

## Clinton County Soil and Water Conservation District Business Meeting

Tuesday, January 19, 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  
Dustin Johnson  
Matt Kelley

### Associates present

### Staff Present

Austin Green  
Leah Harden

### Absent

Richard Moore  
Harold Marshall  
David Beard

### Others

Adam Shanks, Purdue  
Katie Fagan, USDA, NRCS  
Geneva Tyler, ISDA

No additional public requests to access the Teams meeting were received per the public access announcement. The Microsoft Teams video conference business meeting was called to order at 7:36 AM by Chairman Orr.

### Minutes

A motion to approve the recorded minutes of the December 8, 2020 meeting was made by Jerry. Seconded by Matt. Motion carried.

### Financial Report

The financial claims were submitted for review. A motion was made to approve the financial claims for the period covering December 8, 2020 through January 18, 2021. Jerry/Dustin. Motion carried.

The following additional claims were submitted for approval:

The Board discussed billboard promotions for 2021. The estimated cost per promotion lasting four weeks in duration is \$500.00. Leah noted that the tree sale promotion is recovered through tree sale revenue. Other promotions might include Soil and Water Stewardship Week and possibly two others on conservation practice adoption. This would factor out to a quarterly billboard promotion at an annual cost of \$2,000.00. Dustin/Jerry. Motion carried.

### New Business

A request to extend the S. Fork Wildcat Implementation Grant for a one-year period was submitted to the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. The request was approved by IDEM and has been sent to contracting for drafting of a new agreement. Until a new agreement is executed claims are not reimbursable.

The Board reviewed the scope of the Clean Water Indiana grant agreement. The current agreement requires practice adoption (soil health system of practices) in order to be eligible for the soil testing outlined in the agreement. There may be other opportunities to partner with landowners who are farming on a smaller scale or "urban farms." The Board made a recommendation to submit a request to extend the scope of soil testing to the State Soil Conservation Board.

The State Board of Accounts requires political subdivisions to annually designate a depository. Dustin made a motion to retain The Farmer's Bank as the CCSWCD's official depository. Seconded by Jerry. Motion carried.

The following additional policies were reviewed:

The State Board of Accounts has determined that they will not take exception to expenditures for food if the District has a policy in place for the food expenditure, adheres to prescribed procedures for receipt and disbursement of funds for expenditure, that the activity furthers the mission of the District per Chapter 8 of the Uniform Compliance Guidelines. The policy requires an annual review. The Food Expenditure Policy was reviewed with no amendments to existing policy adopted by board action 4/5/2016. Jerry/Dustin. Motion carried.

Policies and Procedures for Credit Card and Open Charge Accounts. Reviewed with no amendments. Jerry/Dustin. Motion carried.

The Materiality Threshold Policy and Internal Control Policies and Procedures were reviewed with no recommended changes or amendments. Jerry/Dustin. Motion carried.

Clint served as the voting delegate to the IASWCD annual business meeting. A summary of the business meeting and the resolutions being considered for adoption was given. Others who attended also provided comments on individual sessions attended and the overall virtual format.

### **Old Business**

The Board revisited how the legal requirements of the SWCD annual meeting will be carried out while also taking into consideration COVID concerns and the health and welfare of those who might potentially attend. Chairman Orr asked Geneva, District Support Specialist, ISDA a series of questions concerning meeting legal requirements and conducting the meeting via a virtual platform. Chairman Orr made the recommendation to move towards hosting the meeting virtually rather than in-person. Additional information will be presented for consideration at the February business meeting before a final decision is made. Adam noted that Purdue Extension has a Zoom license and offered that as an option for hosting the annual meeting.

*IDEM Section 319 Grant – S. Fork Wildcat Creek – See written report for additional updates.*

Unallocated balance: \$13,290.00. Some applicants previously approved were unable to plant cover crops within the recommended guidelines (USDA, NRCS EFOTG). When this happens the field verification/stand evaluation is conducted in the spring of the of the following year. Once verified a request for reimbursement can be submitted to IDEM.

*IDEM Section 319 Grant Solicitation – Browns Wonder-Sugar Creek – See written report for additional updates.*

Unallocated balance: \$160,620.30 Boone County staff have indicated that practice implementation is being verified, invoices are being secured so that reimbursement can be requested for active Boone County applicants.

*IDNR-Lake and River Enhancement – Unallocated balance: \$4,047.50*

### **Staff Report/Conservation Partner Report**

**FSA, CED** – Brittany Shepherd – no report

**ISDA, DSC** – Geneva Tyler/George Reger – Geneva provided highlights of her monthly report.

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

Provided feedback on IASWCD conference sessions that he attended. Adam reported that he and Austin will be featuring the INfield Indiana program through podcasts, commercials, etc.. Planning a soil testing video to be featured on Hoosierland TV/WILO sometime in the future in collaboration with the SWCD and other potential agri-business partners.

**NRCS, District Conservationist** – Katlyn Fagan (see written report)

Katie announced that the Environmental Quality Incentive Program application deadline (for this funding cycle) was 12/18/2020. Thirteen applications were received and are being processed. The Conservation Stewardship application deadline was 1/8/2021.

COVID update - USDA, NRCS has provided directives to maximize telework. The Service Center is open for business and is accepting phone appointments.

USDA, NRCS is seeking public comments on non-industrial forestland.

**Resource Conservation Specialist** – Austin Green (see written report)

Austin reported that the INfield Advantage Program will host virtual producer meetings for those currently enrolled or those interested in enrolling in the INFA Program for the current growing year. The meetings will be held on 1/19 and 1/21 via Zoom. 2021 will include a more streamlined process.

Austin also reported that Rule 5 workload has decreased but plat reviews have increased. FSA and Purdue staff will assist with the fall/winter transect which is tentatively scheduled for March.

**District Administrator** – Leah Harden (verbal report)

Provided an update on FMLA leave status. Requested approval to work from home for an undetermined timeframe.

**Other Business**

None noted.

The regular business meeting adjourned at 9:04 AM. Clint/Dustin. Motion carried. The next regularly scheduled business meeting will be Tuesday, February 2nd beginning at 7:30 AM via Microsoft Teams.

Respectfully submitted by Leah Harden.

**Minutes Approval**

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Clint Orr, **Chairman**

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David Beard, **Vice Chairman**

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Jerry Batts, **Member**

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Dustin Johnson, **Member**

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Matt Kelley, **Member**