



Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District
211 E. Drexel Parkway
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August 25, 2026 – 3:00 PM CDT

Jasper County SWCD Education Center – Fairgrounds

Supervisors Present – Lana Zimmer, Jim Martin, Stuart Orr, Scott Bahler, Mark Kingma

Supervisor Present Remotely – Cheryl Fugate

Staff Present – Cayci Lane, Summer Brinkman, Shay Seibring

Partners Present – Courtney McFall and Kevin Shide

1. **Call to Order** – The meeting was called to order at 2:58 pm by Board Chair Lana Zimmer.
2. **Partner Agencies and Public Comment**
 - a. **NRCS – JCSWCD** scheduled the Local Working Group meeting for September 16 at 10:00am at the Rensselaer USDA Service Center. The purpose of this meeting is to identify resource concerns and establish conservation priorities within Jasper County. Kevin Shide reported that his current focus is on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), with 106 new and re-enrollment offers currently being processed. Kevin advised that individuals interested in CRP should contact the FSA office as soon as possible.
 - b. **ISDA – Courtney McFall** provided an update regarding the pollinator planting discussed at the previous SWCD board meeting. Courtney provided the landowner with a list of recommended plants, and awaiting a response.
 - c. **RC&D – Jim Martin** – Jim Martin reported that he had no update, as he is no longer attending RC&D meetings. Jim stated that another representative will need to be designated to represent the JCSWCD at future RC&D meetings.
 - d. **Weed Control Board - Shay Seibring – Weed Control Board - Shay Seibring** – Shay Seibring informed the board that a Weed Wrangle is scheduled for October 10 at the RCMS Outdoor Lab. The site primarily has honeysuckle that may require contracting. The Weed Wrangle is being coordinated with the parent volunteer night. Shay also informed the board that she will be traveling to Valparaiso for fingerprinting on August 26 followed by a trip to West Lafayette on August 27 to begin the LincPass process. She will also complete an exam at Ivy Tech for her pesticide license.
 - e. **Jasper County Invasives Initiative (JCII)** – JCII will be participating in the October 10 Weed Wrangle for the use of JCII funds. However, not many members are available to assist with the Weed Wrangle that day. The board discussed whether Summer Brinkman may continue to request the distribution of JCII funds on behalf of JCII now that she is employed by JCSWCD. The board determined that this question should be directed to AJ Popovic for clarification.
 - f. **Purdue Extension – Cheryl** – Purdue Extension had no new update.
 - g. **Kankakee River Basin & Yellow River Basin Development - Mark Kingma** – Kankakee River Basin & Yellow River Basin Development Commission had no new update.
3. **Correspondence - ICP announcements of coming events** – Cayci Lane informed the board the SICIM mailed a letter requesting funding support. The board agreed to schedule a meeting with AJ Popovic to discuss SICIM's needs and tabled the matter until the September meeting. Cayci also informed the board that the IASWCD resolution submission period is open through September 25. Cayci then reported that ISDA is hiring two additional District Support Specialists to serve the northeast and southwest regions of the state.
4. **Minutes from Previous Meeting**

