

OCTOBER BOARD MEETING AGENDA

KANKAKEE COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Monday, October 16, 2023 at 7:30 AM

Approval of Agenda

Public Comment

Consent Agenda

Secretary's Report

1. Minutes of September 11, 2023 Board Meeting
2. Minutes of September 20, 2023 Special Committee Meeting

Treasurer's Report

3. Approve Time and Travel
4. Approve Financial Report
5. Bill Approval

Correspondence:

None

FSA Report

NRCS Report

Unfinished Business:

Partners for Conservation (PFC) Cost-Share
Grants
The Conservation Fund TA Agreement
Recent & Future Education & Outreach Events
Recap of Fall Tree & Fish Sales
Social Media Policy
Public Comment Policy

New Business:

Incentive Programs for Producers
Conservation Coordinator Position Vacancy

Reports – in addition to printed reports, if necessary

Resource Conservationist – Crystal Sauder
Administrative Coordinator – Linda Settle
Grants Coordinator & Special Projects – Emilie Watkins
Conservation Coordinator – Matt Raymond

Adjournment

Date and time of next Board Meeting
November 13, 2023 at 7:30 AM

KANKAKEE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Minutes October 16, 2023

The Kankakee County Soil and Water Conservation District held its regular monthly board meeting on Monday, October 16, 2023. Vice Chairman Jim Frogge called the meeting to order at 7:34 AM. Present were Directors Jim Frogge, Larry Kirchner, Alan Wissmiller and Ed Brown, Associate Director John Settle, Resource Conservationist Crystal Sauder, Conservation Coordinator Matt Raymond, Grants & Project Coordinator Emilie Watkins(via phone, left meeting at 9:07), District Conservationist Trenton Rader(left meeting at 8:30AM) and Administrative Coordinator Linda Settle. Absent was Director Jeff O'Connor.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Frogge made and Kirchner seconded a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of 1 item in Correspondence. Motion passed four to zero.

CONSENT AGENDA: Frogge made and Wissmiller seconded a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion passed four to zero.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Minutes of September 11, 2023 Board Meeting

TREASURER'S REPORT:

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

CORRESPONDENCE: Sauder stated that an email had been received from Amanda Piker regarding the lithium battery plant being proposed for Manteno. Amanda has concerns regarding the destruction of our land and water resources and wants to know if the District has a position on the proposed plant. Discussion was held, a letter will be drafted to send to her in response.

OLD BUSINESS:

PFC Cost Share – Raymond reported that the second sign up exhausted the remaining funds for FY2023. All applicants have signed their agreements. There are still a few STAR forms to complete and he is working on RCPP eligibility paperwork.

Grants – Raymond stated that the next potential event will be late fall/early winter. It will be in combination with Pheasants Forever, USFWS and Willowhaven and focus on habitats.

Raymond reported that he is preparing to remove equipment from the fields for the Soil on Demand project. The equipment is in need of firmware updates and maintenance which will be completed over the winter.

Watkins stated that on August 4, 2023 she submitted the application for a new Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation grant. It would be used to continue and strengthen the Conservation Collaborative and build cross-cutting partnerships to secure longer-term funding for District capacity and working lands conservation.

On October 2, 2023 she had a phone call with Rebecca Judd. GDDF is considering giving a 2-year grant of \$25,000 per year. Watkins is working on compiling YTD financials to send them. A decision will be made the last week of November with funding received before the end of 2023.

Watkins stated that she is scheduling a one-on-one mentorship meeting with PRE Collective with an eye toward future funding. The 2023 Hazard Mitigation Plan will be used to discuss funding opportunities and strategic partnerships.

The Conservation Fund TA Position – The services agreement for the Fund TA position has been approved and submitted to TCF on September 29, 2023. It is effective immediately through December. Payment will be within 30 days of receipt of an invoice. Sauder stated that she will have bi-weekly check-in meetings along with the documentation and reporting she will be doing.

Education & Outreach – Sauder reported that the soil judging contest was held on September 20th with 6 FFA teams and 63 students. Lottinville Grain Farms hosted the event.

Sauder also reported that she and Raymond did a STAR presentation for the American Farmland Trust Tour on September 20th at O'Connor Farm. Also on October 4th at the Black Oaks Center Open House she and Raymond met with 2 new and 3 returning applicants for the RCPP enrollment.

Sauder stated that future events include: October 17th at 8AM she will be doing a presentation on soil & environmental issues in agriculture at the ONU Environmental Sciences Lab. Also on October 17th at 6:30PM she and Raymond will be doing a presentation on the District and the Soil on Demand project for Green Drinks. Then on October 28th she will be at the Math/Science Conference for 5th grade girls at Moraine Valley Community College. Still to be determined is the habitat/farming event that is being planned with Pheasants Forever, US Fish & Wildlife Service and BTPD Willowhaven.

Sales – Sauder stated that the fish and tree sales are over. Both sales were small and the District made a small profit from each.

Social Media Policy – Sauder stated that she is still working on a draft social media policy. The AISWCD does not have a policy.

Public Comment Policy – Sauder reported that Director Brown had worked with her on a proposed Public Comment Policy. Brown presented the proposed policy with discussion held on whether to have a time limit set for public comments. Frogge made and Kirchner seconded a motion that each speaker will have an 8 minute time limit and each public comment session will have a 1 hour time limit. Motion passed three to one.

NEW BUSINESS:

Incentive Programs for Producers – Raymond reported that there are some incentive programs available for producers. There are flyers on all programs in the SWCD office.

Illinois Soybean Association is offering incentives for Non-GMO Soybean growers to complete a survey. They are looking for data.

The American Farmland Trust is offering Cover Crop incentives. Incentives are available for new acres and re-enrolled acres. The District would earn a referral bonus for any new acres.

The Soil & Water Outcome Fund has incentives for new contracts and re-enrollments with SWCD referral bonuses.

Conservation Coordinator Position – Sauder reported that Conservation Coordinator Raymond has taken a position with NRCS. His last day will be November 3, 2023. Sauder stated that she will need to take the Certified Conservation Planner training so that the District will continue to get the IDOA grant. Discussion was held on how to move forward. Sauder and Watkins will step up to take more responsibility and will be looking for an intern to help with some of the work. Consensus is not to fill Raymond's position at this time.

REPORTS – in addition to printed reports, if necessary

RC Report – Sauder stated that she will be on vacation December 20, 2023 – January 1, 2024. She will be working remotely for part of time

AC Report – Nothing additional.

Grant Writer – Nothing additional.

Conservation Coordinator – Nothing additional.

DC Report – Nothing additional.

FSA Report – Nothing additional.

Committee Reports –

The next regular District Board meeting will be held on November 13, 2023 at 7:30 AM.

Kirchner made and Wissmiller seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed four to zero. The meeting adjourned at 9:18 AM.