

## KANKAKEE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

### Minutes June 11, 2022

The Kankakee County Soil and Water Conservation District held its regular monthly board meeting on Monday, July 11, 2022. Chairman Jeff O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:43 AM. Present were Directors Jeff O'Connor, Jim Frogge, Larry Kirchner, and Ed Brown (left at 8:40 AM), Resource Conservationist Crystal Sauder, Grants & Special Projects Coordinator Emilie Watkins (via phone), Conservation Coordinator Matt Raymond, and District Conservationist Trenton Rader. Absent were Director Alan Wissmiller, Associate Director John Settle, and Administrative Coordinator Linda Settle.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** O'Connor made and Kirchner seconded a motion to approve the agenda with edit of the date listed. Motion passed four to zero.

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

#### SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Minutes of June 13, 2022 Board Meeting

#### TRERASURER'S REPORT:

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

**CORRESPONDENCE:** none

#### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**PFC Cost Share** – Raymond shared he is promoting the second sign-up period for cost-share. There was one remaining strip-till cost-share payment that was distributed. Raymond is preparing the reports for the IDOA that are due in August.

**Grants** – Raymond shared he has completed field check three. He has sat down with the Farmer Champions to evaluate Tailgate Talk site locations. Watkins shared the four dates scheduled for the Tailgate Talks with a roller crimping event planned for the winter.

Watkins shared she received an invitation to the Compeer "MORE for Ag" grant program. This grant program is by invite only. There is no need to rewrite the grant application previously submitted. Watkins will be reworking the budget to better match the new grant award. Brown made and Kirchner seconded a motion to rework the budget and request and submit the MORE for Ag grant. Motion passed four to zero.

Watkins shared the Conservation Collaborative members are confirmed. NRCS hired a new outreach coordinator and may be interested in sitting on the collaborative. A local farmer still needs to be invited and it was advised to reach out to someone who has some conservation practice experience but uses more conventional practices. The first-year grant progress report for the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation is due July 31, 2022. Watkins sent a draft progress report to the Board to review if interested. Kirchner mentioned he wanted some feedback on how our District is reporting our financials and if it is what the GDDF is looking for.

Watkins shared all Pembroke RCPP applications were funded and the District is helping organize a few soil health events. Watkins would like if the District could provide 20 soil tests for the Pembroke Farmers for the first test. SWCD staff could train Black Oaks staff how to do soil tests, and go over the process of collecting samples at the first event. O'Connor made and Brown seconded a motion to adjust the cost to include recommendations to the farmers for their crop types and provide 20 soil tests. Motion passed four to zero.

**Education & Outreach** – Sauder shared she led a Nature Scavenger Hunt event at Heldt Park on July 6<sup>th</sup> and 20 kids attended. On July 7<sup>th</sup>, Sauder did a pollinator teacher presentation for the Will County Farm Bureau and had 15 teachers attend. Raymond is completing his Certified Conservation Planner training and is 78% complete with Level 1, and 43% complete with Level 3.

**Personnel Policy** – Brown shared he reviewed the Inclement Weather Leave policy and edited the language to make more clear. Sauder shared the Administrative Leave Policy and asked for clarification for what staff is to do when an Administrative Leave notice comes out. Kirchner made and Frogge seconded a motion to approve the edits made to the Inclement Weather policy, clarification to the Administrative Leave policy, and the addition of Juneteenth in the Federal Holidays list. Motion passed four to zero.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**NARP RCPP** – Watkins shared the Conservation Fund's RCPP funding is stopping at the end of 2023. The Fund can request additional funding, and a Kankakee Watershed NARP project would be a great collaborative idea to leverage funds. The Board mentioned the SWCD staff to start planning with KRMA, Strand Associates, and Aqua to visit cover crop fields in late October or Early November.

**IL Cover Crop Initiative** – Raymond shared the American Farmland Trust received the Midwest Cover Crop Initiative grant from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation. The goal is to provide outreach, technical assistance, and financial assistance to farmers to promote voluntary cover crop adoption. Farmers are able to receive \$10 per acre and cover crops must be planted by December 1, 2022. Contracts are available for 1, 2, 3, or 4 years, but cover crops must be planted on the same footprint each year. Staff will try to target those planting cover crops after corn and ahead of soybeans.

**AISWCD Dues Resolution** – Sauder shared there is a resolution on AISWCD dues from other SWCD's. No quorum was met at last year's Winter Training and the dues percentage was still voted on, despite not

having a meeting later where a quorum was met. There will be no Director at the AISWCD Summer Training to act as a voting delegate.

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

**RC Report** – Sauder shared she and Raymond will be at the AISWCD Summer Training in Springfield July 17-20<sup>th</sup>.

**AC Report** – Nothing additional

**Grant Writer** – Nothing additional

**Conservation Coordinator** – Nothing additional

**DC Report** – Rader shared the RCPP announced who got in and there were 12 contracts chosen for our county. He is working on bits and pieces of CRP and CSP and EQIP are finished for the year.

**FSA Report** – Nothing additional

**Committee Reports** – Nothing additional.

The next regular District Board meeting will be held on Monday, August 8, 2022 at 7:30 AM. O'Connor made and Frogge seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed four to zero. The meeting adjourned at 9:11 AM.