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- a. **July Minutes** – The board reviewed the July meeting minutes. Mark Kingma made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, and Scott Bahler seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- 5. **Treasurer's Report - Monthly and YTD Financial Reports** – The board discussed the remaining funds from the Education Center renovation project, with approximately \$1,000 available. The board discussed purchasing 10-12 padded chairs to replace the existing metal chairs for use during meetings. Mark Kingma made a motion to approve the treasurer's report, and Scott Bahler seconded the motion. The motion carried.
 - a. **Status on closing First Merchant's account** – Cayci Lane informed the board that the FMB account was officially closed on August 6.
 - b. **Balancing county appropriations** – Cayci Lane reported that she transferred \$1,413.69 from Dues/Subscriptions to Travel and \$436.98 from Dues/Subscriptions to Education. Mark Kingma made a motion to retain \$4,000 in the DSB account and transfer the remaining balance to Trust Indiana. Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- 6. **Old Business - Current Grant/Deliverables Updates**
 - a. **Review of fair week** – The board discussed the success of this year's county fair. Mark Kingma stated that it was the best fair JCSWCD has had in many years. More than 500 people visited the Education Center throughout the week. The board discussed the possibility of adding a third event and increasing the Education Center's staffing for next year's fair.
 - b. **Local festivals participation** – Cayci Lane reported that she registered JCSWCD and WCB for the Sandhill Crane Festival on September 19. The board discussed the possibility of participating in Third Thursdays in Rensselaer and local farmers markets as additional community outreach opportunities.
 - c. **LKWI Rawles field trip - Sept. 2** – Courtney McFall reported that the LKWI Steering, Technical, and Education Committee meeting is scheduled for September 2 at 11:00am at the Roselawn Library. Following the meeting, the group will travel by bus to Tom and Linda Rawles' property at approximately 11:30am to tour their best management practices (BMPs). The group will have time for discussion and networking at the property. Attendees should bring their own lunch and a chair. The group is expected to return to the Roselawn Library at approximately 1:15pm.
 - d. **Cost-Share Program updates**
 - i. **Cover crop program** – Cayci Lane informed the board that she has spoken with four individuals, so far, who have expressed strong interest in participating in the JCSWCD Cover Crop cost-share program when the time for applying cover crops comes.
 - ii. **Well water testing program** – Cayci Lane reported that 18 households participated in the well water testing program that tested for bacteria, heavy metals, and nitrates/nitrites levels. One household's nitrate/nitrite level was approximately three times the maximum contaminant level. The board discussed sending a general letter to the residents in the area regarding elevated nitrate/nitrite levels while maintaining the confidentiality of the affected household. The board also agreed to contact the household and offer a retest of the well water, with JCSWCD covering 100% of the testing cost.
 - e. **Day of Caring - Laird's Landing update** – Day of Caring - Laird's Landing update – Summer Brinkman reported that Laird's Landing cleanup event is scheduled for September 18 from 10:30am to 1:30pm.

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JCSWCD received donations to aid in the cleanup from Clark's Garden and Floral. The board discussed providing lunch for volunteers participating in the cleanup. Jim Martin made a motion to approve providing lunch for the volunteers, and Scott Bahler seconded the motion. The motion carried.

- f. **Rafting trip staff participation discussion (Kankakee and Tippecanoe)** – Cayci Lane and Summer Brinkman will be participating in rafting with RC&D on the Tippecanoe River on September 9th and 10th. Cayci and Summer will also be participating in the Kankakee River Days with Starke County on September 17th.
- g. **IDEA conference** – Cayci Lane reported that IDEA Fall Conference will be held October 7-9 at Kettles Lake in Angola. IDEA dues are \$50 per staff member. The conference registration fee is \$150 per IDEA member, plus lodging at \$89.99 per room per night. Mark Kingma made a motion to approve the staff attending the IDEA Fall Conference and Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried.

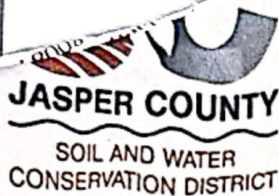
7. New Business

- a. **Rain simulator** – Summer Brinkman reported that she and Cayci Lane picked up a rainfall simulator from Boone County SWCD to use for demonstrations and educational events. The rainfall simulator is temporarily being stored in the Education Center storage room. Scott Bahler offered to store the simulator on his property.
- b. **Plat Book Sales** – Summer Brinkman reported that a representative stopped by the office to gauge JCSWCD's interest in selling plat books. Summer stated that she is unsure whether Purdue Extension is still selling plat books at their office or if they plan to continue doing so. Summer will gather more information and provide an update at the September meeting. The decision on whether JCSWCD should sell plat books was tabled until the September meeting.
- c. **Discussion of Summer's Pesticide License** – The board discussed Summer Brinkman's pesticide applicator's license, which is currently held under Purdue Extension, and whether she should continue maintaining the license under JCSWCD. Summer explained that she would need to attend programs each year to maintain the license. Stuart Orr made a motion to update JCSWCD as her employer on the pesticide applicator's license, and Scott Bahler seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- d. **IFEFF Grant** – Summer Brinkman asked the board if they would like to apply for the Indiana Forestry Educational Foundation Grant. Summer explained that it is a simple grant application submitted through a Google Form. The board directed Summer to review the ApoW to determine what needs could be addressed through the grant. If there are no outstanding needs, the board suggested adding the request to the WIPSP grant. Mark Kingma made the motion to apply for the IFEFF grant and Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- e. **Soil Pit Discussion** – Summer Brinkman informed the board that a location still needs to be identified for a soil pit, or the event may need to be postponed until next year. Summer spoke with Bryan Overstreet, who advised that it would be best to conduct the soil pit with a producer who plants cover crops following wheat harvest, which typically requires planning a year in advance. The board discussed the possibility of conducting a soil pit after cereal rye has been established.

