

State Soil Conservation Board Meeting
Minutes
January 13, 2016
Marriot Hotel – Indianapolis

Members in Attendance:

Mr. Scott Ham
Mr. Bob Eddleman
Mrs. Nola Gentry
Mr. Robert Woodling
Mr. Warren Baird
Mr. Ray Chattin

Others in Attendance:

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Jordan Seger, ISDA | Mary Lou Musselman, Miami SWCD |
| Leah Harmon, ISDA | Meg Leader, ISDA |
| Trevor Laureys, ISDA | Kim Peterson, Lake SWCD |
| Kenny Page | Susi Stephan, Wabash SWCD |
| Stan Moore | Geneva Tyler, ISDA |
| Kimberly Newman, NRCS | Bart Pitstick |
| Jennifer Thum, ISDA | Nan Hammel, ISDA |
| Laura Fribley, ISDA | Martha Miller, Monroe SWCD |
| Jane Hardisty, NRCS | Karen Kitterman |
| Walt Sell, Purdue Extension | Jennifer Boyle-Warner, IASWCD |
| Deb Fairhurst, ISDA | Mike Starkey, Hendricks SWCD |

I. 4:30PM Call to Order – Scott Ham

II. Draft minutes of December 2015

Ms. Gentry moved; Eddleman second. Motion passed.

III. Clean Water Indiana

a. 2015 Clean Water Indiana Grants – Leah Harmon, ISDA

Harmon, stated that for the 2013 CWI grant, the final reports are due by January 31, 2016 and for the 2014 and 2015, the annual reports are due on the 31st as well. The grant committee will have a conference call and meet in person to discuss updates to the process and feedback from the survey. Harmon thanked everyone for their input. During 2015, the DSS team conducted ten CWI audits. The team will be conducting the same amount in 2016. The grants committee reviewed the training scholarships and they funded 32 districts, 95 individuals and more than half of which were supervisors. Harmon went over the upcoming deadlines for the districts.

- b. Clean Water Indiana Budget Update- Jordan Seger
Seger gave a verbal update of the CWI budget. Seger went on to talk about the upcoming legislative session that started Tuesday. This cycle is the short session where they don't typically talk about budgets. No change to CWI budget, expected at this time.

IV. **State Soil Conservation Board Business**

a. SSCB Chairman's Report-Scott Ham

Ham, thanked the SSCB, ICP leaders and the Districts for working with him during his time on the SSCB. It was an honor for him to serve the districts, and he learned a lot. Ham sent in his resignation to Governor's office. Ham spoke about Mr. Rex Blanton who is the nominated individual to fill the vacancy on the SSCB. I am looking forward to having the board full and remaining full. We do need to hold election of officers. Ham asked if there were any nominations for chair and vice chair at this time?

ELECTIONS

Eddleman nominated Chattin for Chairperson and Woodling for Vice Chair. Gentry seconded the nomination.

Chattin and Woodling accepted the nominations.

All in favor, motion passed.

Executive Committee

Eddleman moved to have Chatting, Chairperson and Woodling, Vice Chairperson, and Gentry on the executive committee, Baird seconded the motion.

All in favor, motion passed.

Grants Committee

Chattin moved for Woodling, Eddleman and Baird serve on the grants committee, this was seconded by Gentry.

All in favor, motion passed.

b. SSCB Business Plan

Ham spoke about the different things that affect Indiana, such as, droughts, and flooding. In the development of our business plan, we have looked at ways to support the Districts. We added clarifications, basic typo corrections, and asked people to give recommendations on the plan and to provide feedback. Ham thanked those that did the survey, and that was awesome. We pulled everything together, and we now have a product that benefits all. Ham went through the plan. We did change some goals, you need to tell your story if you want the money and we want to give it to you, but we need you tell your story.

Gentry – encouraged SWCD board members to talk and communicate with local elected officials, as that is critical to keep local funding. The better the elected officials know you and the work that the district does, it's easier at budget hearings to tell them what you need. Bring people with you to help tell your story and have that leveraging sheet with you.

Ham – Legislative luncheon at conference, make sure they know who you are before you come here, they should know you face to face.

We all hope to improve the technology and we are getting better and we are now having lots of opportunities. Be patient with us.

Goals – By 2020, all SWCD will have applied for CWI competitive grants since 2011 and all have received funding. Ham went through the goals as shown in the business plan.

Ham asked if there were any questions.

There were not any questions.

Gentry – it's ready for approval then.

Gentry moved that we approve the business plan as presented, second by Baird.

All in favor, motion passed.

c. CWI grants Committee Report

Woodling mentioned that the grants committee has talked about the idea of districts submitting pre-proposals, and at this point, we decided to leave application process like it was 2015. In addition, we will talk about making more changes to streamline the process. Harmon went into further details; she indicated that the team is looking at guidelines to make sure that the business plan matches the guidelines to make sure all District needs will be met. Woodling indicated that our goal is to make it as easy as possible for the districts to write a good grant so the SSCB and grants committee have adequate information to make good decisions.

Eddleman spoke about the proposals that were determined to be research grant projects. He went into the state law, which prohibits the districts and SSCB from doing research except in conjunction with Purdue University.

Mr. Mike Starkey, IASWCD President, asked the SSCB if that is state code.

Seeger stated that yes that is correct. If districts are using CWI funds for research projects they have to work with Purdue.

V. Soil and Water Conservation Districts

a. Approval of Recommendations for Appointment

The SSCB reviewed the excel document that list the SWCD county names and their recommendations for SSCB appointment to their Board of Supervisors. This information was gathered from the data that the districts imputed onto SharePoint. Gentry moved that the board approves the names shown on the sheet of paper, Woodling, seconded this motion.

All in favor, motion passed.

b. Randolph County- Geneva Tyler

Tyler stated the Mr. Samuel Farrington has to resign from the Board due to his job. The district recommended that Mr. Rex Fields be appointed as a temporary replacement. Gentry moved to accept the resignation and the appointment of Mr. Fields to the board, seconded by Eddleman.

All in favor, motion passed.

c. Union County – Geneva Tyler

Mrs. Tyler discussed the temporary appointment for Union County. Mr. Jay Ballinger resigned. The district recommended that Mrs. Anya Pinkerton be appointed to fill out the remaining term. Chattin moved to accept the resignation and approve the appointment, Gentry seconded the motion.

All in favor, motion passed.

d. White County – Geneva Tyler

Tyler went over the vacant appointment in White County. Supervisors Mr. Larry Williams passed away. The district recommended that Mr. John Demerly be appointment to fill that position. Baird moved to accept the resignation and approve the appointment of Mr. John Demerly, Gentry seconded this motion.

All in favor, motion passed.

e. Warren County – Geneva Tyler

Tyler discussed the reason for the temporary appointment. Mr. Robert Watson has to resign from the board. The district recommended that Mr. Nicholas Weston be appointed to fill out his term. Gentry moved to accept the resignation and the temporary appointment of Mr. Weston, Eddleman seconded the motion.

All in favor, motion passed.

VI. ISDA Updates

a. Director's Report- Jordan Seger

Seger indicated to the board and audience that he had a written report. He went through the highlights and then he would open it up to the audience for questions. The third piece of paper attached to his report was an excel document that went over the divisions performance measures. The Department of Agriculture has accountability with the Department of Office and Budget, which are called Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and program measures. All six of the measures have some number associated with them. Seger thanked all the ISDA employees, and SWCD district employees for all of their hard work. Due to that hard work, we have greatly exceeded all of goals, and we are very proud of that. We can now do automated tracking to see where we are at any given day. Seger discussed this legislative session. ISDA does have a bill on the floor. The bill has nothing to do with budget, but it's just to clean up some of the CWI statute. There was a handout

on how we are cleaning up the language. One of the changes has to do with removing one of the hurdles that prevents districts from combining. Under the current law, if two or more districts were to combine, they would only receive one match of 10,000. The language is to permit those counties that combine and do show they have a local match, are permitted to receive matching funds for as many districts or parts of districts that have merged.

Seger discussed the new hires to ISDA. Mr. introduced Mr. Jared O'Brien. He will be working at the Jasper County USDA Service Center in Rensselaer and will be covering Jasper, Newton, Lake, Benton and White Counties. Seger stated that they were able to fill a vacant WLEB position. We hired, Mr. Nick Alles, who is a former ISDA employee. He thanked NRCS for all their assistance on the new hires. Seger pointed out Director Mr. Ted McKinney. He discussed the Indiana Agriculture Strategic Plan, which is a plan to come up with thoughts on the next 10 years. There is the potential for a roll out in March.

Seger talked about the ISDA 2015 annual report; which should be published in the next 30 days. The report will focus on how the Division is improving existing current programs and working on new ones, such as forming a relationship with AIC on the development of a 4R program. Lastly, Seger thanked Mr. Scott Ham for his service on the SSCB and all of his leadership. There were no questions from the audience.

b. Technical Report- Jordan Seger

He did highlight some of the technical assistance numbers. He then discussed the two hand-outs that gave a snap shot of the Division on where we are year to date and where we have been this past month.

c. Agricultural Affairs –Meg Leader

Leader stated that she had a written report and that she just wanted to hit a few items. She spoke about a program meeting where Corn and Soy, and the Infield Advantage group leaders attended. At this point, three winter meetings have been held, and there has been great discussion, and there are only 25 left.

Ham asked Leader if people are finally starting to recognize the Infield Advantage program. She stated that people are starting to respond to it, but still some struggle.

Gentry wanted to know how many people were signed up for 2015. Leader stated that there have been 346 growers across the state and we are hoping to see some growth, but stay stable for the next couple of years.

d. Accountability and technology – Deb Fairhurst

Fairhurst stated that she supplied a written report, and she will only give a few verbal updates. The fall tillage transects are wrapping up and the DSSs have been encouraging the districts to get completed by February 1st. According to the 2015 DSC KPI report, we now have almost 1,734 practices for the Division and SWCDs combined. That has bumped over the past week. We have saved over 245,854,000 lbs./yr. million tons of sediment in the state. Big kudos to the team leaders. Mike, Jim, George, Julie and the RSs have worked with the districts to get all of date entered into SharePoint, correctly by the year's end. Fairhurst wanted to commend Greg Biberdorf with IDNR, IDEM, and all the NRCS staff for uploading the 2015 conservation workload this past week.

e. District Support-Laura Fribley

Fribley mentioned that she has a written report and she will just touch on a few highlights. She went over the numbers for the past Leadership Institute, at the communication workshop there were 21, and then they had 21 at the Change workshop. Fribley went over the upcoming March region meetings, which are listed on the report. The key topics for those meetings will be parliamentary procedures and open door law. The meeting will then have break out session: supervisor and staff training, Infield Advantage, or how to work with the commodity groups, and CWI grants.

Ham had a question on the attendee list, and was wondering if goals and how many we like to see. Did we hit close to the goals for the L.I. for the attendance? Fribley stated that the minimum we shoot for is 15 participants per workshop and cap at 40. We might not have a goal for each one. We are added conflict management in 2014, and we want to add another topic for the graduates.

f. Water Quality and CREP-Julie Harrold

Seeger indicated that he would be doing the presentations on behalf of Julie. Julie did have handouts and he will just hit a few points. Julie was newly appointed to this position. Regarding the CREP program, we have contracts amended and fully executed. We are building flexibility into them and having long-term amendments. In 2015 ISDA paid out \$529,909.50 in direct payments to participants for installation of practices, and more than \$52,000 in administrative fees to partnering SWCDs. Julie has done good with this job with cutting the red tape so can help out more landowner.

Seger spent some time discussing the nutrient reduction strategy. It's available on our website.

There were no questions from the audience.

VIII. Conservation Partner Reports

a. IASWCD

President, Mr. Mike Starkey stated that there was a written report. Starkey went through the report. Starkey welcomed everyone to the conference. He went through CCSI and their partnership with NRCS. CCSI is still waiting to hear about potential funds to continue their sampling needs. The CCSI annual meeting will be at Hendricks Fairgrounds. We have well known speakers featured, such as Barry Fischer and we will have national updates. Starkey stated that in your packets you will find CCSI annual report, he asked that everyone look at it.

Starkey discussed the economic case studies that are available for people to see, and more will be completed this year. In addition, their final CIG report will be completed this year too. Starkey moved onto the Pathway of Water Quality. They have funds to pay for an individual for two years, and there are several things that need to happen out there. He commented on the CRP reviews, contribution agreements with the districts, and the status reviews. All of these provide financial assistance to the districts. It's a great partnership between IASWCD, NRCS and the Districts. He mentioned the "3 J tour," and he has sat on a few, and they have been going very well. It's a major time and commitment from Jane, Jordan and Jennifer. Lastly, Starkey stated that Emily Nietzel will be leaving the association, and is headed toward Seattle. There were no questions from the audience.

b. IDEM Report

No report

c. IDNR - Greg Biberdorf

Biberdorf stated that he had a hand written report, and he would just touch a few items. He spoke about the LARE program and where the money for that program comes from. From the boat registration there received around \$2 million and that funded 80 projects, and of those, 12 went to SWCDs for land treatment. In addition, those funds went towards planting 7600 acres of cover crops and hay plantings. Some of them are in the RCPP for the WLEB and St Joseph River basin. January 31st is the deadline for 2016 LARE.

d. Purdue Report – Walt Sell

Sell stated that he gave his report to Mrs. Jennifer Thum for the records. Sell works for the soil health portion of Purdue, and his main responsibility is to be at the table with the partnership and agencies in soil health. Extension publications on cover crop and nutrient management are being released. There has been a heightened emphasis on soil health, nutrient management, water quality, land conservation and natural resources as highlighted in Purdue Extension's Strategic document. A goal is to provide staff and partners uniform training opportunities with Iowa and Nebraska so everyone is on the same page. Extension is trying to move forward with the 4R's with several efforts in the WLEB, with opportunities to expand throughout the state too.

e. FSA

No report

f. NRCS – Jane Hardisty

Hardisty stated that a written report was made available along with handouts. She gave her best wishes to Scott Ham and acknowledged that he was a big part in making Indiana the national example for conservation. Hardisty congratulated Chattin and Woodling on their promotion to officers on the SSCB, and she is looking forward to working with them. In addition, she thanked Ted McKinney and Mike Starkey for their hard work on conservation efforts. As you can see in the report, 2015 was a great year. They are in the process of finalizing the budget. In addition to Farm Bill programs, the watershed projects that are going on in Indiana are the GLRI, WLEB, MRBI, NWQI and RCPP. We brought in three million additional dollars for these special projects. Hardisty mentioned that NRCS does have around 20 vacancies. NRCS has been moving to a new HR structure, and things are moving slower than she would like. Things are getting done and every vacancy will be filled. NRCS has entered into agreements with SWCDs to assist with administrative work on Farm Bill programs. Districts are great partners, and NRCS is always looking for opportunities to help build capacity. Hardisty talked about the upcoming conservation partnership celebration. The event will be held at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds. She thanked everyone for their hard work and is really excited about 2016!

g. IDEA – Erica Burkemper-Fischer

Erica – January IDEA meeting at 7:00pm. The meeting will be here.

IX. Public Comment

Ham opened up the meeting to the audience. Scott opened up the meeting

Mrs. Burkemper- Fischer spoke about the silent auction that is occurring during annual conference. All proceeds go to the poster contest. The tables are near the guest elevators.

Mr. Gene Schmidt – LaPorte County –Spoke about Smith Foods and how they are interested in helping out with environmental activities. Smith Foods is located in 20

states with about 40,000 employees. They have agreed to send a message to plant managers. The Greenfield plant is the largest in the country. If district needs them, they will step in to help either with an actual person or possibly funding. The people might travel outside the district that they could help. They want to do this and are motivated, and the company will take note if that person did volunteer or not. Georgia Pacific is thinking of the same thing.

Ham spoke about the roundtable discussion, and then the next SSCB is March 1st at the TNC located downtown.

Ham then turned the meeting over to Chattin for his comments.

Chattin thanked Ham for his work and stated that he really raised the bar. It's a daunting task to follow him.

Ham made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:22pm

DRAFT