

Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District Business Meeting
Tuesday, June 1, 2021 beginning @ 7:30 AM
Purdue Extension, 1111 S. Jackson St., Frankfort, IN

Purpose: *The Soil and Water Conservation District is responsible for the leadership in conserving and protecting soil and water related resources within Clinton County. The SWCD provides information about soil, water and related natural resource conservation; identifies and prioritizes local soil and water resource concerns; and connects land users to sources of education, technical and financial assistance to implement conservation practices and technologies.*

Mission statement: *The Mission of the Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District is to create an environment through leadership, cooperation, and education, in which citizens wisely use and enhance natural resources.*

<u>Supervisors present</u>	<u>Associates present</u>	<u>Staff Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>	<u>Others</u>
Clint Orr	Richard Moore	Austin Green	Harold Marshall	Adam Shanks
Dustin Johnson		Leah Harden	David Beard	Mark Timmons
Matt Kelley		Katelyn Fagan		Brittany Shepherd
Jerry Batts				
Ty Brown				

The regular business meeting was called to order at 7:38 AM by Chairman Orr.

The State Soil Conservation Board approved [May 18, 2021 business meeting] the temporary appointment of Ty Brown to serve the remaining term of David Beard [due to resignation]. Clint Orr administered the Oath of Office to Ty Brown.

Minutes

A motion to approve the recorded minutes of the May 4, 2021 meeting was made by Matt. Seconded by Jerry. Motion carried.

Financial Report

The financial claims were submitted for review. A motion was made to approve the financial claims beginning May 4, 2021 and ending May 31, 2021. Matt/Jerry. Motion carried.

The following additional claim was presented for approval. At times the drill is returned without having the seed cleaned out of the seed boxes. In order to prevent the transfer of seed between clients the District Administrator requested the purchase of a small portable shop vacuum. Estimated cost \$60.00. Matt/Jerry. Motion carried. Discussion followed. A recommendation was made to assess a \$25.00 fee to individuals renting the drill who do not clean the seed out of the boxes before returning. A motion was made to approve claim and was amended to include instituting the \$25.00 fee. Matt/Jerry. Motion carried.

A budget of \$325.00 was requested for the upcoming Building Soil Resiliency workshop. Budget includes \$250.00 speaker fees; portable restroom; doughnuts, coffee, water, fruit, granola, paper products. Matt/Jerry. Motion carried.

New Business

A proposed budget estimate and county budget totals to date were presented to the Board for review and discussion. Increases from fiscal year 2021 budget were noted for the following: insurance [+\$25.00]; storage rental [+\$50.00]; website [+\$20.00]; audit [\$1,800.00] and proposed salary increases. Decreases were noted in the overtime budget [-2897.00]. Discussion followed. The Council typically discusses salary increases at the June Council meeting and makes a recommendation to department heads on percent increase to place in their budget estimates for county employees. At the time of this business meeting that information was not yet available. The Board can request whatever amount they choose but once the budget has been submitted by the July 1 deadline the amount cannot increase but can decrease. The Board recommended a 4% increase for salary compensation be placed in the budget estimate. Dustin/Jerry. Motion carried.

USDA, NRCS is required to review USDA Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity responsibilities and expectations with partner agencies on an annual basis. A checklist is to be completed and affirmed by the Clinton SWCD Board Chairperson and the USDA, NRCS representative who completed the checklist/review. Katie reviewed with the Board.

Eli Blaine and Marian Rodriguez-Soto joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams to speak on the IASWCD/NRCS Urban Soil Health Partnership. Eli is the State Coordinator and Marian is the Regional Coordinator for the NW region of the state. An overview of the program and its mission was reviewed. An opportunity for questions and answers followed. Discussion followed on how the program could be implemented in Clinton County. Clint suggested as a possibility a no-till garden demonstration, professionally maintained, and appropriately signed. Other possible community partnerships might include Healthy Communities community garden(s), Wesley Manor and City Parks. Adam Shanks followed up with an update on the Fairgrounds Soil Health/Cover Crop demonstration gardens. The raised beds are completed but went with a smaller dimension due to portability and placement. Three beds – 2 for cover crops and 1 for pollinator planting. County highway assisted with soil for the raised beds. Farm Bureau provided funding for rakes, shovels, garden hose, etc. to assist with maintenance of the raised beds.

Austin presented cost-share applications for consideration:

Remaining unallocated cost-share budget = \$24,901.07 Total funding requests = \$42,547.50

South Fork Wildcat Section 319 grant

#1 Tier 1 CLA	Cover Crops (118.5 Ac)	\$4,147.50
#2 Tier 2 CLA	Cover Crops (120 Ac)/Equipment Modification	\$4,200.00/8,153.57
#3 Tier 1 CLA	Nutrient/Pest Mgmt. (120 Ac)/Equipment Modification	Deferred to 2022
#4 Tier 4	Application not yet complete for consideration	\$0.00
#5 Tier 1 CLA	Cover Crops (120 Ac)	\$4,200.00
#6 Tier 1 CLA	Cover Crops (120 Ac)	\$4,200.00

Request for funding exceeds available funds. Discussion followed. Applicant # 3 willing to defer until Phase III is awarded. Equipment modification has an individual cap of \$15,000.00. Michelle Gilbert, Conservation Technician, Tippecanoe County SWCD participated in the discussion via Teams. Michelle indicated that based on her conversations with the applicant that she did not believe that applicant #2 would be interested in deferring or a reduced cost-share. A motion was made to approve applicants #1, 2, 5, 6 and partially fund #2. If additional funds become available through SFW Phase II they may be directed to applicant #2 until they have reached their individual cap of \$15,000.00. Dustin/Jerry. Motion carried.

