



## ROCK ISLAND COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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### **RISWCD Board Meeting Minutes Thursday, May 14th, 2020 5:00 p.m. Via Conference Call**

#### **PRESENT**

Dawn Temple, AC  
Gary Blanchard, Chair  
Sally Ferguson, Associate Director  
Brian Parkinson, Vice-Chair  
Rich Stewart, RC  
Julie Voelker, Director  
Twila Cederstrom, Director  
Nathan Oak, Treasurer/Secretary  
Joe Gates, Conservation Specialist

#### **ABSENT**

Jason Hessman, NRCS DC  
Bob Westfahl, RI County Board  
Rep.  
Marty McManus, IDOA R.R.

#### **1. Call to Order**

Chairman Gary Blanchard called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM. Roll call was taken.

#### **2. Motion to Approve Consent Agenda including Timesheets, Bills & Staff Reports**

Ferguson reviewed all items and states they look in order. Parkinson made a motion to accept all consent agenda items minus the timesheets. Cederstrom seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

#### **3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None

#### **4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### **1. PFC**

Stewart presented two applications for well sealings – Skinner for \$750 (FY19) & Long for \$395.85 (FY19). He is still working on Reid and Hoffman's projects and should have them for June meeting. Oak made a motion to approve the projects. Parkinson seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

##### **2. Copperas Creek Grant**

Temple gave an update on the status of the grant. 1<sup>st</sup> sign-up period ended May 1<sup>st</sup> with about 12 applications coming in mostly for streambank projects. Stewart and Temple have reviewed based on the BMP strategy and will submit the ranked

projects to get approved by IEPA. Stewart talked with Hessman regarding the surveys for the projects and he suggested Joe work on them as part of his technical assistance and NRCS will do any that he can't get to. Overall, the grant is behind schedule mostly due to IEPA delays. Parchert Jr. project is in process just waiting for area to dry out enough to haul the rock. Next sign-up period will begin 7/15. There will be some sort of information meeting related to that and we are planning a BMP tour in August.

### **3. Forest Preserve District/Ross Smith**

Temple reported that since Ross has been on furlough and there are no events happening, the MOU contract has been on hold, but will be reinstated for May so he can help Stewart with CRP reviews. Stewart pointed out that NRCS/FSA is now requiring 100% spot checks vs. 10% spot checks required previously.

### **4. Financial Quarterly Analysis**

Ferguson provided a 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter analysis. She reported that the budget is currently running a \$60,000 loss, but a lot of funding typically comes in the last quarter and is not too far off from the anticipated budget loss after 3 quarters. Budget deficit variance is mostly due to over aggressive seed sales. To summarize, we are within \$7800 of projected budget and year end projected is now \$15,000 loss which is mostly due to timing. Outstanding receivables are the main issue right now and we are hoping to still receive the funds prior to year-end.

## **5. NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Summer Interns**

Temple and Stewart have 2 prospects for interns. Their info and resumes were sent out to Board members via email. The first position is to update our filing system which is severely outdated and unorganized. The majority of SWCDs in Illinois have transitioned to tract number while ours are currently organized by operator name. Tract numbers don't change very often, but farm operators change often, and FSA does not provide recons. Staff proposed to hire Kayli Puig for this project as a 1099 contractor type internship for approximately 500 hours @ \$10/hour. There are funds that were overbudgeted for Ross Smith (\$2,000) and would like to reallocate that to help fund this internship. Parkinson made a motion to approve the reallocation of funds and approval to use contractor for internship. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

The second position is available through Western Illinois University for a grad student needing to fill an internship requirement to graduate. Referred by Rob Porter (professor) and recommended by Nahant Marsh where she is currently an Americorps service member. Stewart and Temple interviewed her via zoom. She would not begin till August for a 40-hour, 12-week internship. She will help and assist both staff members with a well-rounded experience. Staff proposed to hire Emilee Novak as a graduate internship through WIU and pay her a stipend upon completion of her internship of \$5,000. This would be funding by FY21 budget since the completion date will not be till at least October. Oak made a motion to approve to

the internship and stipend. Cederstrom seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

**2. Spring Plant Sale**

Temple is working on getting the website updated with pre-sale orders and related buttons. Plan is to do pre-sale orders of pollinator pocket sets and milkweed online then do a pop-up sale with whatever is left over on Friday 6/12. Gates reported that he has about 1,500 plants remaining to sell and some others from Simply Native. He will pick them up when they are ready. Ferguson asked about COVID requirements and staff will make sure to follow the guidelines at the time.

**3. Filter Strip Tax Incentive Applications**

Stewart presented several applications for the filter strip tax incentive that was advertised in the most recent newsletter. Mark Jackson 1.78 acres & Marilyn Bush 14.2 acres. Stewart reviewed and evaluated as per required specs. Cederstrom made a motion to approve. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

**4. NFWF Grant for Conservation Technician/Watershed Assistant**

Temple is working on a grant through NFWF (NRCS funded) for funding of a new staff position. We will hear back in June.

**6. Next Board Meeting**

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday June 2, 2020 at 5:00 pm. We will try to meet in person with social distancing possibly outside.

**7. Adjourn**

**A motion was made by Parkinson and seconded by Blanchard to adjourn at 5:52 pm. MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Nathan Oak, Secretary/Treasurer