

KANKAKEE COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Minutes June 8, 2009

The Kankakee County Soil and Water Conservation District held its regular monthly meeting Monday, June 8, 2009. Chairman Jeff O'Connor called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Present were Directors Jeff O'Connor, Dave Peters, Brian Grob and Alan Wissmiller, Associate Director John Settle, Conservation District Manager Rich Howell, Administrative Coordinator Linda Settle and District Conservationist Bob Gotkowski. Absent were Director Erich Schott, Associate Directors Larry Kirchner, Charlie Cyr and Alex Panozzo. Also present was Ed Brown, Executive Director FSA.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Peters made and Grob seconded a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Motion passed four to zero.

SECRETARY'S REPORT: Minutes of April 13, 2009 Board Meeting: Peters made and Wissmiller seconded a motion to approve the minutes as printed. Motion passed four to zero.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Approval of Time and Travel: Grob made and Peters seconded a motion to approve the time and travel reports. Note was made that this was 2 months worth of time and travel reports. Motion passed four to zero.

Approval of Financial Report: Peters made and Grob seconded a motion to approve the financial report. Motion passed four to zero.

Discussion was held on the remaining funding for FY09 and then the FY10 funding. There doesn't seem to be much good news for Districts, the outlook is pretty bleak. The state is looking at an overall possible budget reduction of 50%.

Approval of Bills: Grob made and Peters seconded a motion to approve the paying of bills with a correction being made to the bill for Jose Gaytan. It is for an NRI refund not office apparel. Motion passed four to zero.

CORRESPONDENCE: There was not any correspondence. All correspondence received for the past two months was forwarded to directors via email.

OLD BUSINESS:

Erosion & Sediment Control Service Update – Howell stated that May had picked up and June was doing even better for Erosion plans. A request has been made to Mike Bossert for increasing the fee from \$50 to \$75. There is support from both him and Mike Van Mill for an increase. Howell stated he thought it would be on the August agenda for the County Board.

NRI Approval – Howell stated that there are two NRI's to be approved. One is for a parcel off Hieland Road that was not properly zoned. It is part of a subdivision and needs to be rezoned for a house to be built on it. Recommendation is that we send a no effect letter and refund a

portion of the fee. The second one is for a rezoning and a variance for a grain elevator to expand and build another silo. A full NRI has been completed and recommendation is that we send a no objection letter. Wissmiller made and Grob seconded a motion to follow the recommendations for both NRI's. Motion passed three to zero. Peters abstained. An IDNR EcoCat report was completed and included in this NRI.

RC & D – June 11, 2009 meeting has been cancelled. Next meeting will be August 13, 2009 at the Bourbonnais USDA Service Center.

Wind farm Update – Howell stated that he has not heard anything new on the wind farm. He thinks they are still working on getting all of the easements needed. He did mention that there had just been an article in the Daily Journal on wind farms and tying into the electric grids.

Fish & Tree Sale Update – AC Settle stated that the final numbers for the fish and tree sale were in the binders even though they had been sent with last months board meeting information. The fish sale did well and we were able to use Dave Peters truck and trailer to pick up the trees again which helped save some of the tree sale profit. AC Settle stated that she had had a call from two different tree customers regarding trees that did not survive. She stated that she had spoken to the nursery and they gave a suggestion on what to try and then said that if they still don't survive that they will replace them in the fall sale.

Soil Stewardship – AC Settle stated that the information for the Soil Stewardship materials was in the binders also. This was not a budgeted item at the beginning of last year but was something that was picked up again after operation funds were received that the District had not really expected. 18 of the 20 churches that participated last year did so again this year.

Sign Replacement Update – AC Settle stated that she had gotten four quotes on replacing the District signs in front of the building. Discussion was held. Ed Brown stated that he had talked to the leasing officer for FSA to see about the possibility of replacing the signs at their expense. The suggestion was that because the lease in this building is up in 2011 and the bidding process for space will begin soon, that it is best that they hold off for now to see if this will continue to be our office building. It was decided to table this until next month to have a better idea of the financial situation for the District.

