. **Leadership Institute – Leadership in Change** – Cooper let the board know that this was an interesting workshop since he had never done the Myers Briggs Assessment and learned the difference in personalities and how that effects a working group. He encouraged anyone interested to attend. He did caution however at the last institute that himself and Burkholder attended, the speakers cancelled before the workshop and was only ½ the day instead of the full workshop day. These workshops count as points when applying for CWI grants.
 - ii. **NAI Region 4 Conference** – Sablich requested to have \$210 released for registration fees. This is a conference she has been helping to plan in our area. She will not need hotel since it is close to home. A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to release the registration fee of \$210. Motion passed.
- b. **Statehouse Visit** – Cooper would like to attend this again this year. Sablich and Longenecker will also attend this. They will coordinate dates that work for everyone as well as reaching out to Elkhart and Marshall County SWCD's to possibly all go together.
- c. **Education Supplies** – Sablich asked for the release of \$100 for renting SK Worm for Science Alive. A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to release \$100 for SK Worm rental. Motion passed. Another motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to approve using up to the budgeted amount for recurring program supplies such as owl pellets, seed bomb supplies, etc. Motion passed.
- d. **St Joseph County Ag Days** – A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to release \$200 for the rental of tables and chairs. Motion passed.
- e. **Indiana Woodland Steward** – Hoffarth asked the board if they would like to release \$100 for Indiana Woodland Steward newsletter costs again in 2019. A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to release \$100 for the newsletter costs. Motion passed.
- f. **IDEM Landfill Inspection** – IDEM received a complaint from a landowner adjacent to the landfill regarding alleged negative effects of the dewatering of the new cell on the water table and excessive erosion on an inactive cell. Due to the erosion complaint the SWCD was requested to attend a meeting with the landfill manager, IDEM, and a drainage board rep. IDEM determined that the landfill has complied with necessary inspections and regulations regarding the dewatering and DNR, Division of Water had already determined that the activity should not be detrimental to the water table. The inactive cell that the erosion complaint was made on was inspected and found to be fine. There were minor rills where the vegetation had not yet taken hold yet but there were no major issues or evidence of sedimentation on the site or in the ditch. The ditch on the north end of the landfill property is a county ditch that has not been serviced for 15 years min. It does need to be cleaned out. The landfill is working with the county to accomplish this. IDEM was to contact the complainant to inform him of their findings.
- g. **Uncleared checks** – Hoffarth informed the board that there is one check that was issued in 2016 that has never cleared. A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to make check 11081 issued on 1-19-2016 to Dru Wrasse in the amount of \$33.84 void. Motion passed.
- h. **Tax Exempt** – Cooper had a short discussion that we should be using our tax exempt whenever we can. It was brought to our attention that we can use it for hotel stays as well as in stores.
- i. **Bad weather/work** – Due to the Polar Vortex coming, St Joseph County has closed all government offices for January 30th & 31st. This includes the SWCD.

VI. **PRIVILEGE OF FLOOR** – Sablich requested the release of \$185 to cover her education memberships. A motion (Cooper/Vandewalle) was made to release these funds. Motion passed. Doods informed the board of the new IASWCD Board of Directors for 2019 is Roger Wenning, President; Bobby Hettmansperger, Vice President; Marc Roberts, Treasurer; Jeff Baker, Secretary; Stan Moore, North-Northeast Director. There were several resolutions presented and the only one approved was to amend the by-laws to allow the IASWCD Board of Directors to approve the minutes of the annual business meeting at a regular board meeting and then announce at the next annual business meeting that the minutes had been approved by the Board of Directors.


VII. **ADJOURNMENT** – The board meeting adjourned at 10:43 am.

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

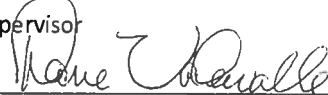
Approved by:



Supervisor



Supervisor



Supervisor

Field Office Report December 19 – January 25

General/Miscellaneous

Office Work

- Annual Meeting – award write-ups, slide show, silent auction, election, program, scripts, VIP invitations, tickets, website/social media
- Annual Financial Reports, 2019 Budget, final CWI reports
- PSS Quarter 3 Quality Assurance reviews
- Producers Workshop – postcard invitations, sponsors, placemats, program/agenda, website/social media
- Conservation Desktop practice
- Work at NRCS Booth @ Ft Wayne Farm Show

Field Work

- IDEM/Landfill Inspection

EQIP- Environmental Quality Incentive Program

Office Work

- Conservation Planning on new applications (14)
- Process cover crop payment (205 ac); Pollinator Habitat (4.4 ac)
- Work with producers to get eligibility forms (10)
- Annual Practice letters mailed (38)
- Certify Annual Waste Storage Facility for Elkhart County

Field Work

- Conservation planning visit – Hoop House

WRE- Wetland Reserve Program

Office Work

- Update deed/documents on current application due to death of spouse

Field Work

CSP- Conservation Stewardship Program

Office Work

- Modify contract
- Verify enhancement (700 acres 4 way mix of cover crops)
- Process payment

Field Work

-

CWI- Clean Water Indiana

Office Work

- Verified and prepped payment docs for 2 raingarden demo grants, 2 pollinator habitats, and cover crops

Field Work

- 3 visits to demo raingarden site to verify specifications were met

Wetland Determinations

Office Work

- Process 1 wetland and Highly Erodible request

Field Work

Rule 5/ Rule 13

Office Work

- 2 SWPPP Reviews
- Site visit to investigate complaint per IDEM's request

Education

Age	Total # Programs	Total # People
Youth Education	5	226
Adult Education	1	17

- Participated in the Youth County Leadership Meeting for January

Meetings & Trainings

Staff Meetings – 6 MSP Kankakee River Basin Commission Annual Conference NRCS – State meeting Government Shutdown Teleconference	EQIP Teleconference Soil Health Team St. Joseph River Basin commission
Webinars	Dates
Regenerating Diversity in the Soils Steve Groff Cover Crop- 6 Ephemeral Gully Erosion – What it is and how we treat it Rethinking Nutrient Management for Soil Health	Office Closed – Dec 24, 25; Jan 1, 21

Comments from the Community

--

DC Talking Points

January 2019

NEW NRCS CHIEF

U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue recently appointed Matthew J. “Matt” Lohr to serve as Chief of the NRCS. According to Perdue, Matt has committed his entire life to the betterment of agriculture,” Perdue said. “The knowledge and experience he brings to the table will help ensure our locally-led, science-based approach continues to offer farmers the conservation solutions needed to enhance their environment and commercial viability.

