

MINUTES
STATE SOIL CONSERVATION BOARD MEETING
March 11, 2025

8425 Keystone Xing Ste 200, Indianapolis, IN 46240

<u>Attendees</u>		
Gene Schmidt (Chair)	David Bausman	Andrea Gogel
Jane Hardisty (Vice Chair)	Cress Hizer	Leah Harmon
Kenny Cain (Member)	Laura Fribley	Lisa Holsher
Brad Dawson (Member)	Nathan Stoelting	Liz Rice
Jewel Wise (Member)	Breegan Anderson	Courtney McFall
Jennifer Thum	Geneva Tyler	Julie Morris
Tara Henry	Ophelia Davis	Nellie Peffley
Sandra Hoffarth	<u>Attendees, via Teams</u>	Katie Nelson
Meg Leader	Holden Abrell	Megan Ritterskamp
Ryan Martin	Amy Burris	Walt Sell
Jared Thomas	Sara Campfield	Morgan County SWCD
Jerod Chew	Leah Walthery	Toby Days
Amy Work	Fulton Co SWCD	Nathaniel Warenski
		Mary Lou Watson

Gene called meeting to order at 9:33am. Gene announced that the meeting was being recorded. He also asked for those wishing to make a public statement to please sign in.

Kenny moved to approve the previous minutes. Seconded by Jewel. Motion approved.

Clean Water Indiana

Tara then provided a report regarding Clean Water Indiana Grants. Report was provided and Tara summarized that report for the board. Tara had an ask for the SSCB to consider possible funding for training needs. Monroe County was highlighted as well as a success story for CWI Grants.

Jennifer gave an update on the CWI Budget. She provided a written report regarding the budget. She also summarized this report. Discussion was held regarding funding additional training needs from reimbursement request. Deadline is March 15 for requesting reimbursement for training. Also questions regarding CREP budget.

State Soil Conservation Board Business

Chairman's report. Gene asked Jane to start by providing some updates from her attendance at a recent ICP meeting. Jane complimented the ICP's efforts on developing an action plan. Jane

had asked the ICP for support in aligning with some of the SSCB's initiatives for the next year. Gene asked the board for reports on annual meetings from SSCB members who were able to attend some annual meetings. Board members provided updates on those meetings.

Business plan update. Tara and Breegan provided an update on the business plan. Breegan provided a brief overview regarding the development of district capacity. A written summary was provided to board members. The board reviewed the document and asked some questions regarding the details. The board made some suggestions of possible changes they are interested in seeing to the document. Breegan then asked for a motion to approve funding for needs assessment as laid out in the written proposal. The board asked questions regarding more details on this position and who will be doing the work. Kenny moved to approve \$250,000 to move forward with contracting appropriate personnel to carry out the needs assessment. Seconded by Brad. Motion carried. Jane offered to help with this process.

Jennifer then provided a director's report. This report was provided and additional details were provided in Jennifer's presentation. Some discussion was held regarding dual office holding. Brad suggested a memo regarding dual office holding going out to all districts with an attachment of the dual office holding guide. Finally, Jennifer provided an update regarding a more uniformed accounting system for districts to use statewide. She has reached out to a firm that might be able to develop a system for districts that could be piloted as a possible program for the districts. We will try to have a speaker at the next SSCB meeting to provide further details and information. There was also some discussion on SSCB meetings at various locations at times. The board discussed starting with (2) off-site locations a year to start. Jane asked about some clarifications on what constitutes quorum for public meetings.

Jennifer introduced ISDA General Counsel, David Bausman.

Ryan Martin, of Kosciusko County then provided details regarding a resolution regarding term limits as requested by Kosciusko County. They are asking the SSCB to review this resolution as a policy. Kenny asked for further details regarding the resolution. The board asked for time to consider this resolution and investigate more details regarding the legalities of this resolution. Brad made a motion to table this motion until they are able to get further details. Kenny seconded the motion. Motion carried. Jewel also announced that she would be abstaining from this vote and discussion in the future.

Presentation

Meg Leader requested a grant amendment proposal for a current CWI/IASWCD grant. Details regarding this modification will be requested officially from GMS. There was a lot of discussion and questions regarding the proposal. Meg also provided additional details on her written

report. She also summarized what she considers technical work. Brad had a question regarding clarification of the CWI funds and how they will be used to complete the project.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts

Geneva presented temporary appointments for Boone, Hamilton, Fayette, and Union Counties. Laura provided details for Crawford County. Sandra provided details for LaPorte and (2) for Starke County, and Nathan spoke for Pike County. Jane commented that she was excited to see some of the diversity from the recommendations. Kenny made a motion to accept the appointments. Jewel seconded. Motion carried.

Indiana Conservation Partner Reports

Julie provided a summary of her written report regarding the nutrient stewardship program. Laura summarized the DSS report. There was a question regarding video feed and recording for public meetings. There is still some question regarding rather or not this applies to Soil and Water Districts. The DSS staff is working with the public access counselor to make a final decision regarding this.

IASWCD provided a written update. Amy provided further details regarding the written update. Cress also gave an update regarding the current session in the house. Brad asked a question regarding possible changes to the cigarette tax.

Jennifer read the CCSI report that was provided. There was also a discussion regarding furlough employees for CCSI. Liz provided more details on this as well as Urban Soil Health staff that have been furloughed as well.

Purdue provided written reports.

Jerod Chew provided details regarding the NRCS update. The State Conservationist written report as provided. More details were given on this update.

FSA report was given by Jared Thomas. No sign up has been announced regarding CRP. This of course has affected the CREP program.

Break was called for at 12:34

Board reconvened at 12:50 to discuss strategic planning.

Brad made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:26. Jewel seconded.