

ELKHART COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 19, 2024

Present: Supervisors: *Alex Wait, Dale Leer, Darrell Shover*; Staff: *Jim Hess, Lora Atkins, Todd Clark, Jenna Wait (Via phone), Associate: Keith Miller; Dennis Badke.*

Absent: Supervisors: Tom Kercher, Dean Rink; Associates: David Bontrager, Gary Kaufman, Tom Perry; Elkhart County Surveyor: Phil Barker; District Support Specialist: Sandra Hoffarth; Purdue Extension: Crystal Van Pelt; Acting NRCS: Troy Manges; ISDA Support Specialist: Heath Hurst.

The board meeting was called to order by Alex Wait at 5:30 pm.

The January 22, 2024, board meeting minutes was approved on a motion by *Leer/Shover*

Agency Reports:

NRCS: - Not in Attendance

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

-17 application have been ranked

- 4 applications have been preapproved.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

-Working on a couple of new applications

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP2018)

-Completed 2 payments after modifications were approved

-Working on 2 new applications

Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)

Wetland/HEL Determinations:

-Working on 30 HELC Determinations

-Working on 2 WC Determinations

Meetings or Trainings:

Several Teams Trainings

IN Regional Dairy Meeting in Plymouth

CSP Rollout Meeting

Potential Project – The City of Goshen is looking to convert the vegetation in 2 retention basins on the South side of Waterford Hills Parkway and West of Regent Street into a pollinator habitat. The 2 areas are about 9 acres in total size. They are working with Blue Heron to get the seeding done. They are also working with Pheasants Forever and Jared O’Brien with USFW on getting some of the project funded. They will still need some help to cover the cost of site prep before the planting. They are planning to put up signs once the project is completed. I told Jason Kauffman and Alexa Kennel, City of Goshen, that I would reach out to the Elkhart SWCD to see if they would be interested and able to put some money toward the project.

District Conservationist Position – The position in Elkhart County has been advertised again along with about 20 others across Indiana. The position application period closes on February 23, 2024. I am not sure how long after that we will know if anyone is interested in the position, but wanted you to know that has been advertised again.

ISDA:

Not in attendance

County Surveyor:

Not in attendance

Extension:

Not in attendance

District Business:

*SWCD Annual Meeting: Lora sent the program around for approval, we also chose the menu for Annual Meeting.

*IDEA Dues: Board approved paying the dues. *Shover/Leer*

*State Tree Nursery Tree Pickup: The Tree Pickup is set for 4/23, the order's can be picked up 4/24 – 4/26 during normal business hours 8:00 am – 4:30 pm.

*Pay Dirt Workshop: Jim and Todd explained to the board how the Pay Dirt workshop is going to go, they listened to a Jennifer Tank /Notre Dame brief video.

*Plat Books: Elizabeth Humble contacted Lora to see if we were ready to update our Plat Book, so we are Moving forward with our 2024 Plat Book. The board approved *Wait/Shover*

*NACD Conference: Jim and Todd talked about the NACD conference in California and their experience, Liz Rice and Amy Work was also there.

*Education Updates: Working on the website and Pay Dirt, she will be at the Michiana Garden Expo on Saturday.

Financial Business:

The vehicle log was signed.

The rubber stamp was not used.

The Gateway Reports have been uploaded and reviewed by the Board.

The monthly financial reports were approved on a motion by *Shover/Leer*

Claims for the following were signed: Darrell Shove (\$40.40 – Annual Conference Expenses); Kourtney Woodall (\$1,850.00 – Pay Dirt 2024 Expenses); The Electric Brew in Goshen (\$1,480.00 – Pay Dirt 2024 Expenses); Tiller Group, Inc (\$3,000.00 – Final Payment for Speaker Fee); Jenna Wait (\$76.91 – Rain Barrel Paint); Burns Rent-Alls, Inc (\$6,603.51).

The board meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM *Leer/Shover*

Next Board Meeting: March 18, 2024 - 5:30 pm
SWCD Office
59358 County Road 7 Elkhart, IN 46517

SWCD Board Chairman
Tom Kercher

SWCD Board Vice Chairman
Alex Wait

SWCD Board Member
Dale Leer

SWCD Board Member
Dean Rink

SWCD Board Member
Darrell Shover

Recording Secretary
Lora L Atkins