

TIPPECANOE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

1812 Troxel Dr., Lafayette IN 47909

MINUTES

March 11, 2026, 8:30 AM

The regular monthly meeting of the Tippecanoe County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) was held on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, in person. Board Chair, Mark Eastman, called the meeting to order at 8:31 A.M.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT:

Mark Eastman, Chair - E29
Steve Kerkhove, Supervisor – E27
Deb Grady-Ruth, Supervisor – A29
Doug Osborn, Supervisor – E28

Supervisors Absent:

Melody Clouser, Vice Chair – A27

STAFF PRESENT:

Kris Gertz, SWCD
Robert Suseland, SWCD
Mike Smith, SWCD

OTHERS PRESENT:

George Reger, ISDA
Sarah Vaughn, NRCS
Kathy Vernon, TC Council
U.S. Congressman Jim Baird
IN Representative Beau Baird

February 2026 Minutes

Upon a motion by Grady-Ruth, Osborn seconded: "The February 2026 minutes accurately reflect reports made, actions taken and stands approved. Motion carried."

The March 2026 Financial Report, and March 2026 Accounts Payable Vouchers were distributed.

Upon a motion by Osborn, Kerkhove seconded: "The March 2026 Financial Report and March 2026 Accounts Payable Voucher Register stands approved." A vote was taken. Motion carried.

DATE FILED	VOUCHER NUMBER	NAME OF CLAIMANT	AMOUNT OF VOUCHER	AMOUNT ALLOWED	CHECK/ WARRANT NUMBER
02/02/26	514	Comcast	\$ 172.55	172.55	7035
02/05/26	515	IRS	\$ 316.15	316.15	EFT
02/06/26	516	Tippecanoe County	\$ 1,000.00	1,000.00	7036
02/06/26	517	National Association of Conservation District	\$ 1,995.46	1,995.46	7037
02/06/26	518	Mike Smith	\$ 126.44	126.44	7038
02/06/26	519	Kris Gertz	\$ 926.17	926.17	7039
02/06/26	520	Greater Lafayette Commerce	\$ 275.00	275.00	7040
02/06/26	520	fees	\$ 141.26	141.26	EFT
		Carried Forward	4,953.03	4,953.03	

Organizational Development and Community Outreach

- ❖ Farmers Market – Smith shared that Gertz contacted West Lafayette and Lafayette Farmers Market. We have a date of June 3 for the West Lafayette Farmer’s Market. We will wait until later in March to hear from Lafayette Farmer’s Market.
- ❖ Outdoor Explorer Sponsorship – Grady-Ruth motioned to support the Outdoor Explore at the same level as last year, \$1001, Osborn seconded. Motion passed.
- ❖ Sponsorship – Vaughn shared a sponsorship opportunity. The board discussed not pursuing until we have a budget line for sponsorship. Gertz will look to add to budget for next year.

Healthy Soil, Healthy Water

- ❖ Community Garden – Smith updated the board on the plot in the Master Gardeners’ Community Garden. We have an event there on May 21, 2026, focusing on Small Graden and Entomology. Baird shared his visit to Africa and discussed a small garden at a school. He shared being proud to be a farmer. Eastman shared his experiences in education of farm practices from other countries that they can bring home.

- ❖ Virtual Fence – Smith shared the interest in Virtual Fence. The district would like to set up field day on an operational farm using virtual fencing. Vaughn shared the possibility of partnering with other SWCDs if they have an operation in their county.
- ❖ Tillage Transect – Eastman shared the history of the 212 miles of Tillage Transect in Tippecanoe County. Reger shared interest. The transect will be on April 29.
- ❖ Grant Opportunity – Indiana Corn Marketing Council – meets today on edge feathers. Edge Feathering takes out taller trees and smaller species to improve soil production.
- ❖ WREC – We have received applications totaling \$190,000 for \$36,000 in funding during the one-year gap in 319 funding.