Lohr is a 5th generation farmer in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley. He and his wife Beth and their six children operate Valley Pike Farm, Inc. Prior to his appointment by the Trump Administration, Lohr held public office, serving in the Virginia House of Delegates from 2006-2010. In 2008, Lohr was awarded Legislator of the Year in honor of his work as an ambassador for economic and community development in Virginia. He then served as Virginia’s Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services from 2010 to 2013. More recently, Lohr worked as Knowledge Center Director for Farm Credit of the Virginias, a customer-owned financial cooperative that provides resources and education outreach to local farmers and the community. And since June 2017, he has been farming full time on the family operation, which includes poultry, beef cattle, row crops, and sweet corn.

“I am honored and humbled to serve America’s agricultural industry in this new capacity,” Lohr said. “As a 5th generation farmer, I care deeply about conserving and protecting our most valuable agricultural resources. I look forward to the chance to lead this valuable agency and assist our producers nationwide with their conservation practices.” Lohr’s family has installed many conservation practices on his property and two placed permanent conservation easements.

FARM BILL

The 2018 farm bill or Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 is United States legislation that reauthorized many expenditures in the prior [United States farm bill: the Agricultural Act of 2014](#). The \$867 billion reconciled farm bill was passed by the Senate on December 11, 2018, and by the House on December 12. On December 20th, 2018 it received the President's signature and became law. It is currently under review at national headquarters for policy development.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

During a government shutdown, agencies that receive mandatory funding or have funds appropriated in prior years that are carried forward can continue to serve customers using that money. NRCS is in this category and will be remain open for business. Key points:

- All contract work should continue. Contact the designated Contract Officer or the Acquisitions Division Director in the FPAC Business Center if there is an issue with a contract.
- Conservation partners who share field office space and are not on furlough can continue working.
- If a Market Facilitation Program (MFP) application package is submitted, the NRCS staff can accept the application, date stamp, and hold until the FSA staff returns to the office. If they are attempting to file an application rather than bringing a package in, the customer should be directed to farmers.gov. On this site, if they have level 2 eAuthentication, an application can be filed online. In the absence of internet access or level 2 eAuthentication, inform the customer that due to the lapse in government funding all FSA offices are closed until further notice and we apologize for any inconvenience.



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 decisions.

VEHICLE MANAGEMENT TOOL (VMT)

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. Indiana is serving as a pilot state for this tool. All partnership staff and service center employees are expected to use it for scheduling vehicle use. Staff who missed the instructional webinar will be sent a link to view the recorded version. The tool is access using an e-auth account. A VMT User Guide will also soon be available. The VMT is merely a reservation and tracking tool, it does not replace any established vehicle use policy.

INDIANA CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP WORKING AGREEMENT

The Indiana Conservation Partnership has developed a new Memorandum of Understand to replace the one that expired on December 31. The new MOU is currently out for legal review. Once all partners have obtained necessary clearance it will be distributed to all SWCDs for signature. In the meantime, **nothing will change regarding our partners working together at the field office level.** We anticipate SWCDs will receive instructions for signing the new MOU by mid-January. The state conservationist will be sending partners information regarding continuing our great partnership until the new MOU final signatures are obtained.



Agenda
59th Annual Meeting of the
St. Joseph County Soil and Water Conservation District

In Celebration of our projects and accomplishments throughout 2018!

Friday, February 8, 2019 - Doors open at 5:45 pm
Hedwig Memorial Center, South Bend, Indiana

5:45 Doors Open & Silent Auction Begins - the silent auction fundraiser will run from 5:45 until the awards are done. Bidding is officially closed for each item when the SWCD Representative touches the bid sheet. (We will NOT make a formal announcement at the time of the silent auction closing)

6:40 Call to Order/ Introduce Guests-----John Doods, Chairman

Followed by:

Treasurer's Report-----Dave Vandewalle gave the treasurer's report. Jeremy Cooper and Richard Schmidt motioned to approve the report. Motion passed.

Supervisor Election-----Jeremy Cooper

No further nominations from the floor. Dave Vandewalle & John Doods motioned to close the nominations from the floor. Motioned passed. Mike Burkholder was elected as supervisor by majority vote. Commissioner Dave Thomas issued the Oath of Office for Dave Vandewalle, appointed supervisor. Mike Burkholder was not in attendance and will be given his Oath of Office at the next available board meeting.

Invocation----- Chuck Lehman

7:00 Family Style Polish Dinner-----Hedwig Memorial Center

8:00 Reflections & Awards----- Jane Sablich & Jeremy Cooper

Silent Auction Bidding Closed!!

Followed by:

Annual Meeting Key Note Speaker-----Stephanie McLain

Followed by:

Adjournment-----John Doods adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Silent Auction Results Announced-----Jeremy Cooper

Instruction for Payment and Receipt of Silent Auction Items

Thank you for a great evening. Drive Home Safely!

John Doods

Dave Vandewalle

Dave Vandewalle

[Signature]