

**PIATT COUNTY SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 21st, 2017

Chairman, John Beckhart called the meeting to order at 8:02 A.M. on February 21st, 2017. The meeting was held at the USDA office located at 1209 Bear Lane in Monticello, Illinois.

DIRECTORS PRESENT:

Chairman: John Beckhart, Vice-Chairman: Jerry Edwards, Secretary-Treasurer: Eric Miller, Butch Fisher, and Wyatt Muse

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS PRESENT: Joan Lawson

DIRECTORS & ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS ABSENT: Loyd Wax, and Brian McDowell

NRCS PERSONNEL: Kent Bohnhoff District Conservationist

DISTRICT PERSONNEL: Jonah Totten, Resource Conservationist and Patricia Webb, Administrative Coordinator

MINUTES:

Jerry Edwards made a motion to approve the January 17th, 2017 minutes. Wyatt Muse seconded the motion. Motion passed.

TREASURERS REPORT:

Piatt County SWCD have started switching their investments over to CD's and moved \$16,000 in January and will continue to do so every 3 months until all funds are moved over to CD's.

Wyatt Muse made a motion to approve the January Treasurers Report and sign bank statements. Butch Fisher seconded the motion. Motion passed.

FOUNDATION UPDATE-

There is a total of \$11,297.76 of liquid funds in our foundation account.

OLD BUSINESS:

Farm Bureau Grant Nitrate Testing- SWCD hosted our first nitrate testing program on February 1st, 2017. We had 4 soil samples and 8 water samples brought in for the testing event. (2 customers). The first day was a little rocky due to our nitrate sensor not working correctly. However, after ordering new sensors, we were able to get the machine up and going. Jonah completed a report for the customers and sent it out showing both available nitrates and PH results from their samples. Press Releases were sent to the local paper for both February and March. Also, Jonah has been in contact with Farm Week and have sent them information on the event as well. So far, our grant has purchased 1000 magnets to send out to landowners, a PH sensor, electrode sensor, nitrate sensor, and 2 soil scoops. We have purchased enough standard solution to work the machine for all the events. Farm Bureau has paid for the mailing of the magnets and we are donating our time spent on analyzing the samples and creating reports for the landowners. Within the framework of our grant, we have around \$600 dollars left to spend which can easily be used up in equipment and printing. We also have 5 more testing events as well.

Butch Fisher made a motion to approve all Old Business. Wyatt Muse seconded the motion. Motion passed.

NEW BUSINESS:

Funding Update- SWCD received money from the State of Illinois. We were given \$22,680 in operations and \$10,000 for on the ground conservation funding. We also have a plan that our LUC came up with that will also have Piatt County receiving an additional \$14,303.00 in operations funding.

Organization of the Board-

Butch Fisher made a motion that we take the group that we already have and unanimously vote them in as Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Wyatt Muse seconded the motion. Motion carries.

FOIA Request- A Company in Deerfield Beach Florida has sent Piatt County SWCD a FOIA request every 60 days asking for our purchase records. They use this information to put in a government data base and put this information together on where people can purchase things at. Illinois freedom of information act has a provision that Piatt County SWCD as a body can act for its bylaws. These records she is asking for is not in any of our formats as a board they can deed these request cumbersome. In the future they board may have to look into the bylaws and see if the board needs to change anything.

Strategic Plan Survey (February 24th) - The board and employee's are encouraged to fill out this Strategic Plan Survey. This survey will be used in the strategic planning process on how we will receive our funds in the future. They will have workshops in March to discuss the information they got from the surveys.

Jerry Edwards made a motion to approve all New Business. Butch Fisher seconded the motion. Motion passed

BILLS PAID AND UNPAID:

Wyatt Muse made a motion to pay Bills paid and unpaid. Butch Fisher seconded the motion. Motion passed.

STAFF REPORTS:

NRCS REPORT

CSP- There is a new process for evaluating applicants for CSP. December payments were all approved and just handful left to review documentation for January payments.

EQIP- There are 4 active EQIP contracts in the county. The RCCP cutoff dates are different than the regular EQIP dates.

Wetland Determinations-Wetland determinations continue to have a long wait time to be completed, the state and the area is trying to get the wait time down to near 60 days. Jamie is on a 2 day a month wetland detail until they are caught up for completing these throughout the area for onsite determinations.