NEW BUSINESS:

Education Committee Report – Howell reported that there were 4 applications for this year's scholarship. The decision was made to award a \$1000 scholarship and a \$500 scholarship. Jared DeVries of St. Anne will receive the \$1000 scholarship to help with pursuing his degree in Landscape Architecture at Ball State University and Gregory Sanders of Herscher will receive the \$500 scholarship to help with pursuing his degree in Agricultural and Consumer Economics at the University of Illinois.

Education Grants – Howell stated that he had contacted some groups such as park districts and extension that work with kids to ask them if they had any programs that they might need

some financial assistance on in the event the District had some extra money to help with. He received one response back for a program that is geared toward underprivileged kids. They are looking for \$300 to help sponsor kids to attend summer camp through this program. Discussion was held and the issue was tabled until a better idea of the District finances for the next year.

Summer Conference – Discussion was held on attendance at summer conference. Summer Conference is July 22nd – 24th. O'Connor stated that he will probably be going.

Camera Case Purchase – Howell stated that he would like to purchase a case for the new camera that the District recently bought. Consensus of the board was to get a case that the camera will fit into.

LUC Meeting – Howell stated that it was a quick meeting. There was lots of discussion on the bleak financial outlooks coming out of Springfield. Howell reminded O'Connor that the District will be hosting the September meeting because the District is vice chair of the LUC.

Privacy Act – Farm Bill Section 16, Data Sharing Certification – Discussion was held on the need of the SWCD board to sign a certification with FSA that basically says that they will not share any private information with anyone else. This includes farm numbers, tract numbers, farm programs, wetland delineations, etc. Ed Brown gave some background on the CRP contracting process and how it goes from NRCS to FSA to SWCD to County Committee. If the District board has anything to do with the process of approving the contracts this certification needs to be signed by the board members. The contracts have always been signed by Howell. District staff has already signed the certification forms. Gotkowski stated that he had heard that there is to be a new memorandum of understanding coming that will incorporate this certification and include the board. Brown suggested that it would probably be a good idea for the District Board to officially delegate the authority of signing the conservation plans to Howell and to renew that delegation each year.

REPORTS – In addition to printed reports, if necessary

RC REPORT – Howell stated that the personnel, budget and annual plan of work committees need to schedule meetings. June 15 at 8:00 am was chosen for the budget committee and the other dates will be decided on after that meeting. Howell informed the board that there is going to be a local food breakfast at the Farmers Market on June 27, 2009 in conjunction with the Celebrate Ag day. Tickets are \$10 each and are available at the District office. Howell stated that he will be doing the tillage survey tomorrow (June 9) with our Regional Rep., Joe Bybee.

AC REPORT – AC Settle stated that the book the District wants to donate to the Limestone Library in memory of Associate Director Alex Panozzo's mother, Rose Panozzo has not been given to the library as yet. Decision was made for Howell to coordinate with Alex Panozzo and get the book delivered. AC Settle stated that she had attended a Regional AC meeting in May where the main topic was the Freedom of Information Act and the Open Meetings Act. She told the board that the procedures for a FOIA request needed to be posted and request and appeal forms specific for the District needed to be available. This has all been completed. The agenda and public notice for the board meetings are now posted on our website as well as the approved

minutes as required. She stated that the District needs to look at the fee for copies if they should get a FOIA request as staff time cannot be a consideration. She also stated that closed meetings need to be recorded and written minutes done. Discussion was held on whether a closed meeting and an executive session are considered the same thing.

DC REPORT – Gotkowski stated that he did not have a written report with the board packets this month as there was not a lot of information for him to give. He did inform the board that they have rolled out EQIP and they have been told that there are enough applications statewide to exhaust all of the available funds. There are 10 applications in Kankakee County that are ready and eligible. He stated that he is beginning his summer work schedule. He will be working Monday – Thursday 7:00am – 4:30pm and Fridays will be alternating with 7:00am – 3:30pm and off. Gotkowski stated that there is a pasture walk coming up in Logansport, IN and the office will be closed on July 3rd for the 4th of July holiday.

COMMITTEE REPORTS –

The next regular District Board meeting will be July 13, 2009 beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Grob made and Peters seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed four to zero. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.