

July 30, 2019 Minutes

Jasper SWCD Office

Supervisors Present: Lana Zimmer, Jim Martin, Derek Luchik, Mark Kingma

Supervisors Absent: Mark Jordan

Staff Present: Derek Carty

The meeting was called to order at 3:02pm by Vice-Chair Lana Zimmer.

A motion was made by Derek Luchik to approve the June minutes. Mark Kingma seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Due to a staff vacancy, there is no treasurer's report; June claims are tabled until the August meeting.

Under correspondence, Lana Zimmer shared the ICP soil health philosophy that was sent to all conservation partners, pointing out its shared mission.

New staff member, Derek Carty, has attended several key trainings over the past 30 days. He attended the Jasper/Newton Foundation grant writing workshop, ISDA grant writing training in Columbus, IN presented by Leah Harmon regarding CWI grant applications. Leah provided feedback that Jasper County, for future CWI grants, advising us to focus on less technical content and fewer specifics in terms of details of site locations. Derek C. also attended the Forestry Field Day near Knox where he learned forestry management practices, about invasive species, and how to protect soil in order to cut back on erosion. He also attended the Hoosier Riverwatch Basic Training for water quality testing and benthic macroinvertebrate sampling. Lastly, he attended the advanced soil health training by CCSI on soil management practices.

Upcoming summer supervisor/staff training will be held in Rochester on August 20th. Derek, and our new employee, Shelby Keys, and Jim Martin will attend. Derek also had a request to assist Darci Zolman, Kosciusko County, for one day with the river rafting trip, which is held for high school students. Jim Martin made a motion to approve; it was seconded by Derek Luchik. Motion carried. Derek will also attend an ICP LaPorte County Soil Testing and Interpretation workshop on September 24th. IDEA Staff fall conference is in September.

Under old business:

The following grants were updated:

LKWI 205j grant:

There will be a float trip on the Kankakee on October 13th partnering with DNR LaSalle Group.

Derek will be testing water as soon as the instrument is returned to us after calibration. Testing will be a bit late due to a late return after a new calibration. We will need to order new supplies for water quality testing. He suggested we color code our water sample bottles for better efficiency.

There will be \$100 gift card randomly awarded for one social indicator survey participant. The survey will be sent to 11,400 addresses within the Lower Kankakee watershed.

Mark reported attending the new KRBC meeting, now referred to as the Kankakee River and Yellow River

Basin Development Commission meeting. (The new commission bill was created by Doug Gutwein and was approved by the General Assembly last spring.) There are two farmers on the new Board along with surveyors, commissioners, and other appointees. The next meeting will be in La Porte. Mark K. will attend. One goal of the Commission is to retain water on the fields with constructed breaches or by more cover cropping. Neighboring farms will be protected from constructed breaches. Constructed breaches will be costly and challenged by area neighbors. So, cover cropping will help to resolve some of the problem. He suggested that we push for more cover crops to retain water on fields rather than release into the river.

CWI 2019 Interseeder Grant project transition

The interseeder hitch has still not arrived. We are planning to end the contract with PG Consulting in mid-August due to the unusual planting season. There was continued discussion as to how long to retain Dan. However long that may be, we need to recover the data and information for what has been done so far so that we can take over this grant. Mark K. will talk to Dan about getting the information that we need. There is no funding in that grant to hire consultants.

CWI 2017 Roller Crimper policies/update

The roller crimper is being borrowed for the Purdue Extension Organic Field Day at Klemp farms in Wheatfield. Policies need to be revisited to be sure it stays in good working order. It was suggested that upon its return, an inspection should be conducted before it switches hands, or there should be a sign off that it is in good condition at the end of use. It needs to be serviced at the end of each use. Derek L. requested that Derek C. bring a draft of revised policies to the August meeting.

LARE 2016 – Carpenter Creek Grant ends in December.

Lana will check with Mark J. about the deadlines for when money has to be used. There is still \$13K to spend.

