



Jasper County Soil and Water Conservation District

211 E. Drexel Parkway

Rensselaer, IN 47978

(219) 866-8008 x3

[jaspercountysoilandwater@gmail.com](mailto:jaspercountysoilandwater@gmail.com)

May 26, 2026 – 3:00 PM CDT

Jasper County SWCD Education Center – Fairgrounds

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

Associate Supervisor: Cheryl Fugate

Partners present: Sheila Schroeder, CCSI; Keving Shide, NRCS

No staff were present

1. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lana Zimmer at 3:04pm.
2. Partner Agencies and Public Comment
  - a. NRCS - Kevin Shide presents a written report that indicated the status of various NRCS programs and levels of participation countywide.
  - b. RC&D – Jim Martin reported that there was not a meeting this month of the RC&D. He did remind the Board of the Tippecanoe River Rafting trip in September, and that we should be considering our participation.
  - c. Weed Control Board - Shay Seibring was not present, but provided a written report. She stated that the county vehicle is awaiting license plates. She has begun invasive species mapping and provided two maps for our review. She is creating outreach information, and also has developed a landowner flier for information. Lastly, she thanked the Board member (Cheryl and Stuart) for helping to plant the native plants, clean up the garden beds, and the planted areas around the building. She and Cayci have mulched the area of the new plantings.
  - d. Jasper County Invasives Initiative (JCII) - Stuart Orr stated that they have not met recently.
  - e. Purdue Extension - Cheryl Fugate reported that she is assisting with the community gardens, and where there are 24 plots
  - f. Kankakee River Basin & Yellow River Basin Development - Mark Kingma reported that there is a meeting scheduled in June
  - g. Conservation Cropping Systems Initiative (CCSI) -Sheila Shroeder presented a number of professional development opportunities are available. They can be found in detail in the CCSI newsletter, but they include a 3-day training June 8-11 on soil health, July 14 in Miami County on machinery modifications, to name a few.
  - h. Public comments : none present
2. **Correspondence** - None presented
3. **Minutes from Previous Meeting**
  - a. April Minutes - April minutes were approved as presented. Mark Kingma made the motion, Stuart Orr seconded. Motion carried.
4. **Treasurer's Report**
  - a. Monthly and YTD Financial Reports were approved as presented. Mark Kingma made the motion to approve, Scott Bahler seconded, and the motion carried.
5. **Old Business - Current Grant/Deliverables Updates**
  - a. The NiSource grant award for \$5000 is expected soon. There was discussion for a need to review the specifics of the grant, which is about addressing invasive species in woodland habitats. Stuart will review the grant and make recommendations, as there were some methods and procedures that were



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determined to need some adjustment in order to be most effective. Courtney McFall (ISDA) and Shay Seibring will also work on implementing that grant.

- b. Kesling resignation - Lana Zimmer will make a formal request for a new hire for this position on Monday, June 1st.
- c. LKWI update - Lana Z. reported that Q9 invoices were submitted and we are awaiting payment from IDEM. There is a stakeholder meeting on Wednesday, June 3rd in Roselawn, IN. The distribution of the remaining cost-share funds will be discussed.
- d. Tree sale debrief - Cayci provided a written report that indicated the expenses were \$2,318. There was a net gain for the District of \$139.42. There have been some complaints that the size and quality of the trees were inadequate, and that some did not leaf out. The Board voted to refund any dissatisfied clients. Mark Kingma made that motion, Scott seconded. Motion carried.
- e. Education Center - identify deadlines and completions
  - 1. Mural/native planting will be completed prior to July 4.
  - 2. Outdoor boxes are weeded and replanted. Native plants are planted and signage has been added. Those areas need to be watered by staff 3X per week.
  - 3. Outdoor maintenance and fair prep - The initial work is complete. Yet to be completed:
    - a. Gutters - Scott is meeting with a person on May 29 for measurements
    - b. Root display - Mark K. has purchase materials for display.
    - c. Privacy fence, indoor trim, and TV - Jim will complete beginning in the first week of June.
  - 4. Outdoor signage - Cheryl has been working on banners for the outdoor poles that draw attention to our building and displays. Lana will make sure we are allowed to put those on the poles (city and Fair Board).
  - 5. Indoor displays - Work will begin on those the first week of June. Lana, Cheryl, and Cayci will complete those.
  - 6. Indoor painting is complete.
  - 7. Kevin Moore (fairgrounds) will be completing the internet installation. Parts are ordered.
  - 8. Mark Jordan, Associate Supervisor, and his family are deep cleaning the kitchen and the restrooms. They have also re-organized the store room.
  - 9. Fair set up and final preparations will be determined at the June meeting.

## 6. New Business

- a. July 4th 250th Celebration at Fairgrounds - Lana discussed participation with both Shay and Cayci. Shay is tentatively planning to have a pop-up event on July 4th outside of the Education building, prior to the parade.
- b. Finalize and approve 2027 budget - The Board discussed some adjustments to the 2026 budget for 2027. The following reductions were recommended:
  - i. Postage - \$750 to \$150



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- ii. Education - \$1500 to \$1750
- iii. Office Supplies - \$2000 to \$1000
- iv. Dues and Subscriptions - \$3000 to \$4000
- v. Utilities - no change
- vi. Treasurer's bond - no change
- vii. Travel - \$2500 to \$5000
- viii. Furniture and Equipment - \$1000 to \$2000
- ix. Board Compensation - no change

Motion was made to approve by Mark Kingma, Stuart Orr seconded. Motion carried.

- c. County MOU - Lana presented the commissioner's and Attorney Beaver with a formal MOU at Rein's request. It is pending. A new employee policy was also approved. This policy addresses staff complaints and concerns. This will be presented to staff as soon as possible. Scott made the motion to approve, and Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- d. New Hire - The Board determined that our new hire needed a much stronger focus on agriculture. The job title will be Natural Resource Specialist. There was discussion about compensation, and the Board members agreed that the base salary range would be the County Deputy rate with a maximum of \$55,000. There was also discussion about developing a new system that would provide any additional funds on a sliding scale depending upon job performance and accomplishments. Scott recommended that we develop a schedule for reviews. Cheryl shared some ideas on this from her corporate experience. Research will be done and a system determined by the Board prior to hiring. Jim Martin made the motion to approve the job description and recommendations. Mark Kingma seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- e. July Board meeting change of date due to fair - July 14, 2026. This date will provide ample time for fair preparations.

## 7. Staff Update

Mark Kingma made a motion to adjourn. Scott Bahler seconded. Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:25 pm CDT.

Lana Zimmer  
Scott Bahler  


Jim Martin  
Mark Kingma