

KANKAKEE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Minutes September 14, 2020

The Kankakee County Soil and Water Conservation District held its regular monthly board meeting on Monday, September 14, 2020. Chairman Jeff O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Present were Directors Jeff O'Connor, Alan Wissmiller, Jim Frogge, Associate Directors Ed Brown and John Settle, Administrative Coordinator Linda Settle, Resource Conservationist Emilie Watkins, and Educational Coordinator Crystal Sauder. Absent was Director Larry Kirchner and District Conservationist Trenton Rader.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Frogge made and O'Connor seconded a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of the Kankakee River Stakeholder Meeting. Motion passed three to zero.

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

SECRETARY REPORT:

Minutes of August 10, 2020 Board Meeting

TREASURER'S REPORT:

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

CORRESPONDENCE: N/A

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

PFC Cost-Share – Watkins stated there are five applicants to review and approve for cover crop cost-share. This will be the first-time utilizing cover crops for most of the applicants and the first time on all the fields. If every applicant utilizes the full \$20/acre all of the FY2019 PFC Cost-share funds will be spent and we can start using FY2020 funds. O'Connor made and Frogge seconded a motion to approve the five applications submitted for cover crop cost share. Motion passed three to zero.

Grants – Watkins shared the two Cover Crop Champions Field Day events went well and lots of great conversations were had at each. She will be conducting Farmer Friday interviews and continuing video series through the end of November. There is \$449.33 remaining in the Cover Crop Champions grant funds. Watkins proposed she would like

to purchase a tabletop rainfall simulator with the remaining grant funds to make educational videos.

Sauder stated the Village of Manteno has already started preparing the site at Rock Creek Estates. They have been cutting and spraying trees and applying herbicide to prepare for a winter seeding. Sauder shared she is investigating grants to receive funds for walking paths and signage. The ComEd Green Region Grant is the top grant for the habitat project.

Sauder shared the insect surveys at Hawkins Park in Limestone are continuing. She is working with Trevor Edmonson on scheduling a tree planting date with the park district's board and possible community members.

Sauder is creating a seed stratification video for the Virtual Engagement Grant requirements. She will submit the final report by September 30th.

Education & Outreach – Sauder stated she is conducting a Winterizing for Wildlife event at the University of Illinois Extension office on September 25th at 10am. Ten people will be allowed to attend in person with the rest watching through Zoom. This event will share with guests how to prepare their yard and gardens for the winter to provide shelter to insects and other animals that over-winter here.

Sauder gave an update on upcoming District events. Watkins and herself will begin the QuickBooks Online course on September 16th. The fish and tree sales are scheduled for October. Watkins and Sauder will be going to KCC on October 13th to talk about Cover Crops to two classes.

Sales – Sauder stated the fish sale delivery date is scheduled for October 2nd. This will be the first sale using Keystone Hatcheries for the fish sale. The tree sale pick up has been moved to October 22nd and 23rd to line up with Iroquois' tree sale.

CD Update – Watkins stated CD #3 will be withdrawn at the end of this month. O'Connor signed the paperwork needed to withdraw the CD.

NEW BUSINESS:

RCPP – Watkins shared Rader, O'Connor, Sauder, and herself met with Emy Brawley from the Conservation Fund to discuss the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). There are different counties that are targeted in Illinois. The focus is to create ALE Easements to preserve farmland for next generation farmers. The Kankakee County SWCD is eligible to be the easement holder. This would require the District to inspect the fields one per year and submit an easement monitoring report to NRCS. There would be a \$4,000 one-time payment to the District per easement. O'Connor

mentioned he is unsure if it would be the right fit for the District with staffing right now. As the Board discussed the District's potential involvement, a few concerns and questions were brought up. Watkins stated Emy did not need answers right away and we can continue to learn more about the possibility.

Stakeholder Meeting – Watkins stated the District has signed up for two slots for the Kankakee River Society Stakeholder Meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to learn about the East Riverwalk Project. The District will be able to share input for green infrastructure and water quality while at the meeting. A discussion was brought up on who the best two individuals to the meeting were. It was decided that Watkins and Sauder will go to the meeting to discuss the District's involvement and input in the project.

REPORTS – In addition to printer reports, if necessary

RC Report – Nothing additional

AC Report – Nothing additional

EC Report – Nothing additional

DC Report – Rader stated he is working on CRP and creating new contracts. Payments will be distributed soon.

FSA Report – None

Committee Reports – None

The next regular scheduled District board meeting is scheduled for October 19, 2020 at 7:30 am.

O'Connor made and Frogge seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion passed three to zero. The meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.