



St. Joseph County Conservation District
693 E. Main Street
Centreville, MI 49032
(269)467-6336 x5

March 20, 2024 Board Minutes

6:03 pm Call to order by Howard Avildsen

Directors Present:

Howard Avildsen, Board chair
Todd Hironimus, vice chair
Dan Blasius
Chad Clark, Treasurer
Carol Higgins

Staff Present:

Harlie Miller, Ashley Waltke, Shaun Grace and Eric Pretzlav

Introductions/Visitors: Nelson Evers and Rick Schaffer

Additions or Deletions to agenda: five additions. Clark motioned to accept the board agenda as presented with the 5 additions to New Business, Higgins second. Motion passed.

Public Comment: None

Approval of February board meeting. Clark motioned to accept February minutes Hironimus second. Motion passed.

Treasurer Report:

Higgins motioned to accept the financials and place on file. Hironimus second, motion passed. No discussion.

Correspondence Reports:

Administrator: spoken/written Grace was excited to share her pictures and a bit of her experience about the February trip to Australia. She thanked the board for allowing her to go and Renehan for taking the Feb board minutes.

MAEAP: written. Miller showed the board her spill kit she assembled for new MAEAP farmers. She also read her report and explained the information.

NRCS: none.

CISMA: S. Grace spoke about Spotted Lantern fly and many questions were asked about how and where we place traps. Grace gave Blasius the phone number to the DNR representative to speak with him further about questions and the rules around spotted lantern fly.

CTAI: Waltke explained that another technician left the program, and she was assigned to a fourth county to provide support. She is a bit nervous about the extra responsibility. However, we know she can do it.

MDARD: written.

Board:

Higgins discussed the success of her 2 Mendon Envirothon teams. It is the first time SJCCD has had a team represented.

Avildsen invited the board to coffee on March 29th with state representative Steve Carra. Associate Board member Nelson Evers asked where batteries might be recycled. A great discussion was had about when current events are held at the fairgrounds, and possibly Home Depot or other stores have places to recycle. SJCCD staff will look into where recycling is located.

Old Business:

- **Conflict of interest:**
- **Annual Meeting April 10, 2024:** 2 awards will be given out to new farmer of the Year and Volunteer of the year. The board took flyers to post around town.
- **Vehicle search:** Still searching.
- **Dairy Doo:** Clark motioned to place the sales of the Dairy Doo on to our web page and the \$1.00 profit per bag. Blasius second. Grace will meet with Nottawa Gas for further sales and how to get to the fairgrounds for distribution in May at the tree sale.

New Business:

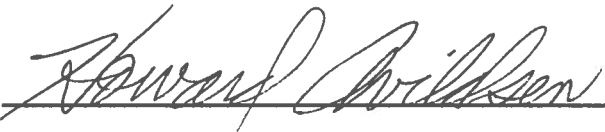
- **Grants:** Grace explained that 2 grants were written and submitted and Pretzlav spoke up about the denial of Clean Boats, Clean Water grant. He reached out to see how we could strengthen the grant proposal next year. We have not heard from the Macroinvertebrate grant as of this writing.
- **ADP Payroll:** Grace asked the board to approve the change for payroll and tax service. She will investigate accountants, and other online providers to pick up the taxes that Sinclair will no longer be completing. Higgins motioned to have Grace find the best place to move our paycheck and tax provider that best fits our needs. Blasius second Motion passed.
- **Drains and Culverts:** Blasius was concerned that a new culvert placed near Aldridge Lake caused the lake levels to drop a significant amount. After the discussion with the Drain Commissioner, the lake association will be allowed to build a dam to control the lake levels.
- **Spotted Lantern Fly:** During the discussion with CISMA Coordinator S. Grace, the solution for Blasius was resolved. He now can reach out to DNR personnel to discuss his concerns about the trapping and quarantine of the SLF. Blasius will take the District posters and post them around the community to help inform the people about the dangers of the spotted lantern fly.
- **Presentation Board:** The board once again asked Grace and other staff members to research and purchase a presentation board for our events. They would like a portable and possibly a board that could be exchanged for different events. Grace will stay or try to stay within the first proposed budget of \$600.00

- **Stewardship Week:** Higgins suggested that she and C. Grace try to reach out to Mendon and Nottawa schools to participate in the coloring contest sponsored by NACD May the Forest be With You! The stewardship week is April 29-May 5, 2024
- **Goose Population:** Blasius brought it to the attention of the board that he disagreed with the Parks Department about the squashing of the eggs of Canadian Geese at one park. Discussion was had by the board.

PA116: JACA LLC

Adjournment: Clark motioned to adjourn at 5:08 pm Higgins second. Motion passed.

Next Meeting: April 17, 2024 at 3pm at the St. Joseph County Conservation District Offices.

Board Chair Signature: 

Date 4/17/2024