

ELKHART COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 22, 2024

Present: Supervisors: *Tom Kercher, Alex Wait, Dale Leer, Dean Rink, Darrell Shover*; Staff: *Jim Hess, Lora Atkins, Todd Clark*; Associate: *Keith Miller, Tom Perry*; Wood-Land-Lakes RC&D, *Jon Zirkle*.

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

The board meeting was called to order by Tom Kercher at 5:30 pm.

The December 18, 2023, board meeting minutes was approved on a motion by *Rink/Shover*

Agency Reports:

NRCS: - Not in Attendance

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

-Working on 20+ Applications

-Working on certifying practices for 2 Contracts

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP2018)

-Working on 2 modifications

-Working on 2 new applications

Wetland Reserve Easement (WRE)

Wetland/HEL Determinations:

Working on several HELC Determinations

Meetings or Trainings:

Several Teams Trainings

Monthly SWCD Meeting

IASWCD Annual Conference

ISDA:

Not in attendance

County Surveyor:

Not in attendance

Extension:

Not in attendance - Kathryn Jennings is the new Educator.

District Business:

* Annual Business Meeting: Tom Kercher talked about how things were discussed between the two budgets.

*Legislator Breakfast: They said it was different, that it was hard to hear, and that they are hoping it is better next year.

*SWCD Annual Meeting: We need a letter from the Chairman.

*Finance Audit: The audit went well and was finished within 90 minutes.

*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*

*Well Water Test Kits: We have new test kits that are DIY that are updated.

*Tree Sale: We have had over 60+ orders, \$6,412.50 is our Early Bird Sales total.

*PAY DIRT Workshop: Jim & Todd went out and talked to several Sponsors as a follow-up for our Workshop. BrightStar/Casey's Erosion & Seed Solutions/Ceres Solutions & Co-Alliance are merging as of March 1st. Jim is looking for places to advertise. He has People's Exchange, Farm World & Farmer's Advance, Jim asked the board if they had any other suggestions. He also had a letter he had ready to send out to the Swamp participants that he had them look over.

*SWAMP Projects: We have 5 left that he is wrapping up...

*General Permit Updates: This is the slow part of the year; we are getting the Annual Report ready. He shows 29 municipal owned projects in the county.

*Education Updates: Poster Contest/Seed Swap/75,700 people were reached through public education and out events. And 66,000 people through social media. Our website had over 9,000 unique visitors, since we have offered our Grass Roots newsletter electronically, we have increased by 400 recipients.

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 *Rink/Wait*

Claims for the following were signed: Indiana Dept of Revenue (\$674.29 – 2023 Sales Tax); Penny Stroup (\$200.00 – 2023 Yearly Audit); Thomas Kercher (\$374.70 – Annual Conference Expenses); INterra Credit Union (\$2123.08 – Postage/Special Projects/Office Supplies/Ed & Conference); INterra Credit Union (\$1288.79 – Postage/Special Projects/Ed & Conference/Sustenance); INterra Credit Union (\$120.00 – Annual Conference Hotel).

The board meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM *Shover/Rink*

Next Board Meeting: February 19, 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