

Virtually
ELKHART COUNTY SWCD BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 25, 2021

Present: Supervisors: *Alex Wait, Dean Rink, Darrell Shover*; Staff: *Jim Hess, Lora Atkins, Todd Clark, Jenna Wait*; Associates: *Keith Miller*; ISDA Support Specialist: *Heath Hurst*;

Absent: Supervisors: Tom Kercher, Dale Leer; Associates: David Bontrager, Joe Brown, Brian Campbell, Gary Kaufman, Purdue Extension: Jeff Burbrink, Robert Kelly; ISDA District Support Specialist: Jennifer Thum; Elkhart County Surveyor: Phil Barker.

The board meeting was called to order by Alex Wait at 5:33 pm.

The December 21, 2020 board meeting minutes were approved on a motion by *Rink/Shover*

Agency Reports:

NRCS:

CSP program deadline was January 8

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program deadline February 3rd.

Indiana NRCS will award up to 1 million to locally driven partnerships. Purpose is to help NRCS workload and focus on the 5 priority activities.

Advance the goals of the Indiana AG Nutrient Alliance and the Indiana State Nutrient Reduction Strategy.

Promote soil health to producers

Conduct Conservation Planning

Provide Soil Scientists with work support

Assist with technical assistance with Farm Bill program promotion in farms related to the Western Lake Erie basin

Partners may request between 30,000 and 500,000 dollars in funding and are expected to offer value-added contribution to amplify the impact of the NRCS funding by providing a 50 percent or greater match to the NRCS investment. Projects are expected to be between 2 to 5 years in length. NRCS is accepting proposals at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/home.html> Applications were good through January 25, 2021.

So even though the deadline has passed it's good to be aware of the things the NRCS is doing with partners

Also, the USDA is looking for public input on nonindustrial private forest land related to technical and financial assistance available through conservation programs of NRCS. NRCS is looking to improve transparency about how NRCS makes land eligibility determinations to forestlands. The open lobby period ended January 19, 2021.

EQIP ranking deadlines are coming up at the beginning of March.

ISDA:

CWI Supervisor and Staff Training Reimbursement is due 3/12. February 4th 9-11 am. There will be a Virtual Soil Health Workshop - <https://www.ccsin.org/event-details/virtual-soil-health-workshop> Cost Free - Registration requested by February 1st

County Surveyor:

Not in attendance

Extension:

Not in attendance

District Business:

*79th Annual Meeting Format & Elections: We plan on mailing out letters to our Affiliates with a postage paid return postcard for voting purposes, and then if anyone who doesn't get one of the letters wants to vote, can stop into our office to pick up a voting packet. But, we will still have an actual Virtual online meeting. We chose Mike Yoder for our Friend of the SWCD.

*County Project Option: New Courthouse project – Jim and Todd attended a meeting last week where they met with an engineering firm (Ken Jones). They would like to see as a community driven project

*Rule 5 Updates: Todd and John Heiliger spent a day driving around the county looking at projects that needed to be closed out.

*SWAMP Projects and Updates: 27,384 acres in SWAMP/Water Quality \$297,000. 182 Participants in 4 years, that averages out to be 153.50 per participant. 60,000 tons of sediment saved from going into the ditches.

*Education Projects: Jenna explained what she has been working on, as we try to switch our website over to a new hosting site.

Financial Business:

The vehicle log was signed.

The rubber stamp was not used.

The monthly financial reports, claims and budgets were approved on a motion by *Shover/Rink*

Claims for the following were signed:

Indiana Dept of Revenue (\$209.21 – Indiana Sales Tax – 2020); Penny Stroup (\$150.00 – Yearly Financial Audit); INterra Credit Union (\$858.32 – Office supplies/Special projects/Postage/Education & Conferences).

The board meeting adjourned at 6:25 PM *Shover/Rink*

Next Board Meeting ~ *Virtually*: February 15, 2020 - 5:30 pm
SWCD Office
59358 County Road 7 Elkhart, IN 46517

SWCD Board Chairman
Tom Kercher

SWCD Board Vice Chairman
Alex Wait

SWCD Board Member
Dale Leer

SWCD Board Member
Dean Rink

SWCD Board Member
Darrell Shover

Recording Secretary
Lora Atkins