

KANKAKEE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Minutes March 12, 2018

The Kankakee County Soil and Water Conservation District held its regular monthly meeting Monday March 12, 2018. Chairman Jeff O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:45 am. Present were Directors Jeff O'Connor, Tim McCorkle and Dave Peters, and Resource Conservationist Emilie Janes. Guests in attendance were Jim Frogge.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: O'Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Cover Crop Sampling under Old Business and IEPA under New Business. Motion passed three to zero.

REORGANIZATION OF BOARD:

Election of Officers: O'Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to approve the slate of directors as written. Motion passed three to zero.

Appointment of Associate Directors: O'Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to appoint John Settle as Associate Director. Motion passed three to zero.

Restructure of Committees: O'Connor made and McCorkle seconded a motion to appoint Jim Frogge to the Education Committee. Motion passed three to zero.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Minutes of February 12, 2018 Board Meeting: O'Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to approve the minutes as printed. Motion passed three to zero.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Approval of Time and Travel: O'Connor made and McCorkle seconded a motion to approve the time and travel reports. Motion passed three to zero.

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

Approval of Bills: Peters made and O'Connor seconded a motion to approve the paying of bills as presented. Motion passed three to zero.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

OLD BUSINESS:

NRI Approval – Janes stated that she is still in the process of working on several NRI's for solar projects. Janes stated that five NRI reports for solar need to be reviewed: 2018-006, 2018-007, 2018-008, 2018-009 and 2018-010. **2018-006** is for a 19.16 acre parcel in Momence Township, with a moderate LESA score. **2018-007** is for a 27.22 acre project in Momence Township, with a moderate LESA score. **2018-008** is for a 26.79 acre project in St. Anne Township with a low LESA score. **2018-009** is for a 22.45 acre project in St. Anne Township, with a moderate LESA score. **2018-010** is for a 19.16 acre project in Limestone Township, with a low LESA score. All reports are for Cypress Creek Renewables, and Janes recommends approving all for the proposed land use change. Peters suggests to review and collectively approve all NRI reports.

Peters made and McCorkle seconded a motion to follow the recommendation, and to collectively pass that the Kankakee County SWCD “does not oppose” the proposed land use changes. Motion passed three to zero.

Cost Share Programs – Money has not been released yet, but Janes is working to make a plan for allocation when the funds are released.

Drainage District Meeting – Janes has been in contact with Sara Smith from the Illinois Drainage District Association. There will be a Drainage District meeting on March 29th at Quality Inn.

ONU Pollinator Habitat – None.

Champaign Co. FSA Questionnaire – O’Connor stated that a survey for Kankakee County could be put in FSA folders and given to producers to complete while they are waiting for other forms to be completed. O’Connor stated that the Questionnaire, created by a representative from the Wetlands Initiative, needs to be tweaked for use at the Kankakee County SWCD. The survey will serve to guide the allocation of district dollars and the creation of projects, based on producers’ responses. The survey includes questions about the implementation of different conservation practices on farms, as well as participation in different NRCS programs. O’Connor states that the survey will be a priority for the upcoming month, and will be discussed again at the April meeting.

Kids Day at the Farm – Janes stated that she is creating new presentations for the “soil” and “water” stations at Kids Day at the Farm. The event will take place on March 21st and 22nd from 10am-2pm at the Kankakee County Fairgrounds. O’Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to approve a Kids Day at the Farm budget of up to \$250. Motion passed three to zero.

Cover Crop Sampling – Janes stated that last spring, the district pulled 21 cover crop samples for 10 producers to send in to Midwest Labs for a nutrient analysis. The district plans to continue this initiative for spring 2018. Peters made and O’Connor seconded a motion to fund the Cover Crop Sampling project to complete 100% more samples this year than had been done in spring 2017. Motion passed three to zero.

NEW BUSINESS:

Approval of Personnel Policies – O’Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to approve the Personnel Policies as written, with the intention of continuing to update the policies as needed. Motion passed three to zero.

AISWCD Web Development & Maintenance – Janes stated that the AISWCD reached out to her about helping them develop a website. The board agreed that this would be a good opportunity. Janes stated that she would reach out to Alan Riley, programmer at Olivet Nazarene University, to help with the project. Janes will move forward with the project if she can find outside help.

NRCS Conservation Planning Course – Janes was invited to participate in the 2018 conservation planning course offered through NRCS. The board determined that with her current workload, Janes would not be able to attend the training this year.

Membership Renewals – O'Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to decline membership renewal for the National Association of Conservation Districts and National Watershed Coalition. Motion passed three to zero.

Monarch Research – Janes stated that the Illinois Natural History Survey reached out to find potential study sites in southern Kankakee County. Sites would be CRP fields, soybean fields and garden areas to plant milkweed and assess the monarch butterfly oviposition rates in different habitats. Janes is in communication with Dr. Zaya to help him find potential sites and contact landowners.

Grand Park Wind Farm (GPWF) – Janes stated that a wind farm project in Grant Park is in the planning phases, but there is no word yet whether or not the project will continue. If the project is approved, the district will be responsible for completing an NRI for the 300 megawatt wind farm project in the northeast portion of the county.

Asana Monthly Subscription – Janes stated that she is using a web-based task management platform called Asana. A premium subscription to the platform costs \$6.25 per month, per user. Peters made and O'Connor seconded a motion to approve a premium membership for Janes, if needed. Motion passed three to zero.

IEPA – O'Connors stated that it may be necessary to utilize other SWCDs in surrounding counties to complete IEPA inspections, if needed.

QuickBooks – McCorkle made a Peters seconded a motion to approve a cloud-based QuickBooks update if the update adheres to security protocol. Motion passed three to zero.

Overtime – O'Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to allow Janes to work up to 50 hours a week, 10 hours of overtime, until a part-time employee is hired to alleviate work load. Motion passed three to zero.

REPORTS – In addition to printed reports, if necessary

RC REPORT – Nothing additional.

AC REPORT – Nothing additional.

DC REPORT – None.

FSA REPORT – Brown stated that FSA and NRCS offices are being reorganized and consolidated. In the future, the NRCS, FSA and SWCD may operate behind one common counter.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – none.

The next regular District Board meeting will be April 9th, 2018 at 7:30 am.

O'Connor made and Peters seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed three to zero. The meeting adjourned at 9:22 am.