

MINUTES
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
February 11, 2014
USDA-NRCS
6013 Lakeside Blvd
Indianapolis, IN

Members in Attendance:

Scott Ham
Larry Clemens
Bob Eddleman
Nola Gentry
Warren Baird

Laura Fribley, ISDA
Geneva Tyler, ISDA
Nathan Stoelting, ISDA
Susan Hovermale, FSA
Jane Hardisty, NRCS
Cress Hizer, INAg LLC/IASWCD
Jennifer Boyle Warner, IASWCD
Angie Tilton, DNR
Hans Kok, CCSI
Jason Kischton, FSA
Dave Caldwell, Fayette SWCD
Ray Chattin, Knox SWCD

Others in Attendance:

Ted McKinney, ISDA
Jordan Seger, ISDA
Jen Pinkston, ISDA

I. 9:36 AM: Call to Order

II. Draft Minutes of October 2013

Nola moved to approve; Bob second. Motion passed.

III. State Soil Conservation Board Business

a. Chair and Vice Chair selection

Larry reviewed the officer recommendations for 2014 and 2015. Scott Ham will serve as Chairman, Nola Gentry will serve as Vice Chair. Bob moved to approve appointments. Warren second. Motion approved.

b. Committee selections

Scott reviewed the committee recommendations for 2014 and 2015. The executive committee will remain the same with Larry, Scott and Nola serving. Bob will continue to serve on the grants committee. The two vacant positions will make up the remainder of the grants committee. Until the board appointments are made, Warren will serve on the grants committee as well. Nola moved to approve the recommendations; Larry second. Motion approved.

IV. Soil and Water Conservation Districts (See Attachments)

a. Gibson County SWCD-Nathan Stoelting-Nola moved to approve; Bob second. Motion approved.

b. Warren County SWCD-Geneva Tyler-Warren moved to approve; Nola second. Motion approved.

V. Clean Water Indiana

a. Updated Clean Water Indiana Budget-Jen Pinkston (See Attachments)

Jen reviewed the changes proposed to the budget. In late 2013, all state agencies were required to withhold an additional 1.5% reserve. The impact on the Clean Water Indiana budget reduces the available funding to pilot projects down to \$145,000. Nola moved to approve the amended budget; Warren second. Motion approved.

b. Healthy Rivers Initiative Update-Angie Tilton (See Attachments)

Angie reviewed the 2012 project which ISDA, DNR and TNC entered into an agreement to share the cost of staffing for the Healthy Rivers Initiative. The current MOU between ISDA and DNR is nearing expiration. DNR would like to continue the partnership. DNR is requesting \$40,000 from ISDA to cover the next two years of the project. Jordan noted these funds will come from the special "Disaster" monies, not Clean Water Indiana. Therefore, SSCB approval is not

required for these funds, but ISDA would like the support of the SSCB for this initiative. Larry Clemens abstained from discussions and voting on matters related to the Healthy Rivers Initiative. Nola moved to support the project with the use of the Disaster funds; Bob second. Motion approved.

c. Pilot Project Proposals-Dave Caldwell (See Attachments)

Dave reviewed the proposal for a Concentrated District Support Specialist to be shared with Fayette and Union County SWCDs. It is the goal of the districts to be served by a unified staff, but to maintain their county identity. The boards will create a joint business plan and will hold joint board meetings. Union County and Fayette County maintain a common office in the FSA building located in Connersville. The two counties share a combined annual meeting. There is a history of mutual cooperation between the Union County and Fayette County staff and boards. Sharing the CDSS resource will be a seamless move and is virtually in place now. The combined districts will be governed by an Executive board. The Executive board will consist of two members from the Union County board and two members of the Fayette County board. It will be chaired by the chairman of the Union or the Fayette county board, alternating annually. The board discussed the proposal. Scott would like the board to consider the proposal and review the intent of the Request for Proposal to ensure this meets the intents. Nola voiced concern over Fayette County's lack of financial support to the district; Warren agreed. The board is requesting a letter of commitment from Fayette County to reinstate district operating funds at some level. Jennifer Boyle Warner commended the two districts for coming forward with this well thought out proposal and particular thanks to the two chairmen for taking the lead in developing the proposal. Jane Hardisty reiterated to the Fayette and Union County SWCD chairmen that technical assistance is available from NRCS and ISDA in their areas. The executive committee will meet later this month to review the proposal and develop recommendations for the next meeting.

