

MINUTES
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
9:00 a.m. Tuesday, December 8, 2009
Indiana State Department of Agriculture
101 West Ohio Street, Suite 1200
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Members in Attendance:

Nola Gentry
Bob Eddleman
Warren Baird
Bill Mann
Scott Ham

Others in Attendance:

Jerod Chew, ISDA
Sara Slater-Atwater, ISDA
Roz Leeck, ISDA
Kelly Gentry, ISDA
Paul Hoffman, ISDA
Jim Lake, ISDA
Laura Fribley, ISDA
Tara Henry, ISDA
Nathan Stoelting, ISDA
Paula Baldwin, IASWCD

I. 9:07 AM: Call to Order

II. Draft Minutes of November 2009

Bill Mann moved to approve the November 2009 minutes as presented. Warren Baird seconded and the motion carried.

III. Clean Water Indiana

a. Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Update – Sara Slater-Atwater – See Attachment

Sara Slater-Atwater stated the CREP amendment is waiting on FSA to finalize the payment process. The payment process they are using is Pay As You Go (PAYGO). She also mentioned no date has been set on when the amendment will be finalized.

Jerod Chew mentioned ideally we would like to have a sign up period after planting season, like EQIP. If we have a sign up period, and looking at past trends, we would need approximately \$1.4 million the first year. Chew also commented that Slater-Atwater and the CREP committees have been working on getting marketing ideas in place to use this winter.

Nola Gentry recommended working with CREP districts and getting everyone on board. Perhaps successful CREP districts could lead and demonstrate to those who need more assistance.

Scott Ham asked who finalizes the CREP amendment. Slater-Atwater stated FSA in Washington D.C. N. Gentry suggested including a paragraph on CREP in the letter to legislators that is sent in March.

Chew also reported CREP is close to 500 linier miles in conservation. The current contract states CREP requires 2,000 linier miles.

b. Clean Water Indiana Update – Jerod Chew – See Attachment

Chew announced the 2010 CWI grants have yet to be approved. We submitted the preapproval form to State Budget Agency two days after the November board meeting. We have not heard back from them whether or not the funds will be approved. Baird stated the board's approval for the 2010 CWI grants is based on funding.

Chew suggested communicating to districts on the current situation with the 2010 grants. N. Gentry asked Chew to draft a letter to districts from the board and the Division explaining the situation and possible outcomes.

Chew went over annual CWI budget as prepared by Jennifer Pinkston, ISDA's Accountant. Total estimated CWI budget for fiscal year 2010 totals \$3,341,580.00. This document is to show how CWI money is being spent.

N. Gentry asked if there has been any discussion on the future of CWI \$10K match program. She asked if we should talk to the State Budget Agency about those funds, or will that draw unnecessary attention to those funds. Chew responded we will need to be prepared to answer any questions State Budget may have and explain the impact CWI funds have on Indiana. N. Gentry stated if she had to choose between CWI grants and the \$10K match program, then she would rather pass on the CWI grants. Jim Lake agreed. The \$10K match is in statue.

Chew mentioned he had hoped State Budget would have had an answer on the CWI grants before the SSCB meeting today. We are unsure of what the next steps might be.

Baird asked what limits ISDA has on talking to State Budget. Chew responded the Division has regular meetings with them covering current funding. We do our best on educating them, but have not received an answer.

Chew also reported the Division is currently at a net loss of five staff that we have not been granted permission to fill. We also have two possible retirements in the next five months.

IV. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

a. Supervisor Requests – Kelly Gentry

Blackford County Recommendation for Vacant Appointment – See Attachment

Baird moved to approve Blackford County's request. Mann seconded and the motion carried.

Marion County 10 Acre Waiver Request

Bob Eddleman moved to approve Marion County's request. Ham seconded and the motion carried.

b. CWI Grants Requests – Paul Hoffman

Allen County 2009 SNRG Extension/Reallocation Request – See Attachment

Lake clarified Allen County's preference would be to reallocate the funds. If funds are reallocated and the district can prepay the contracts then an extension would not be needed.

Mann moved to approve Allen County's 2009 SNRG reallocation request to use remaining funds for the winter producer meeting and prepay contracts with both the speaker and facility. Eddleman seconded and the motion carried.

Paul Hoffman also reported ECAP funds are starting to come back. Laura Fribley wanted clarification that the practice must be complete by December 31, 2009 and landowners need to be paid by January 31, 2010. Chew replied receipts must be submitted by the end of January and funds should be paid to landowners by February 28, 2010 along with final reports.

V. SSCB Board Reports and Discussion

a. SSCB Sub-Committee Reports and Recommendations

i. Executive Committee Report and Recommendations – Nola Gentry

In order to help with the state budget crunch, N. Gentry asked any board member that would be willing to waive their per diem for meetings to let Paul Hoffman know so he can prepare your vouchers accordingly. It is up to each board members own discretion. N. Gentry also mentioned state mileage rates have dropped to \$.40.

ii. CWI Grants Committee Report and Recommendations – Warren Baird – No Report

iii. District Capacity Committee Report and Recommendations – Bob Eddleman

Eddleman mentioned the webinar scheduled for November 17th was canceled due to equipment failure. They are not sure when it will be rescheduled.

VI. Public Comment

N. Gentry asked about the Leadership Institute that was held earlier this month. Fribley reported the last Leadership Institute workshop was held December 4th-5th in Wabash, IN. There were 51 participates. The theme for this workshop was *Impacting Community*. It was a very successful workshop. All of the DSSs attended.

N. Gentry also mentioned Janet Ayres will be moving on from Leadership Institute to allow new trainers to step in. Fribley also mentioned there maybe more levels of training beyond the current four in the future, such as webinars.

Ham asked when the next training will be. Stoelting stated it would be in March of 2010 in Bloomington. There will only be four workshops scheduled for 2010.

Lake also mentioned there are approximately 10 district supervisors that will graduate from Leadership Institute. They will be acknowledged during Annual Conference. Fribley also stated she would be giving an annual report on Leadership Institute during the January board meeting at Annual Conference.

Chew announced the Division will have a booth during Annual Conference. He asked the board if there is anything specific they would like to see at the booth to please let him know.

N. Gentry announced the ICP will be resigning a new partnership agreement that will include DNR and IDEM. The partnership has been working to clarify what programs each of us are and are not involved in.

Paula Baldwin stated Annual Conference planning is going strong and many took advantage of early registration. She also mentioned they have a legislative meeting scheduled on Friday to discuss their next steps on approaching legislators and what to ask.

VII. Other Business – None

VIII. Next Meeting: Monday, January 11, 2010 at 8:30 a.m. The meeting will take place during Annual Conference at the Indianapolis Hyatt Downtown.

IX. Business Plan Session

The SSCB participated in a business plan session facilitated by the District Support Specialists.

X. Adjourn: 2:30 PM