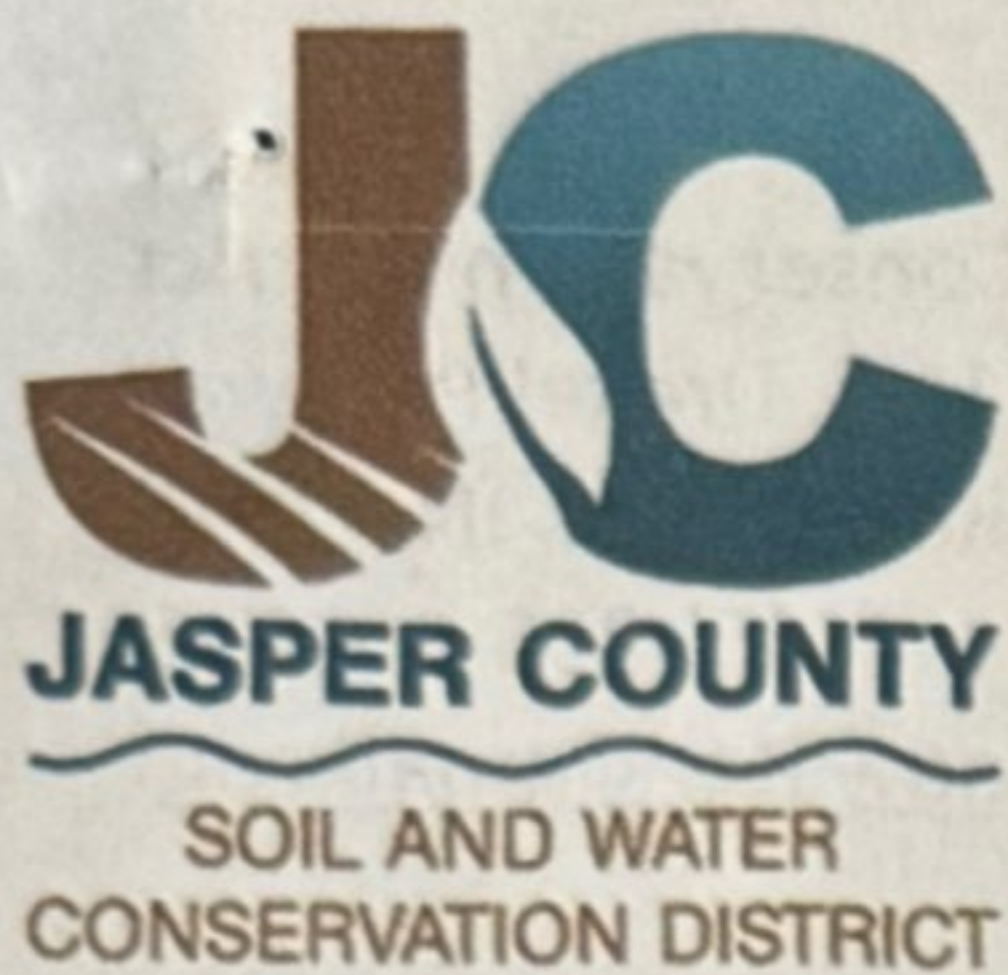




Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District
211 E. Drexel Parkway
Rensselaer, IN 47978
(219) 866-8008 x3
jaspercountysoilandwater@gmail.com

Jasper County SWCD Education Center - Fairgrounds

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

Staff Present: Cayci Lane and Joshua Kesling

Public Attendees: Tom and Linda Rawles

1. **Call to Order** – Called to Order at 3:02pm by Lana Zimmer, Chair
2. **Partner Agencies and Public Comment**
 - a. **ISDA**- Courtney McFall shared with the board that she'll be heading up an urban tour toward the end of September.
 - b. **RC&D – Jim Martin** – Jim Martin shared with the board that Cayci and Joshua are set to volunteer on the Arrow Head RC&D River Expedition on the Tippecanoe River scheduled for September 3rd, 9th, and 11th.
 - c. **Weed Control Board - Jim Martin** – Jim Martin informed the board that the Weed Control Board is scheduled to present a proposed budget of \$41,000 to the County Council on August 20 at 1:00 PM. He also noted that the Weed Control Board's next meeting will take place on September 11 at 9:00 AM at the SWCD Education Center, located on the fairgrounds.
 - d. **Kankakee River Basin & Yellow River Basin Development - Mark Kingma** -- Mark Kingma informed the board that the KRBC/YRBC will convene a Technical Advisory Committee on August 21st. He also outlined upcoming projects, including the proactive removal of riverbank trees leaning more than 45 degrees to prevent them from collapsing into the waterway.
 - e. **Public Comments** – Tom and Linda Rawles were present and raised questions regarding whom to contact for assistance in protecting their property from potential exposure to residual chemicals resulting from aerial spraying.
3. **Minutes from Previous Meeting**
 - a. July minutes- Stuart Orr made motion to approve, Scott Bahler seconded, motion carried.
4. **Treasurer's Report**
 - a. Monthly and YTD Financial Reports- Monthly reports were presented. Cayci Lane had prepared reports from July 1st through July 31st. Mark Kingma made the motion to approve the Treasurer's Report. Jim Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried.
5. **Old Business - Current Grant/Deliverables Updates**
 - a. **LKWI 319 Implementation grant application 2027-2030**- Cayci, Joshua, Bri, Laura (Newton Co. SWCD), and Courtney met virtually with Sara Peele to discuss the LKWI Grant. The meeting covered several key topics, including bringing Joshua up to speed, reviewing questions raised by Joshua and Cayci, addressing Lindsay's feedback, planning the next round of application edits, reviewing the budget, and outlining next steps for the grant process.
 - b. **Update on social media and website development**- The board engaged in a discussion regarding the future duration of our engagement with Cori Lane's marketing service for social media support. Joshua shared that he has assumed responsibility for maintaining and updating the District's website moving forward.



Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District

211 E. Drexel Parkway

Rensselaer, IN 47978

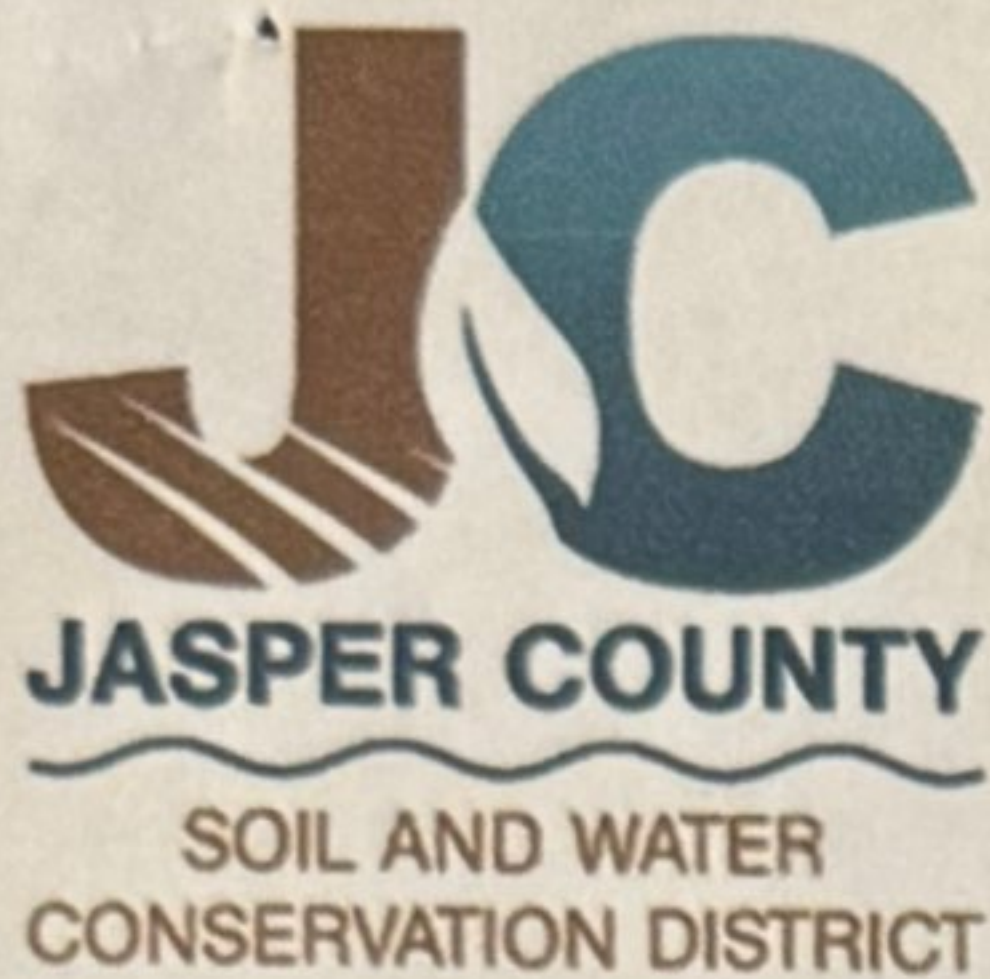
(219) 866-8008 x3

jaspercountysoilandwater@gmail.com

- c. **RC&D river rafting**- Cayci and Joshua are set to volunteer on the Arrow Head RC&D River Expedition on the Tippecanoe River scheduled for September 3rd, 9th, and 11th.
- d. **Status of Watershed Specialist position** - new hire Joshua Kesling- Joshua has obtained both a master's at Yale University and bachelor's at Oregon State University, where he engaged in applied ecological research with local, state, and federal government partners interested in watershed ecosystem conservation practices. His specialty areas include stream ecosystems, forested wetlands, riparian zones, watershed restoration, invasive species management, cultural ecosystem services, and conservation agriculture.
- e. **Update on CWI Invasives grant application**- Sandra Hoffarth has been providing valuable guidance on our CWI Grant, offering feedback that has informed ongoing revisions and updates to the proposal. A meeting is scheduled for August 20th at 2:00 PM at the SWCD Education Center to review the grant budget, letters of support, and clarify the responsibilities of the proposed Invasive Species Specialist role.
- f. **Update on Education Center projects**- Jim Martin and Scott Bahler identified and repaired the A/C issue at the SWCD Education Center.
- g. **Other**- Mark Jordan shared details about the upcoming Drop Your Crop event, scheduled to take place at the Jasper County Airport the week of August 25th, weather permitting. Plans include providing lunch for both the cost-share participants and the pilots who will be applying cover crops via aerial seeding.

6. New Business

- a. **Budget hearing on August 20th 1pm**- Jim Martin and Lana Zimmer are scheduled to present the SWCD budget to the County Council on August 20th. Jim will also use this opportunity to share the proposed budget for the Weed Control Board.
- b. **IDEA Memberships Dues**- Cayci and Joshua requested board approval to pay the annual IDEA membership dues, which are \$50 per employee. Jim Martin made the motion to approve. Stuart Orr seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- c. **IDEA Fall Conference**- Cayci and Joshua requested board approval to attend the IDEA Fall Conference, scheduled for October 15–17. The registration fee is \$150 per employee, with hotel accommodations priced at \$129 per night per attendee. Mark Kingma made the motion to approve. Scott Bahler seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- d. **Sexual Harassment Training**- Sandra Hoffarth notified the district via email of the board members who still need to complete the mandatory sexual harassment training ahead of the August 31st deadline.
