



Meeting Minutes DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District

Call to order

The monthly Board meeting of the DeKalb County SWCD was held on March 15, 2023. The meeting was called to order by Chairman John Begun at 12:30 p.m.

Attendees

Attendees included: Directors, John Begun, Lynn Martz, Anita Zurbrugg and Paul Kuhn

Associate Directors: Peggy Doty, Jim Arndt, Paul Idlas, and Byron Cann

Staff: Dean Johnson and Jeff Woodyatt

NRCS: Arron Seim

Guest: Alexa Rutherford, Shelly Ray IDOA

Directors not in attendance

Members not in attendance included: Dan Kenney

Approval of the agenda

Motion to approve agenda made by: Director Kuhn, seconded by Director Martz, approved.

Approval of minutes

Motion to approve minutes of the February 8th, 2023 meetings made by: Director Martz, seconded by Director Zurbrugg, approved.

Approval of Treasurers Report

Motion to approve the Treasures Report made by: Director Kuhn and seconded by Director Zurbrugg, approved.

Special Presentation

Staff members from NIU's Meteorology and Department of Communications made a presentation to the SWCD board informing them of the Community Project grant that they were awarded through Adam Kinzinger's Congressional office in regard to "Understanding and Mitigating Future Weather and Climate Risks to American Agriculture." NIU is looking for farmer volunteers to help participate in the survey. Interviews and focus groups would meet in the summer of 2023. The DeKalb County SWCD and Farm Bureau will be working together to compile a volunteer list for this project.

Reports

NRCS Report: District Conservationist Arron Seim provided a report on the activities of the NRCS for the month of February and the outlook for March.

SWCD Resource Conservationist: Jeff Woodyatt provided a written report of the activities of the Resource Conservationist for the month of February and the outlook for activities occurring in March.

SWCD Executive Director: Dean Johnson provided a written report of the activities of the Executive Director for the month of February and the outlook for March.

University of Illinois Natural Resources Educator: Peggy Doty provided an update to the activities occurring in February and March.

IDOA Report: Shelly Ray Regional Representative from the IDOA provided an update on the activities of the Department and deadlines for reporting for the Districts in the near future.

Correspondence

The Illinois EPA has submitted the Watershed Grant Agreement through the GATA portal for acceptance. Hard Copies of the agreement should be arriving from the EPA for signatures.

Cecily Cunz who was the lead Consultant with our last Watershed Planning effort was laid off by RES as part of a cost saving effort by the company. Cecily has contacted the district in the hopes of finding a new employer that will allow her to keep the consulting role and continue the agreement we currently have. RES will no longer be doing Watershed-based planning. If unsuccessful we will have to submit a new request for proposals to find a new firm to complete the plan.

Jeff Woodyatt and Dean Johnson attended the Soil Health/Lobby Day in Springfield on March 8th. We had personal meetings with Senator Chesney, Senator Severson and Representative Tony McCombie, we also dropped off materials to several other legislators from neighboring counties. The AISWCD had 3 bills that are being proposed that we discussed with the legislators and encouraged their support of those bills. A reception followed at the new AISWCD offices just south of the State Capital.

IDOA is working on Grant Agreements for the Districts hopefully we will see them in the next 30 days.

The DeKalb County SWCD has established two new bank accounts at the Waterman Bank, one for restricted funds and the other for unrestricted funds.

Met with Emily O'Connor via zoom from the Lincoln Park Group, she is working on a \$40 million grant to introduce smart valves into the Commonwealth Edison infrastructure to alleviate the stability issues with new renewable energy coming online. She was looking for support from the District but I relayed to her that it would be difficult for the District to show any kind of favoritism as we do review these projects in the zoning process.

Courtney Gallagher Campus Sustainability Coordinator for NIU contacted the SWCD requesting a letter of support for improvements to correct shoreline issues to the East Lagoon on the NIU campus. The district will be meeting with Courtney in the next month to review the watershed-based plan that was completed in 2020 that includes NIU to help give them direction in their new sustainability plan.

Time Sheet Approval

Employee time sheets were reviewed and approved by: Director's Martz and Kuhn.

Unfinished business

Marketing and Outreach Committee Report: Director Zurbrugg gave an update to the board on the direction that the committee would like to pursue. One item is working with the DeKalb County Townships as a way to increase revenue. Director Zurbrugg was going to follow up with DeKalb Township to gather more information and look for some opportunities that could benefit the District.

The Executive Director suggested that it may be wise to review our strategic plan as we seek direction on how to improve our revenue resources. The board agreed that we should take a look at the plan at the next meeting.

New business

Election of Officers: Director Zurbrugg moved that the same slate of Officers that are currently serving the DeKalb County SWCD board be re-elected to serve for the next year. John Begun Chairman, Paul Kuhn Vice-Chairman, Lynn Martz Treasurer, and Dan Kenney as Secretary. Director Martz seconded the motion. Motion passed 4 yes and 0 no. Dan Kenney was not in attendance.

Practice Component list for FY23: Director Kuhn moved that the DeKalb County SWCD approve the Practice Component List for the Partners For Conservation Cost Share Program for FY23. Director Zurbrugg seconded the motion, motion carried.

Partners for Conservation cost share project rankings: Director Zurbrugg moved to approve the FY23 cost share project rankings for the DeKalb County SWCD. Director Martz seconded the motion, motion carried.

NRI 726 Joe Roberts Sandwich project: Director Zurbrugg moved to approve the NRI #726 report for Joe Roberts. Director Martz seconded the motion, motion carried.

NRI 727 Shenadeah Solar LLC Squaw Grove Township: Director Zurbrugg moved to approved NRI #727 report for Shenadeah Solar LLC.. Director Kuhn seconded the motion, motion carried, 3 yes and Director Martz abstained.

Envirothon Donation: Director Zurbrugg moved to make a \$250 donation to the Northeastern Illinois Envirothon. Director Martz seconded the motion, motion carried.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: Director Martz, seconded by Director Kuhn, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

Announcements

The next meeting of the DeKalb County SWCD will be April 12, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.. The meeting will be held at the DeKalb County Farm Bureau's Center for Agriculture in Sycamore.

Chairman

Date