Healthy Ecosystem

- ❖ CREP Payments –Grady-Ruth motioned to allow the District Administrator to pay landowners their CREP Payment as soon as the state pays the invoice, Osborn second; motion carried.
- ❖ ME Capstone Project – Eastman shared history of Senior Project and the District. Suseland shared the progress of the honeysuckle removal device.
- ❖ Native Plant Fest – Suseland shared the progress of the 2026 Native Plant Fest.
- ❖ Garden Expo – April 25 – Same day as the sale. Interns will table for the District and TICT.
- ❖ Work Study Projects – Suseland shared that August is working on signs for prairie and prairie restoration. Mali is representative for Purdue Earth Day as she has finished her work on the sustainability and soil health page.
- ❖ Woodland Walk – April 27: Suseland shared the event at Happy Hollow to see woods where honeysuckle was removed.
- ❖ Landscaping with Natives 201- March 13 – Suseland shared the event at Celery Bog. There is currently 31 registered.
- ❖ Demonstration Prairie Renovation – The Prairie next to the office was started in 2000 and needs a rehaul. Osborn moves to spend \$500 to revive the prairie, Kerkhove seconded; motion carried.
- ❖ TICT Tuesday -Murdoch and Munger parks are next on the list. August made flyers.
- ❖ NRES Capstone Projects – Suseland shared the Healthy Water for Health Fish project is working on top 10 fish of Tippecanoe County and Designing a Display for River Fest – Smith shared second project on Lawn and Pond flyer, webpage and signs for water quality and a mussel campaign.

Business Operations

- ❖ Board Report Format – Gertz asked the board to review and comment on the new board report format with the new strategic plan. The board will review for needed updates.
- ❖ NACD TA Grant – Gertz shared the final payment on the TA 2024 Grant. The 2025 TA Grant recipients should be announced in March.
- ❖ Spring Newsletter – Gertz shared the next newsletter will release near April 1.
- ❖ MOU-NRCS-SWCD-ISDA – Vaughn shared that the new MOU agreement is on hold District will present to the board once we receive it.
- ❖ Policies – Gertz shared current policies and lack of Materiality policy. She will continue to review and update policies.
- ❖ Chainsaw Training – Gertz shared her discussion with county employees on chain saw use. The board discussed training, PPE chaps, gloves, helmet, eyewear and a 3-year certification.
- ❖ IASWCD – Gertz shared the IASWCD invoice for dues. Osborn motioned to keep dues at \$3,000, Grady-Ruth seconded; motion carried.

Other Reports/Announcements

- ❖ ISDA Incentive Program – Reger shared that he collected a soil sample and reported on Cover Crop Incentive Program. He also informed the group that Matt Williams will be the new Sugar Creek CREP Resource Specialist.

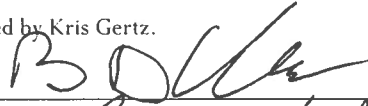
- ❖ Watershed Meeting – April 16
- ❖ Farm Bureau Meeting - March 17
- ❖ Solar Farm Ordinance – April 1

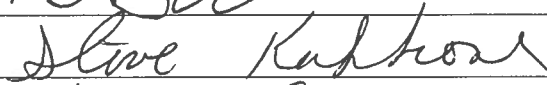
Upcoming Events

- ❖ Landscaping with Natives March 13
- ❖ TICT Tuesday
- ❖ Native Plant Sale – ends April 6
- ❖ Native Plant Fest – April 21-28
- ❖ Woodland Walk – April 27
- ❖ Soil Health and Pollinator Habitat for Productive Gardens – May 21

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 10:35 A.M. Kerkhove motioned; Osborn seconded; motioned carried.

Minutes recorded by Kris Gertz.

APPROVED: 

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The Tippecanoe County Soil and Water Conservation District is committed to providing quality technical, educational, and informational resources for the community through leadership, service, and citizen involvement to foster natural resource conservation and environmental stewardship.