- e. **Approval of Strategic Plan 2025-2030**- On July 29th, Jim Martin, Lana Zimmer, Mark Kingma, and Cayci Lane met to finalize the five-year strategic plan. Following their review and completion of the final draft, the SWCD Board officially adopted the plan during its August 19th meeting. Mark Kingma made the motion to approve. Jim Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- f. **Annual Plan of Work development**- The board reviewed the Annual Plan of Work and explored strategies for effectively monitoring its progress throughout the year.



Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District

211 E. Drexel Parkway

Rensselaer, IN 47978

(219) 866-8008 x3

jaspercountysoilandwater@gmail.com

- g. **Watershed Academy 2026-** Cayci and Joshua discussed the upcoming 2026 Watershed Academy, which was recommended by Sara Peele. The program includes a series of three workshops, and applications are due by October 24th. Mark Kingma made the motion to approve. Stuart Orr seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- h. **2025 - 2026 monthly meeting schedule-** The board reviewed the monthly meeting schedule and reached consensus to continue holding meetings on the fourth Tuesday of each month at 3:00 PM.
- i. **Microsoft Office 365-** Cayci and Joshua requested approval to purchase a Microsoft 365 subscription, priced at \$12.99 per month. The plan supports up to six users and includes 6TB of cloud storage. Stuart Orr made the motion to approve. Jim Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- j. **Other-** Scott also secured a \$5,682 estimate from FBi Buildings for removing the north doors, cutting new openings, adjusting the frame, and installing windows to improve the facility's layout and functionality. Board will discuss and make final recommendations.

7. Staff Update

- a. **Invasive Species workshop** – Jim Martin, Lana Zimmer, Cayci Lane, and Joshua Kesling are scheduled to attend the Indiana Invasive Species Conference in Hammond on September 4th. The event will focus on strategies for managing invasive species and restoring native ecosystems. Registration is \$80 per person. On September 5th, Cayci and Joshua will participate in a field day at the Grand Calumet River Nature Preserve. This site features a network of contiguous, independently owned preserves that highlight riparian wetlands and remnant dune and swale ecosystems.
- b. **Cover crop workshop August 13th** – Cayci Lane, Joshua Kesling, and Mark Kingma attended the Porter County Soil Health Field Day in Kouts, which welcomed 91 participants. The event featured guest speaker Jamie Scott of J & A Scott Farms in Pierceton, Indiana, a respected leader in agricultural conservation. Jamie shared valuable insights on cover crop species and seeding techniques, offering practical guidance to support soil health and sustainable land management.

Mark Kingma made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Stuart Orr. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:44 PM CST.

Lana Zimmer

Stuart Orr

Mark Kingma

Jim Martin

Respectfully Submitted: Cayci Lane

Next Meeting September 23, 2025 at the SWCD Education Center