CWI 2020 – grant ideas discussion

Lana and Derek C. will create this grant which is due September 6th. A successful grant needs to connect to other grant projects. LKWI and KRBC are good choices to build on. Discussion about deep rooted pollinator buffer strips and low lying areas may be an innovative practice that focuses on bioengineering. Livestock fencing, crossings, water wells, geo-webbing, onsite water retention sites, such as constructed wetlands to meet those goals are all possibilities.

Equipment insurance/inventory/policies/maintenance/storage

Benton County SWCD asked if we carry insurance on our equipment. We discussed the lack of it, so Mark K motioned to table for further research. Derek C. will start by collecting serial numbers on equipment. Shelby will be asked to research insurance once she begins.

2019 County Fair comments

Derek C. visited the Newton County Fair Earth Day for ideas. He suggested we bring in other conservation groups each night to bring people inside. E.g. Conservation officer, animal rescue groups etc., like Newton County as their events were well attended.

Jim Martin and Derek C. got the building ready for the fair, and they did a great job. We also hired an individual to clean bathrooms, etc. A dehumidifier has been installed. Supervisors and staff each had an evening to greet the public. There was good attendance for some evenings, and it was agreed that more should be added to programming next year.

Under new business:

Derek L. presented a program that he is promoting called Pollinator Friendly Solar. It is a project that

promotes the installation of deep rooted native vegetation for solar farms. Typically shallow rooted grass or crushed stone are used under solar panels with little long term benefit. The benefits of planting pollinator plants are that they support wildlife and will continue to protect soil health during the duration of the solar contracts. Derek made the motion to support this project. Mark K. seconded. Motion carried.

Purdue Extension Organic Field Day

This event will be held in August at the Klemp Farms in Wheatfield. The District was asked to provide tables, chairs, projector, PA system, the roller crimper, tents, and coolers. Derek C. will be attending this event, taking and returning the borrowed items.

The District has hired Shelby Keys as District Administrative Assistant/Treasurer. Shelby begins on July 31st. The Board is very pleased with Shelby's qualifications.

Brian Overstreet, Purdue Extension, has organized the Manure Expo to be held at Fair Oaks Farms July 31st – August 1st. Derek C. will be attending Wednesday afternoon and on Thursday.

Staff/Partner/Agency Reports:

SICIM Invasive Species Specialist, Erica Luchik was pleased to participate at fair.

NRCS, Kevin Shide

CRP opened up June 3rd. Re-enrollment ends August 23rd. New CRP may be the same date. Wetlands, waterways, filter strips, and buffer practices are favored. BMPs related to water quality only will be completed. Derek C will be able to sign conservation plans. The tillage transect was completed in early July by Kevin and Derek C. Another transect will be completed in the fall. \$900K has been allocated for cover crops for prevented plant acres covering 30K acres statewide. IDNR grasslands for game birds using EQIP funds will have an information day on August 29th. It is being coordinated with TNC.

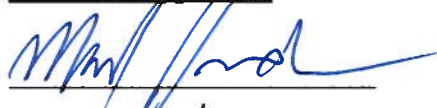
ISDA – Ben Eaton

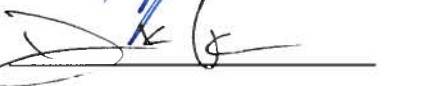
In-Field Advantage is being revised across the state because of the unusual weather and lack of participation. Also, they have a new soil health program manager and other changes. Jordan Seager is the new Deputy Director of ISDA and Jennifer Thumb is the acting director for the Division of Soil Conservation.

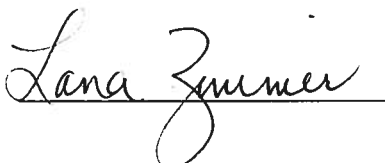
Purdue Extension – no report

There was a motion to adjourn by Mark K. and second by Derek L. We adjourned at 5:55pm.

Minutes Approved







Respectfully submitted,
Lana Zimmer
Vice-Chairman

