

Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District Business Meeting

Tuesday, December 8, 2020 beginning @ 7:30 AM

In consideration of the COVID-19 national emergency the meeting was conducted via Microsoft Teams

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.*

Supervisors present

Clint Orr
Jerry Batts
Matt Kelley

Associates present

Richard Moore

Staff Present

Austin Green
Leah Harden

Absent

David Beard
Dustin Johnson
Harold Marshall
Katie Fagan

Others

Adam Shanks, AgNR
Educator, Purdue
Brandy Daggett, NRCS
Danielle Waldschmidt,
NRCS

No additional public requests to access the Teams meeting were received per the public access announcement. After resolving a few technical difficulties the Microsoft Teams video conference business meeting was called to order at 7:50 AM by Chairman Orr.

Minutes

A motion to approve the recorded minutes of the November 3, 2020 meeting and Local Work Group meeting was made by Matt. Seconded by Jerry. Upon roll call three “ayes” were recorded. Motion approved.

Financial Report

The financial claims were submitted for review. A motion was made to approve the financial claims for the period covering November 3, 2020 through December 7, 2020. Motion to approve by Matt. Seconded by Jerry. Upon roll call three “ayes” were received. Motion carried.

New Business

IDEM Section 319 Grant – S. Fork Wildcat Creek Implementation

Allocation for cost-share \$100,000.00 Unallocated balance - \$13,290.00

At the time of the meeting no new cost-share applications submitted for review or approval.

IDEM Section 319 Grant – Brown’s Wonder-Sugar Creek Implementation

Allocation for cost-share \$200,000.00 Unallocated balance - \$160,620.30

At the time of the meeting no new cost-share applications submitted for review or approval.

Clean Water Indiana Grant

Allocation for cost-share/soil testing \$32,000.00 Unallocated balance - \$29,800.00

At the time of the meeting no new cost-share applications submitted for review or approval.

The Nominating Committee for the 2021 SWCD Election provided the following report:

Nominees for election (due December 1, 2020) – Clint Orr has agreed to place his name on the ballot to serve a 3-year term in the elected position. To meet legal reporting requirements the information has been uploaded to Conservation Link.

Annual Meeting requirements were discussed. As mentioned in previous meeting Leah explained that Luke Britt, Public Access Counselor, State of Indiana provided some clarification via webinar on how Districts would be required to meet certain requirements for their annual meetings and still be in compliance with Indiana’s Open Door Law. A worksheet

offering three possible plans for meeting the requirements of public access, election etc. for the annual meeting were presented and discussed. The following option was the most favored by the governing body:

Plan B:

Schedule the annual meeting during a monthly board meeting at the airport or other location (larger meeting room) to conduct the legal requirements of having a public meeting and for the purpose of having an election and making financial reports known. No meal. This would happen at March business meeting. Would need to follow CDC guidelines (hand sanitizer, masks, social distancing). Would need to record the meeting, collection of ballots and counting of ballots.

Matt made a motion to approve moving forward with Plan B for the annual meeting. To allow for accessibility the meeting will be held in the evening. Seconded by Jerry. Upon roll call three "ayes" were recorded. Motion carried.

The Board gave guidance to the District Administrator to come up with a venue conducive to holding the meeting but also to allow for social distancing. Several upcoming webinars may offer more information on how to host a virtual annual meeting and/or how to conduct the election. As that information becomes available it will be passed on the Board for consideration. It was noted that the Board could also attend the webinars.

Clint and Dustin were appointed to serve as the audit committee for the Annual Financial Report.

The Indiana Assn. of Soil and Water Conservation Districts will host a virtual conference in 2021. Early bird registration ends December 11th. Cost per registrant is \$50.00. For each four registrations received a fifth registration will be given at no cost. The program will be recorded and made available to registrants for a six-month timeframe after the conference. Matt made a motion to approve registration costs for supervisors, associates and staff. Seconded by Jerry. Upon roll call three "ayes" were recorded. Motion carried. The District Administrator will register all and submit payment.

Old Business

Notification was received by the CCSWCD that the S. Fork Wildcat Phase III project proposal will be recommended for funding. The next phase is to submit revisions per IDEM review staff's recommendations. Austin and Leah discussed the recommended revisions with IDEM Watershed Specialist Amanda Studor Bond. After discussion and clarification Austin made revisions and (re)submitted to the Nonpoint Source Grant Section 319 Grant Program. It will be forwarded to EPA for consideration. It is anticipated that the grant agreement will be fully executed in the Fall of 2021.

A request for extension of the S. Fork Wildcat Phase II agreement will be drafted and mailed as soon as all cost-share reimbursement claims have been processed.

IDNR-Lake and River Enhancement – see written report for updates.

Staff Report/Conservation Partner Report

FSA, CED – Brittany Shepherd – no report

ISDA, DSC – Geneva Tyler/George Reger – written report provided

Purdue Extension, AgNR Educator – Adam Shanks

Thanked the SWCD for sharing resources (animal tracks) for an afterschool program at Clinton Central. Announced that the Hardy Hills Solar Project will have a public meeting on December 10, 2020 at the Edward Jones building.

NRCS, District Conservationist – Kaitlyn Fagan, Brandy Daggett, Danielle Waldschmidt (verbal report)

Brandy provided highlights of this month's USDA, NRCS Talking Points. The Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) program application deadline is December 18th 2020. The Conservation Stewardship Program application deadline is January 8, 2021. Brandy reported on Katie's behalf that Katie is currently working on CRP maintenance status reviews; maintenance renewals and establishment of contracts (practices) installed for FY 2017. Robert Suseland is assisting with that workload. Katie is working on becoming a certified conservation planner.

Danielle also noted that USDA, NRCS has had a rather aggressive schedule in 2020.

Resource Conservation Specialist – Austin Green (see written report)

Tillage and cover crop transect is tentatively scheduled for January of 2021.

The INfield Advantage Program will host producer meetings on January 19 and/or 21, 2021. More details to come. Biomass sampling has been completed on three of the four farmer's fields enrolled in the INfield Advantage Program. The fourth farmer's field planting was delayed so sampling will occur at a later date.

District Administrator – Leah Harden (verbal report)

Provided information on a couple of initiatives that recently came to her attention. The Wabash River Enhancement Corporation recently launched the Greenway Corridor Master Plan planning project for a ten-county region including Warren, Tippecanoe, Carroll, Cass, Montgomery, Clinton, Benton, White and Pulaski. The project is seeking public input in the development of the plan with several Local Planning Stations announced, a website specific to keeping the public updated on the current news about the project and public meeting announcements.

Indiana NRCS announced that it is seeking potential project applications for Indiana Partners for Conservation funding opportunity. Indiana NRCS has up to 1 million dollars to award for locally driven partnerships that address natural resource issues and that encourage collaboration. Five local priority activities were noted in the announcement. Deadline to submit a proposal is January 25, 2021. Discussion followed. A committee was formed to discuss a possible project proposal. Clint Orr, Richard Moore and Matt Kelley will serve on the committee along with staff members. A meeting invite will be sent out at a later time.

Other Business - none noted

The regular business meeting adjourned at 8:46 AM. Matt/Jerry. Motion carried. The next regularly scheduled business meeting will be Tuesday, January 5 beginning at 7:30 AM at Purdue Extension (date and location subject to change).

Respectfully submitted by Leah Harden.

Minutes Approval

Clint Orr, **Chairman**

David Beard, **Vice Chairman**

Jerry Batts, **Member**

Dustin Johnson, **Member**

Matt Kelley, **Member**