

## KANKAKEE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

### Minutes November 9, 2020

The Kankakee County Soil and Water Conservation District held its regular monthly board meeting on Monday, November 9, 2020 at 7:30am. Chairman Jeff O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:40am. Present were Directors Jeff O'Connor, Jim Frogge, Alan Wissmiller, Larry Kirchner, Educational Coordinator Crystal Sauder, and District Conservationist Trenton Rader. Guests in attendance were Hannah Wissmiller and Dan Dandurand. Absent were Director Dave Peters, Associate Directors Ed Brown and John Settle, Administrative Coordinator Linda Settle, and Resource Conservationist Emilie Watkins.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** O'Connor made, and Kirchner seconded a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of the Employee Evaluations Meeting. Motion passed four to zero.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** O'Connor made and Frogge seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda. Motion passed four to zero.

#### **SECRETARY REPORT:**

Minutes of September 14, 2020 Board meeting

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT:**

Approval of Time and Travel  
Approval of Financial Report  
Approval of Bills

**CORRESPONDENCE:** N/A

#### **UNFINISHED BUISNESS:**

**PFC Cost-Share** – Sauder shared that there are two new cost-share applications that we received in the mail and needed to be approved. Ben Shipper applied for 30 acres of a Bonus Blend with a \$600 maximum payment. Joe Denault applied for 243 acres of rye with a \$1600 maximum payment. Kirchner made and O'Connor seconded a motion to approve Ben Shipper and Joe Denault for PFC Cost-Share. Motion passed four to zero. Watkins will submit the final paperwork for the three previously approved projects to the IDOA and then release payments after approval. The District is on track to spend the remaining FY2019 funds by the end of the year. At the December board meeting, the Board will look at the remaining funds for FY2020 to determine if we should start promoting strip-till cost share more or not.

**Grants** – Sauder stated Watkins purchased the rainfall simulator with some of the remaining Cover Crop Champions grant funds. Watkins will be working on a rainfall video to share on social media. The final report for the Cover Crop Champions grant is due on November 20<sup>th</sup>, and Watkins will be submitting the report. There is \$57.90 in funds remaining. Watkins plans to spend that money to “boost” soil health videos on Facebook to help reach more people.

Sauder stated she and Watkins picked up and delivered trees and shrubs for Hawkins Park on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. The following day, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Watkins and the Bourbonnais Township Park District planted the trees at Hawkins Park. 100 brochures and seed packets were distributed to Hawkins Park Visitors through a brochure holder the District placed at the park. Sauder and Watkins filmed, edited, and shared a Seed Stratification video and a Hawkins Park video on YouTube, Facebook and the District’s website. Sauder will be purchasing native tree and shrub tags with the remaining Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation grant funds. Sauder has a Zoom meeting on November 11<sup>th</sup> with Rebecca Osland from the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District. The final report is due on November 30<sup>th</sup>.

Sauder created the Seed Stratification video to fulfill the Vital Lands Virtual Engagement Grant requirement. The District received \$500 to reimburse the price of the camera we bought. Watkins sent in the NACD dues for 2020-2021. The Friends of NACD grant is due on November 30, 2020. Sauder is investigating whether our dues we paid on 7/19/2020 qualify for the Friends of NACD Grant requirements.

**Education & Outreach** – Sauder shared the supplies for the Soil Health Conservation Kit have been delivered after being backordered. She is currently working with the teacher to finish up the kit & contents. Sauder mentioned the possibility of doing a spring round of kits if there is any interest from teachers. \$1,500 is budgeted for FY2021 to go towards conservation kits.

**Sales** – Sauder stated the District made a profit of \$848 from the fish sale and a profit of \$931.25 from the tree & shrub sale.

**RCPP** – O’Connor gave an overview on what the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is through NRCS. There was discussion on the benefits of holding the ALE Easements for the county at the SWCD office, as well as the disadvantages. Watkins and Sauder will be having another meeting with Emy Brawley to discuss the RCPP in more detail.

**Kankakee Riverfront Masterplan** – Sauder stated herself and Watkins attended an on-site meeting with engineers to discuss green infrastructure and grants on September 16<sup>th</sup>. The engineers discussed incorporating green infrastructure into their designs. SWCD staff shared funding opportunities and will keep in touch with additional grants. Wilkins reached out to Watkins requesting an audience of the Board for a stakeholder meeting to discuss the project. A date is not scheduled yet, but there are possibilities of it being on November 17, 18, or 19<sup>th</sup>.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

**Wind & Solar Update** – Sauder shared Watkins had a phone call with Delbert Skimerhorn from the Kankakee County Planning Department on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Delbert informed her that Pattern Energy is quickly moving forward with a large solar farm project, with a wind farm to follow, in the Essex area. The solar farm will be first with a Special Use Permit (SUP) coming to the District in January 2021. The Special Use Permit for the wind farm can be expected before April 2021. There is other news of another ~700-acre solar farm near Essex (BASF area), as well as Grant Park Wind Farm with nothing new to report on.

**NRCS Sub-agreement Update** – Sauder shared Watkins sent in a letter of intent to participate in the FY21 NRCS sub-agreement. Watkins has been spending much of her time recently working on 2020 CSP payments, annual practice reminder letters, deferral letters, and managing contract items and folders. Sauder now has Protracts and DMS permissions and will begin NRCS training with Watkins.

**Annual Financial Report** – Sauder stated Watkins submitted paperwork to SKDO for the FY20 Annual Financial Report. The Annual Financial Report will be approved at the December board meeting and then submitted before the end of the year.

**Determine Nominating Committee** – It was decided to push the decision of determining a nominating committee to the December Board meeting.

**Employee Evaluations** – Sauder stated a date and time needed to be set for an employee evaluations meeting. The employee evaluations are to take place at 3:30pm before the December board meeting.

**REPORTS – In addition to printed reports, if necessary**

**RC Report** – Nothing additional

**AC Report** – Nothing additional

**EC Report** – Nothing additional

**DC Report** – Rader stated he has sent all CSP payments out. CRP general signup is happening now, with CSP renewals happening by December. Rader also said he may be getting two potential new employees. One will work out of the New Lenox office and the other will work out of the Bourbonnais office.

**FSA Report – None**

**Committee Reports – None**

The next regular scheduled District board meeting is scheduled for December 14, 2020 at 5:30 pm.

Kirchner and Wissmiller seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed four to zero. The meeting adjourned at 8:52 am.