

Montgomery County SWCD Board Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 7th 2024, 8:00 am

USDA Service Center Conference Room

In attendance: Marc Roberts, Daniel Bullerdick, Jordan Gillenwater, Joyce Grimble, Dave Stanley, Adam Beck, Aron Rhoads, Kenny Cain, Michael Hill, Tricia Herr, Lea Hickle, Sam Lovold

Jordan opened the meeting at 8:03 am.

Partnership reports

Adam- Nothing much to report at FSA. Kelsey one of their technicians has left and moved back home to the farm. Still pending news on what Disaster rates will be on corn and soybeans.

Dave- Dave is still working in both Fountain and Montgomery and is stretched pretty thin. The Covington District Conservationist position has been open internally for a while. Soil Conservationists are being hired right now as well. Brandy is coming to help Dave with CSP payments. Will Hinshaw has left his position as a Pheasants Forever Biologist. He checked all the wildlife CRP practices in the area including our county. NRCS is short staffed in our region now. Dave hosted a farming education workshop last week with new NRCS staff and Lea to educate them about how farming works. They toured a farm, looked at a combine, looked at grain bins, and asked lots of questions. They are planning to host one in the spring as well.

Joyce- Budget has passed in the county, still pending state approval though. Should see staff raised throughout the county. Program Coordinator position will receive a raise and Director position will remain the same. Joyce visited a dairy in Scotland and uses manure biofuel to grow tomatoes in a greenhouse. Fascinating observation of an efficient farm elsewhere in the world.

Tricia- Couple classes coming up. On Tuesday will be at HHSB hosting a virtual forage webinar. Succession planning and cut flower classes coming up in January. \$60 for the 4-week classes that include dinners. PARP recertifications have been slow, if you need to get recertified reach out to Tricia. Master Gardeners will begin working on their pollinator garden on Saturday.

Kenny- SSB went over the grants this cycle. 2.3 million dollars to disburse and 3 million dollars were asked for. Held back 900k this year. Whole state soil board weighed in and the grants committee decided on CWI grant awards. The money held back was for CREP, which the state provides 10% of the cost towards and the fed side the additional 90%. Kenny sees this as a point of contention in the future since some SSB members will want this money distributed back through the districts.

Sam- Sam has reached out about Platt books but hasn't got a response. Will go to the county building and get some. Weed wrangles were successful in October, applied for SICIM Reimbursements and currently set to receive \$4,000. Additional reimbursements pending. Finalizing W4L Learning Circle. Lea and Sam are picking up supplies for it later this afternoon.

Dr. Ingram has submitted a grant to Wabash for their prairie garden which we have partnered with.

Lea- Learned more about the QuickBooks online price, turned out to be much more than advertised after the first year. Lea has learned that QuickBooks desktop is manageable and no longer thinks we need to subscribe to QuickBooks pro. The only downside is that we cannot have multiple users for the desktop.

Consent agenda: Jordan moved to approve, Daniel 2nd, consent agenda approved as presented.

Old Business

Election Committee- Submitted the election committee and submitted a nominee for Marc's spot. Kenny brought up we should look for someone to represent the southern portion of the county in the future.

IDEA Fall Conference- The trainings at the conference were great and networking was good. Lea got the chance to put faces to names for many of soil and water staff around the state.

New Business

Supervisor Nominee- Rachel Stine has been nominated, she was unable to attend this meeting but she will tentatively take Marc's spot and Marc will become an associate board member.

IASWCD Conference Registration- The group discussed the annual conference that will be held in Indianapolis on January 27-28. Lea will register and book hotels for herself, Sam, Jordan, and Marc for the conference.

2025 Annual Meeting Prep- Lea asked if the board was fine with the same venue as we used last year. Will look into HHSB as a venue since it is free to non-profits. We will search for speakers for the meeting as well. The sooner we can book one the better. We will have the Annual meeting on February 18th at 6 pm with March 4th as a snow date. By next meeting we will try to wrap up details.

Brickyard Park project- Sam has been working with Parks and Angie Miller to design a prairie patch at the Brickayrd park. There is about 18 acres of fallow ag fields on the property. Sam will get with Fawn and Angie, discuss the project, price, and maintenance and come up with an MOU to make sure the project is looked after. At the next meeting we will have an update and potentially come up with a sub committee to watch over the project.

Grants updates- Our 319-project grant was rejected. We have reached out to IDEM for feedback on our application but have not heard back yet. The RCPP Project led by TNC was picked up. The project overlaps 22 counties including our entire county. According to Seth's update they are negotiating with NRCS. The project will not be live until next spring.

Crawfordsville Pride Sponsorship Program- Received a mailer asking for sponsorship from Crawfordsville Pride. Not much details on who the contact was, will try to put a face to the name and see if they would be interested in participating in district events.

Upcoming Bills- NACD Dues (\$775) and DNR Nursery Dealer Renewal (\$50) Aron motioned to pay these bills, Marc 2nd. Motion approved.

Jordan adjourned the meeting at 9:43 am.

Minutes approved 12/5, 2024

David B. Smith
J. H. H. H. H.
Paul H. H.

J. H. H.

Submitted by Lea Hickey