Construction- We will continue to work on layout and design of projects with applications and move ahead with funded construction projects on contracts.

CRP- New enrollments have a different process and have to be approved before the contract can be executed. FSA is starting to work on contracts expiring September 30, 2017 CRP. New enrollments are not automatic anymore.

Patricia Webb, Administrative Coordinator. Entire report attached.

NRCS administrative assistance: Piatt County SWCD invoiced out 8.25 hrs. of work for NRCS for the month of January.

AISWCD Insurance: Jonah's February insurance was filled out and sent to be paid January 31st, 2017.

Spring 2017 Fish and Tree Sale: Fish and Tree orders have started coming in from the 2017 Newsletter. Order forms will be mailed out the end of February. William Street Press thinks they can quote us a better price to mail out our order forms than we can do here in the office ourselves. Does the board want me to check into this? Fish pick up is March 24th.

E-Recycling- Our next E-Recycling day will be tomorrow Wednesday February 22nd, 2017 9-12 or trailer full.

PCSWCD Website/Facebook page: Patty has been updating the Web page and Facebook. She has posted the Available Nitrate soil and water testing workshop flyer and instructions as well as the E-Recycling flyer.

Board Packets: I typed up the January board minutes. I completed the AC board report for January. I sent the Bank Statements to Kelly, went to Kelly's to pick up the treasurer's reports. I typed the Agenda & made copies of board packet. Emailed packets to board members and put the board books together.

Plat Books: 7-2015 plat books were sold (4 to the foundation) 1-2002 plat book

Recons: 13 recons were done this month.

Jonah Totten, Resource Conservationist.

CRP- Jonah has completed site visits on reenrolling CRP contracts on all the contracts that she can easily access. Jonah has about 10 more to look at in the next few weeks that are a little trickier to get to. Jonah has completed 22 Reenroll Contracts, plans, and seeding for FSA and also have completed 3 contracts, plans and seeding for new acres enrolled in CRP. Jonah has submitted for a quarterly reimbursement for on the ground conservation and should receive \$3,713.00 next month.

Lake Decatur Watershed- The ranking deadline will be February 17 for the 2017 projects and then the selection for funding will occur at their Mid-March board meeting. Jonah has submitted 2 new projects this month for the watershed ranking. We have a total of 5 projects in Piatt County that will be in this batching period. One large cover crop project, 2 grade stabilization structures, 1 small streambank project, and one project that has 2 waterways and a structure.

CPP- SWCD received \$10,000 in CPP funds. Jonah has been out with our Area Engineer on a field visit and completed a survey for a large grade stabilization structure with multiple landowners involved. It appears that the structure will not be able to be designed by the NRCS because it exceeds the size of a project that NRCS would typically work on. Jonah has given a report by the engineer and sent that to the landowners letting them know the structure will need to be privately engineered. At that time, we could then c/s on the project 60% of the project up to \$10,000. We also have multiple applications in the Macon Co. Watershed that if one of those projects are denied, we could pull from that pile to spend our cost share dollars. We usually have two years to spend this money, which will not be a problem at all.

Alphabet Soup Meeting-There are some private entities that have some similar goals of the soil and water conservation districts that will be coming together March 30th, 2017 (9:30 A.M.-3:00 P.M.) at the National Sequestration Education Center at Richland Community College in Decatur. Some of the Entities include ADM, Coalition on Agricultural Greenhouse Gases, Nature Conservancy, Lake Decatur Watershed, and the National Sequestration Education Center. This may be a way to pull private funding awarded to our districts for Conservation practices. Jonah will be meeting with the Lake Decatur watershed on March 1st, before the meeting to develop some guidelines of where the funding could best be utilized within our watershed.

*Butch Fisher made a motion to approve all staff reports. Wyatt Muse seconded the motion. Motion passed.
John Beckhart made a motion to approve time sheets and expense reports. Butch Fisher seconded the motion.
Motion passed.*

NEXT BOARD MEETING:

Our Next Board Meeting is March 21th, 2016 at 8:00 A.M

Wyatt Muse made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jerry Edwards seconded the motion. Motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT: @ 9:09 A.M.

Minutes taken and transcribed by:

Patricia Webb, Administrative Coordinator

Approved by:

John Beckhart, Chairman

Signature

Date