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- f. **Billboard Partnership with WCB Discussion**— Cayci Lane informed the board that Lake County SWCD has a partnership with Lamar Advertising. Cayci reached out to Lake County SWCD for more information and is still awaiting a response. The board discussed possibly using the same billboard that the Jasper County Fair Association (JCFA) uses, located near StockVets, during the time between the JCFA's use. The board determined that Gary Braasch would be the appropriate person to contact regarding the billboard.
 - g. **Policy reviews/updates - Travel policy, Lunch policy, Out of Office policy** – The board and staff reviewed the current travel, lunch, and out-of-office policies. The board agreed to keep the lunch policy as currently written. Mark Kingma made a motion to approve keeping the lunch policy unchanged, and Scott Bahler seconded the motion. The motion carried. The travel policy will be updated to use the county mileage rate instead of the federal mileage rate, with all other provisions remaining unchanged. Stuart Orr made a motion to approve the updates to the travel policy, and Mark Kingma seconded the motion. The motion carried. The out-of-office policy was updated to require staff to notify only the Board Chair if they will be late to the office, rather than notifying the entire board. Mark Kingma made a motion to approve the updated out-of-office policy, and Scott Bahler seconded the motion. The motion carried.
 - h. **Other** – Summer Brinkman informed the board that the Rain Garden Workshop is scheduled for October 21 from 9:00am to 3:00pm. Plants will need to be purchased for the rain garden, and the current sign will need to be revamped. Summer and the Rensselaer Parks Department will develop a maintenance plan for the rain garden. Jim Martin made a motion to approve the purchase of plants for the rain garden, and Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried. The board discussed charging participants \$20 to attend the workshop. Lunch and a Blue Thumb Guide to Rain Gardens will be provided to participants. Stuart Orr made a motion to approve the purchase of 30 Blue Thumb Guides, and Scott Bahler seconded the motion. The board tabled the remaining expenses related to the workshop until the September board meeting. The board also discussed the need to purchase promotional items for upcoming festivals and events. Mark Kingma made a motion to establish a \$1,000 budget for promotional materials, and Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried. The board discussed the agreement made prior to Summer Brinkman starting with JCSWCD to pay for her tuition for professional development as her classes are soon to begin. Mark Kingma made a motion to approve payment of Summer's tuition in the amount of \$2,395 for professional development, and Jim Martin seconded the motion. The motion carried. Summer Brinkman informed the board the JCSWCD has received several emails from the Jasper County Trails Club about their upcoming meetings. The board agreed that JCSWCD staff should attend the club's meetings periodically to assist with invasive species management and erosion concerns.
- 8. Staff Update - requests for out-of-county activities/trainings**
- a. **Cayci** – Cayci Lane requested approval for out-of-county travel to attend the LKWI Everglades of the North paddle event on September 20. The board approved this request

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- b. **Summer** – Summer Brinkman requested approval for out-of-office on September 25. The board approved this request
- c. **Shay** – Shay Seibring asked the board to clarify the banking of hours for her part-time position with JCSWCD. Shay expressed concerns about not receiving benefits and not receiving a paid lunch hour like the full-time JCSWCD staff. After discussion, Mark Kingma made a motion to approve paying Shay for a 30-minute lunch period, with the remaining 30 minutes to be made up during the workday. Scott Bahler seconded the motion. The motion carried with all members in favor and one abstention.

Mark Kingma made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:31pm, and Stuart Orr seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mark Kingma

Jim Martin

Lana Zimmer

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