VI. SSCB Report

a. Business Plan Update-Scott Ham (See Attachments)

Scott reviewed the updates to the business plan (in green) for 2014. Warren noted his concerns regarding the utilization of SharePoint for board members. Scott requested to set up a training session with the board members and Deb Fairhurst, possibly after the next meeting. Nola moved to approve the updated business plan; Larry second. Motion approved.

b. Future of Clean Water Indiana Grants Committee Report-Scott Ham

Scott reviewed the discussions from the Future of Clean Water Grants Committee. It is the consensus of the committee that CWI dollars should be focused towards "gaps" in conservation funding across the state. Scott is working with Deb to create maps to show the gaps. Scott will present this at the next meeting.

Bob discussed the continued support of CCSI. The steering committee met recently and they would like to know if the SSCB will continue funding in FY15 at the current levels. Nola asked about funding other than ISDA. Jennifer Boyle Warner informed the board of significant outside support from US Fish and Wildlife, the Conservation Innovation Grant, and Indiana Corn and Soybean. Jennifer and Bob noted the tremendous progress made under the CCSI program. Bob made a motion to continue to support at \$89,000 during fiscal year 2015, contingent upon available funds. Nola second. Motion approved.

VII. ISDA Updates (See Attachments)

a. Agricultural Affairs-Meg Leader

Meg is getting up to speed on the On Farm Network program and has been attending winter grower meetings. Jordan thanked Hans for his continued support and assistance in Meg's first few weeks.

b. District Support-Laura Fribley

Laura reminded everyone of the March meeting dates: March 6, 11, 13, and 18. Geneva reported on the last Leadership Institute which was held last weekend. There were 22 participants, with one participant completing the program. Tara continues to support the Water Quality Pilot Program efforts. A reporter from the Wall Street Journal is coming out to take pictures and write an article. Jennifer Thum is assisting the Policy division of ISDA with several zoning issues.

VIII. Conservation Partner Reports

- a. IASWCD Report-Jennifer Boyle Warner (See Attachments)
IASWCD has been sending emails of interest to SWCD staff periodically. No bills pertinent to soil and water are active with the legislature at the moment. Conservation Day at the state house was held recently. IASWCD has created a funding task force made up of SWCD staff and supervisors. The group will look into a possible natural resource extraction tax, among other ideas. Scott asked if anyone else from the partnership will be involved. Jen Pinkston will provide funding background and Lynn Dennis from The Nature Conservancy will also serve. The NACD summer conference will be held in Indy this summer. This is the first time to be held outside of Washington D.C. in about 15 years.
- b. IDEM Report-No Report
- c. DNR Report-No Report
- d. Purdue Report-No Report
- e. FSA Report-Susan Hovermale
FSA will have a conference call tomorrow to review the programs and funding opportunities under the recently signed Farm Bill. After the conference call, FSA will have more information.
- f. NRCS Report-Jane Hardisty
Jane noted the \$28 billion in conservation funding included in the Farm Bill. NRCS will lose funding over the next 10 years in EQIP dollars, but will receive additional dollars for technical assistance.

IX. Public Comment

X. Next Meeting:

March 4, 2014
9:15 AM
The Nature Conservancy
620 E Ohio St
Indianapolis, IN
June 3, 2014
9:30 AM
Location: TBD-Johnson County area

July 31, 2014
9:15 AM
The Nature Conservancy
620 E Ohio Street
Indianapolis, IN
October 28, 2014
9:15 AM
Location: TBD

XI. Adjourn: 11:41 am

Minutes Prepared By: Jen Pinkston
Approved By:
