



Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District
211 E. Drexel Parkway
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(219) 866-8008 x3
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December 16, 2025 – 3:00 PM CDT

Jasper County SWCD Education Center – Fairgrounds

Supervisors Present: Lana Zimmer, Jim Martin, Mark Kingma, Stuart Orr

Supervisors Absent: Scott Bahler

Staff Present: Cayci Lane and Joshua Kesling

- 1. Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 3:02pm by Board Chair Lana Zimmer.
- 2. Partner Agencies and Public Comment**
 - a. RC&D – Jim Martin** – Jim Martin did not have an update, as he was unable to attend the previous meeting. Cayci Lane shared with the board information from the RC&D Education Committee meeting that was held on December 10, noting several key takeaways. These included details about the Envirothon program, opportunities for networking with neighboring SWCDs, and information regarding the upcoming RC&D grant application that is due on January 31.
 - b. Jasper County Invasives Initiative (JCII)** – Stuart Orr updated the board on future events that JCII hopes to participate in during 2026, including Touch of Dutch and the Sandhill Crane Festival. The board discussed the potential for strong collaboration among JCII, the Weed Control Board, and JCSWCD, noting that each group's expertise could complement the others, particularly once the invasive species specialist position is filled. Jim Martin reported that at the JCII meeting held on December 8, it was decided that Katie Powell and Summer Brinkman are authorized to request JCII funds at will (these are funds which are being held by the JCSWCD since they do not have a bank account).
 - c. Purdue Extension** – Joshua Kesling reported on behalf of Summer Brinkman, who was unable to attend, and provided an overview of the programs and events Purdue Extension has scheduled for early 2026. These upcoming activities include a grain marketing program, garden conference, Fruitful Fridays, and the Weed Control Board PARP session scheduled for January 22.
 - d. Kankakee River Basin & Yellow River Basin Development - Mark Kingma** – Mark Kingma reported that he did not have a significant update at this time, but noted that he had sent Cayci Lane drone footage of two major projects completed this year: the Jasper County Kankakee Bank Stabilization project and the Yellow River Bank Reconstruction, Phase III, near IN-23. He added that both videos were recorded in November.
- 3. Correspondence** – Joshua Kesling informed the board that the Soil and Water Conservation Society had requested a subscription renewal in the amount of \$115. Mark Kingma moved to approve the renewal, and Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- 4. Minutes from Previous Meeting**
 - a. November Minutes** – The board reviewed the November meeting minutes. Jim Martin made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, and Mark Kingma seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- 5. Treasurer's Report**
 - a. Monthly and YTD Financial Reports** – Cayci Lane presented the financial reports for November, and the board reviewed the information provided. Mark Kingma made the motion to approve the financial reports, and Jim Martin seconded. The motion carried.
 - b. 2025 County appropriations closure** – Lana Zimmer reminded the board that per diem information must be submitted to Cayci Lane by December 29. Lana noted that board members are eligible for \$35 per day, with up to \$2,100 covered by county appropriations; any remaining amount will be paid from the



general fund. Lana also instructed Cayci to draw down the county appropriation funds as closely to zero as possible before the end of the year.

6. Old Business - Current Grant/Deliverables Updates

- a. **Education Center Renovations update** – Cayci Lane informed the board, on behalf of Scott Bahler, that FBi Buildings provided a quote of \$5,862 for the renovation project and required a 50% down payment before beginning work. Cayci noted that she had already issued FBi Buildings a check for \$2,900 so the project is expected to begin soon. This project was approved by the Board at a previous meeting.
- b. **Native Plant/Tree Sales update** – Joshua Kesling presented the order form materials that he extracted from Native Prairie Moon Nursery and Hensler Nursery. During the discussion, the board suggested adding features and brochures to support the upcoming sale, as well as creating a Google Form for ordering. Additional recommendations included listing size ranges at the time of purchase, adding white oaks to the order form, and promoting the sale on social media. The board also discussed how customers would submit payment and agreed that all orders should be prepaid. The cutoff date for placing orders was set for Earth Week.
- c. **LKWI Update, signing and uploading materials** – Cayci Lane provided a quick update from the Steering Committee meeting held on December 3. Following her report, Joshua Kesling presented LKWI cost-share applicants documents and obtained signatures for approval so he can upload the documents and submit them for reimbursement.
- d. **2026 Initiatives** – The board discussed its initiatives for 2026, which include offering cover crop incentives, organizing a Jasper County solar panel agrivoltaics summer tour, and following the strategic plan, and hosting a soil pit event in the spring. The board also instructed the staff to create a system for tracking progress on these initiatives.
- e. **Annual meeting update** – Cayci Lane and Joshua Kesling provided a brief update on the planning progress for the annual meeting. They reported that they met with Dawn Slack, virtually, on December 2 and confirmed her as the event's speaker. Dawn will present on Natural Areas and Stewardship, with a focus on the impacts of invasive species. The board recommended using Jean Witherington as the caterer again and instructed the staff to aim for approximately 100 attendees.

7. New Business

- a. **Discussion on IASWCD resolutions** – The board reviewed the IASWCD resolutions that Lana Zimmer will be voting on at the IASWCD Business Meeting on December 19. The first resolution, titled *Snowball's Chance* from the Dearborn County SWCD, proposed allowing supervisors to serve on boards located outside the county they reside in as long as they own land within the county of the board they want to serve on. After discussion, the board agreed to vote no on the resolution. Mark Kingma made a motion to approve voting no on the resolution, and Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried. The second resolution, titled *District Consolidation Study Committee* from the Knox County SWCD, proposed combining SWCDs in cases where districts are not co-located in a USDA service center due to low population; currently, 16 districts fall into this category. After discussion, the board agreed to vote yes on the resolution. Stuart Orr made a motion to approve voting yes, and Jim Martin seconded the motion.



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The motion carried. The third resolution, titled *Supporting Refund of Indiana Bottle Deposit Revenues to the State of Indiana* from Pike County SWCD, proposed using bottle deposit revenue to help bridge gaps in conservation funding service. After discussion, the board agreed to vote yes on the resolution. Jim Martin made a motion to approve voting yes, and Mark Kingma seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- b. **2026 Meeting calendar** - The board reviewed the current meeting schedule, which is held on the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Education Center. They discussed the possibility of changing the monthly meeting date but agreed to first check for any potential scheduling conflicts before making a final decision. TBD at next meeting.
- c. **Other** - Jim Martin informed the board that he had told JCII the JCSWCD would purchase books for them to use at events. The board then discussed buying multiple copies of the books to donate to all Jasper County libraries. Available 2025 appropriations will be used.
- d. **MOU for staff salaries** - Lana Zimmer noted that an MOU for staff salaries requires board signatures before it can be submitted to the county. Stuart Orr made a motion to approve the MOU for staff salaries, and Mark Kingma seconded the motion. The motion carried.

8. Staff Update

- a. **Conservation and Coffee event idea; small financial request** - Joshua Kesling presented an idea to the board to host a "Conservation and Coffee" event at Cup of Joy in Rensselaer. The purpose of the event would be to engage with the public about conservation concerns and to share information on JCSWCD programs. Joshua requested that \$50 be allocated for the event, to be paid from the education county appropriation. Mark Kingma made a motion to approve the \$50 allocation, and Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- b. **Mary Sholey Rain Barrel Update** - Cayci Lane and Joshua Kesling informed the board that they sent a certified letter to Mary Sholey regarding her rain barrel on December 5. The mailing cost was \$10.48, which will be reimbursed through LKWI.

Stuart Orr made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:31pm, and Mark Kingma seconded the motion. The motion carried

Lana Zimmer

Mark Kingma

Jim Martin

Stuart Orr

Scott Bahler

Next Meeting January 20, 2026