

KANKAKEE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Minutes January 16, 2018

The Kankakee County Soil and Water Conservation District held its regular monthly meeting Tuesday, January 16, 2018. Chairman Jeff O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:45 am. Present were Directors Jeff O'Connor, Larry Kirchner, Alan Wissmiller and Dave Peters, Resource Conservationist Emilie Janes, District Conservationist Trenton Rader, FSA County Executive Director Ed Brown and guest Liz Reddington of Microgrid Energy. Absent were Director Tim McCorkle, Administrative Coordinator Linda Settle and Associate Director John Settle.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: O'Connor made and Kirchner seconded a motion to approve the agenda with the removal of Storm Water Contact with EPA under Old Business and the addition of Approval of FY2017 AFR and IDOA Funds to New Business. Motion passed four to zero.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Minutes of December 2017 Board Meeting: O'Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to approve the minutes as printed. Motion passed four to zero.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Approval of Time and Travel: Wissmiller made and Peters seconded a motion to approve the time and travel reports. Motion passed four to zero.

Approval of Financial Report: O'Connor made and Wissmiller seconded a motion to approve the financial report. Motion passed four to zero.

Approval of Bills: Kirchner made and Wissmiller seconded a motion to approve the paying of the bills as presented. Motion passed four to zero.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

NRI Update – Janes currently has 4 active NRI applications she is working on. She received training from Daniel Bishop, Kankakee County GIS Technician, and will continue training into the future. The current NRI process is being updated to reflect changes in the programs used, ArcMap and ArcCatalog.

Future Solar Projects – Liz Reddington, Project Development Manager for Microgrid Energy, met with the board to discuss questions and concerns about solar projects in Kankakee County. Liz discussed Community Solar Gardens, what they are and their relationship to utility companies and consumers interested in "subscribing" to solar. Liz explained the technology and equipment used for the solar gardens, and addressed concerns including vegetation under panels, installation, general maintenance, drainage, storm water management, environmental hazards and safety.

Conservation Cropping Seminar – On January 23rd, Kankakee will be hosting the 2018 Conservation Cropping Seminar at the Quality Inn & Suites. The K3SWCD will be promoting, attending and helping with the event.

Cost Share Programs – Nobody has signed up for the cover crop cost share, but there have been wells targeted for potential well sealing opportunities. Janes will look into approved cost share practices to implement if cover crop cost share isn't utilized.

Soy Capital Ag – O'Connor and Janes met with representatives of Soy Capital Ag to share information about the S.T.A.R. program and the Conservation Cropping Seminar. Janes will arrange a couple meetings a year, and on an as-needed basis, in order to continue a relationship with Soy Capital Ag.

NEW BUSINESS:

Nominating Committee Report – Directors Alan Wissmiller, Dave Peters and Larry Kirchner are up for reelection at the annual meeting.

Approval of RC Activities and Time Off – Janes requested to attend the Community Habitat Symposium at JJC on February 24th and 25th. The board agreed to pay the registration fee for Janes to attend. Janes requested time off in May and June, and was approved by the board.

Update & Approve Personnel Policies – Janes will send out an old copy of the Personnel Policies to the board for review. She will make any needed changes and bring back the updated version of the document for approval at the next board meeting. Ed Brown will supply Janes with policies used by FSA.

Student Registration for CCS – Kirchner made and O'Connor seconded a motion to pay the \$10 student registration fee for up to 10 ONU students to attend the 2018 Conservation Cropping Seminar. Motion passed four to zero.

Ag Areas – Joe Bybee sent Janes information about Ag Areas, a way to protect farmland.

Drainage District Meeting – Janes has been in touch with Sara Smith, IADD Executive Director, about planning a drainage district meeting for March. Janes has reached out to Quality Inn & Suites about hosting the event, but it was suggested to contact KCC or the Manteno Municipal Center for a location. The meeting was tentatively set for March 1st, but the board has suggested pushing the meeting to a later date in March. Janes will continue to work with Sara Smith to plan the meeting.

Pond Management Workshop – Janes has contacted Dale DeYoung and Rob Miller, fisheries biologist, to set up a Pond Management Workshop. The workshop will be held on Thursday, September 6th, 2018. Janes reached out to Logan Hollow to see if they would like to help sponsor the event, or speak at the event.

Tree & Fish Sale Dates – Dates for the spring fish and tree sale have been determined and posted on the website.

ONU Solar & Pollinator Habitat – Janes has been in contact with Dr. Mike Pyle, ONU biology dept. chair, about establishing pollinator habitat and potential solar on Olivet's campus. The board will back the establishment of pollinator habitat, but would like to learn more about solar before proceeding.

Approval of FY2017 AFR – The FY2017 AFR will be approved and submitted at the next board meeting.

IDOA Funds – K3SWCD has received a deposit for \$22, 680.41 in the operations account from the IDOA. This is a part of the full amount outlined in the FY2018 IDOA grant agreement.

O'Connor and Janes will meet with Kankakee County Farm Bureau to see if they are interested in providing funds to place signage at the fields involved in the Cover Crop Cost Share Program.

Contract – O'Connor made and Wissmiller seconded a motion to approve Janes' contract up to 40 hours a week. Motion passed four to zero. Janes will send out a final revised copy of her schedule to the board and others.

REPORTS – In addition to printed reports, if necessary

RC REPORT – Nothing additional.

AC REPORT – Nothing additional.

DC REPORT – Trenton Rader stated that CRP re-enrolls are still at a standstill. A budget has not been approved, and it is still being determined what money will be allocated to certain programs. CSP enhancements will now be bundled, but standalone practices may be scheduled without enhancements for a slight decrease in payment amount.

FSA REPORT – Signups are still in progress, with appointments being made.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – None.

The next regular District Board meeting will be February 12, 2018 at 7:30 am.

O'Connor made and Wissmiller seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed four to zero. The meeting adjourned at 11:10 am.