The biennial landfill review was conducted on May 6, 2021. Offsite sedimentation concerns persist as noted in the review. The Board suggested that Austin communicate with the County Commissioners to draft a joint letter expressing concerns to be sent to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Solid Waste Compliance Section and the Division of Soil Conservation.

Old Business

The IASWCD has announced that nominations are being sought for River Friendly Farmer awards with nominations due by June 10. The Board recommended that Hawley Farms (Jay and Sue) be nominated for the 2021 award recognition. The Hawley’s have accepted the nomination and the field visit has been conducted and online application submitted.

The Fiscal Year 2022 Clean Water Act Section 319 grant solicitation has been announced. The due date for submission of a Notice of Intent is June 1, 2021. The application due date is September 1, 2021. Staff have submitted the NOI per Board direction and prior to the June 1 due date.

The District Support Specialist, Geneva Tyler mentioned in a previous business meeting that if the Board thought that they might want to consider submitting a letter to the SSCB requesting an extension for the Clean Water Indiana grant (due to COVID restrictions causing problems with effectively administering the funds) that it should be done prior to the May 18 SSCB business meeting. The request was prepared and submitted to the District Support Specialist. Additional guidance was provided by the District Support Specialist after the request was submitted to indicate that the SSCB would only be considering grants awarded in 2019 or prior. Per that additional guidance the District Administrator requested that the request for extension be withdrawn. Although the SSCB noted that they would be willing to consider the Clinton SWCD CWI agreement [2020] request at a future date if deemed necessary.

Grant Updates

S. Fork Wildcat – previously discussed

Brown’s Wonder-Sugar Creek – 4 pending applications should be complete and ready for board consideration at the July business meeting. Two previously approved applications (Boone) should be submitting invoices soon to request reimbursement.

Clean Water Indiana – two pending applications should be complete and ready for consideration at the July business meeting.

Staff Report/Conservation Partner Report

FSA, CED – Brittany Shepherd – written report provided

Brittany provided updates on the Conservation Reserve Program. Currently on pause as Biden administration makes changes. Expect higher soil rental rates and a return of incentive payments. An update of current office procedures in dealing with COVID safety concerns. Open for business by appointment only. Those who have not been vaccinated must wear a mask and maintain 6 feet of social distancing. A leasing update was provided per Board inquiry.

ISDA, DSC – Geneva Tyler – May report provided. June report will be forwarded when received.

Purdue Extension, AgNR Educator – Adam Shanks – provided verbal report

Daniel Quinn is the newly named corn specialist for Purdue. He will replace Bob Nielson who is retiring. Jason Ackerson, Soil Health Specialist is leaving. Purdue Extension is hosting a First Responder Training at the fairgrounds.

NRCS, District Conservationist – Kaitlyn Fagan – verbal report provided

EQIP – Thirteen applications were submitted. Two were approved. Deadline of Friday [June 4] to complete paperwork. The State Office has requested additional funding. If additional funding is directed to pending applications it will likely be late July or early August when announcements are made. There will likely be a two-week timeframe for turn-around on paperwork.

Resource Conservation Specialist – Austin Green (written report provided)

Upcoming workshop planned for June 24th, 2021 with the focus on Building Soil Resiliency in a Changing Climate. The event is being held at Mohler Farms in Boone County in partnership with the Boone County SWCD and the Browns Wonder-Sugar Creek Stewardship Initiative. The tentative agenda was provided.

Infield Advantage update – Soil testing on Nitrogen trials with Ceres [Betsy/Sina]

Completed 2 Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans (SWPPP). Each required multiple reviews.

District Administrator – Leah Harden - verbal report provided

FY 2022 budget considerations were presented. County budget allocations and percentages spent in each allocation were reviewed. Budget estimates are to be submitted by July 1, 2021 to the county auditor.

Suggested that the Board consider staffing needs and responsibilities/job descriptions for the future.

Academy of Science is being planned as a live event. Dates are October 1st and 2nd.

Other Business

Based on discussion of a potential increase in practices enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program and the potential for an increase in the use of the no-till drill the Board re-evaluated drill replacement. Chairman Orr requested that staff research options and present to the Board at a later date for consideration.

The regular business meeting adjourned at 10:15 AM. Matt/Dustin. Motion carried. The next regularly scheduled business meeting will be Tuesday, July 6, 2021 beginning at 7:30 AM at Purdue Extension.

Respectfully submitted by Leah Harden.

Minutes Approval

Clint Orr, **Chairman**

Dustin Johnson, **Vice Chairman**

Jerry Batts, **Member**

Vacant, **Member**

Matt Kelley, **Member**