

ELKHART COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES

December 16, 2024

~Draft~

Present: Supervisors: *Alex Wait, Darrell Shover, Dale Leer, Keith Miller, Dean Rink*; Associates: *Tom Kercher, Tom Perry*; Staff: *Jim Hess, Lora Atkins, Todd Clark, Jenna Wait*; ISDA Support Specialist: *Heath Hurst*; NRCS: *Acting District Conservationist, Deb Knepp*; *Dennis Badke and Farmer Eric Brookins, Mark Brookins*; Health Dept: *Carrie Brunson*; Speakers from Notre Dame: *Diogo Bolster, Moh Aboelnour*.

Absent: Associates: David Bontrager, Gary Kauffman; Elkhart County Surveyor: Phil Barker; District Support Specialist: Sandra Hoffarth;

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

The November 18, 2024, board meeting minutes was approved on a motion by *Leer/Rink*

Agency Reports:

NRCS:

***Elkhart County NRCS Report
November 18 – December 13, 2024, 2024***

Environmental Quality Incentives Program:

Currently processing 21 applications for 2025.

Completed assessments on 14.

9 ranked and eligible for early round funding.

Have met with many producers as they brought applications in.

8 applications preapproved in the early funding.

Working on contracts, job sheets and signatures for them.

Processed payment for fencing for a prescribed grazing system.

Processed request for 2 EQIP cancellation requests for one producer who sold both properties.

Cancellations were approved.

Completed site visit for FSA Compliance Review

Completed 2 wetland/Highly Erodible determinations

Public comments can be made through Dec 23rd, 2024, on Climate benefits of Conservation Practice Standards

Comments can be made at [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) or dana.ashford@usda.gov

ISDA:

ISDA hired Cody Lindville, they are down one person in the NE and they are looking to hire another person.

County Surveyor:

Not in attendance

Extension:

Not in attendance

District Business:

*Notre Dame University Research Opportunity: Moh Aboelnour went over his proposal, he talked about watershed his models SWAT (Soil & Water Assessment Tool).

*CWI Grant Info: Nothing to report until the end of January 2025.

*Capacity Report: Quality Water of Life manual, we had a meeting with BS&F about creating our manual. Our Capacity report and it has been approved.

*Annual Conference Resolutions: The board was given the resolutions to look over before the Annual Conference.

*RITA Tech Visit: Dec 17, 2024, Camille Sczerbowicz will visit our office.

*PAY DIRT 2025 Planning: Todd and Jim met with Ty Garmin who will be doing a podcast. Seed to Feed will be growing our live stage, Tom Mortenson with RA Smith /Matt Meersman/BS&F/Flexamat.

*SWAMP Projects: We used up all but \$25 of our funds this year

*General Permit Updates: Todd has been busy with NOT's (Notice of Terminations), closed 7 chicken barns, new project RV Resort on county line near Syracuse doesn't plan to shut down over winter.

*Education Updates: Classroom at Bethany, Pay Dirt, Website.

Financial Business:

The vehicle log was signed.

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

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

Claims for the following were signed: INterra Credit Union (\$1,118.48 - Postage/Office Supplies/Special Projects/Conference/Hotel); Robert Webb (\$128.70 – Refund for Tree Sale order 2025-011); CMC Global (\$875.00 – IASWCD Annual Conference – Alex Wait/Darrell Shover/Keith Miller); Michiana Irrigation Assn (\$60.00 – Winter Irrigation Workshop – Jim Hess).

The board meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM *Rink/Leer*

Next Board Meeting: December 16, 2024 - 5:30 pm
SWCD Office
59358 County Road 7 Elkhart, IN 46517

SWCD Board Chairman
Alex Wait

SWCD Board Vice Chairman
Darrell Shover

SWCD Board Member
Dale Leer

SWCD Board Member
Keith Miller

SWCD Board Member
Dean Rink

Recording Secretary
Lora L Atkins