



ROCK ISLAND COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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RISWCD Board Meeting Minutes Tuesday, February 5th, 2019 4:30 p.m. (changed from 5pm due to weather)

PRESENT

Dawn Temple, AC
Rich Stewart, RC
Gary Blanchard, Chair
Nathan Oak, Director
Brian Parkinson, Vice Chair
Bob Westfahl, RI County Board Rep.
Joe Gates, Public

ABSENT

Bill Parchert, Treasurer/Secretary
Marty McManus, IDOA R.R.
Twila Cederstrom, Director
Jason Hessman, NRCS DC
Sally Ferguson, Associate Director

1. Call to Order

Chairman Gary Blanchard called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM at the Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation District Office. Roll call was taken.

*****Due to weather and one Board member being late, the Agenda was addressed out of order. Informational items were addressed first.***

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Audit Update – Temple reported that she didn't have an audit update due to the auditor not getting back to her. The deadline for the Comptroller report is Feb. 27th and she stated that she expects it to be done prior to that and the last conversation with him he stated that it had gone to the review process.

NEW BUSINESS: Stormwater Conference – The conference will be next Tuesday @ Jumer's. There was an issue with the situation of doing the free beer tasting – Jumer's instructed us that we would need a liquor license in order to do this. Wake Brewery would be serving beer during the networking time after the conference. They donate the beer as a sponsor. So, there is a fee of \$50 for the permit. Parkinson wanted to make sure there would be no issues with obtaining this permit and the cost, etc. Temple and Stewart explained that this cost would be covered by our conference revenues and no operating funds would be used. We have 16 additional sponsors as well as 115 people currently registered for the event. The keynote is being presented by the I-74 Bridge corridor manager discussing the bridge project. The other topics were also discussed by Stewart. It addresses stormwater issues throughout the Quad Cities.

NEW BUSINESS: Board Elections – The election will be Feb. 28th. Sally has agreed to run for the Treasurer position because Parchert is dropping off. And Oak will be running again for his position. Temple presented a form to sign for IDOA petition to hold and election. All Board members present signed.

NEW BUSINESS: S.T.A.R. Program – Stewart reported he got 3 farmers to complete the STAR survey at the Farm Show. Parkinson completed the form and received 4-star status. Signs will be provided to those that complete the forms indicating how many stars they earned (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest). Former Board Chairman, Jim Mueller earned a 5-star ranking. Blanchard will figure out a field to do and complete as well.

NEW BUSINESS: Grant Proposals – Temple presented a couple grants that she discovered in normal course of business. The first is through National Fish & Wildlife Service & Wells Fargo and the second one is a technical assistance grant through NACD directly funded by NRCS. The technical assistance grant could be used for the conservation specialist position we have available. Temple wanted feedback on applying. The other NFWF grant could be utilized within Copperas Creek for additional projects. It focuses on project types such as cover crops, nutrient management, stream buffer enhancements. Since we already have the Copperas Creek resource plan, we could utilize that to provide metrics and project plans fairly easily that would coincide with projects already in place. Pre-application is due Feb. 19th so we need to move quickly on it. The NACD grant is due March 1st. We would request \$200,000 on the NFWF grant. Temple needs to find out more details and each one provides a webinar. Stewart agreed these have potential and worth giving them a try. Need Board approval to proceed with doing application.

OTHER BUSINESS: AC Report - The AC gave a brief verbal and full written report highlighting work and activities/projects during January and upcoming activities. She reported that the conference planning has been taking up a lot of her time the past few weeks and she has a lot going on. Follow up from prior month on educational outreach/partnerships – she spoke to Meghan, Education Coordinator with Living Lands and Waters as a potential partner and she will follow up on that after the conference. Stewart provided a flyer for QCCA Outreach Center and she will try to get in touch with them as well and see if there are any potential partnership opportunities. She also discussed a personal conservation concern involving the urban environment and that she would like to pursue some recycling type endeavors. Her concern stems from going to conferences and events and there is no recycling available. She is trying to do some outreach to see if there's a group or committee that could be put together for event recycling (such as BI-CAN) to pursue an event recycling program (potentially reenacting NAGS?). A discussion surrounding recycling ensued about why and potential solutions. [Oak entered the meeting]. Parkinson agreed he is interested, and it bothers him as well. Blanchard also agreed and suggested starting out slow and seeing how it unfolds. Temple suggested maybe partnering with QCCA to help them implement recycling at their events since they are a partner of ours already. Board agreed it was ok for her to pursue this as time allows. She also reported that she met with a guy out of Morris that

sells tumbling composters. Asked for approval to sell these going forward through website and/or as part of tree & fish sale programs (as pre-orders). We can purchase them for \$110 so she suggested selling for \$150 so we cover any shipping costs and make a little money on them. No one else seems to be selling similar items so could be a good market niche to fill for the gardening community in particular. She reported she has still not received her Linc card. Other items pending are the spring newsletter and tree orders. She provided feedback on Bald Eagle Days and doesn't think it's worth the time or money on this event. Not enough focus on conservation by the public, but more like a flea market type environment. Does not recommend doing this next year. Potentially just give Extension some materials for handouts rather than setting up a booth.

****EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS CONSERVATION SPECIALIST POSITION**

Meeting was reconvened at 5:30 pm. Joe Gates was hired as the Conservation Specialist. Parkinson made the motion to approve hiring him, Oak seconded. MOTION CARRIED. He will start as soon as possible on getting the Linc Card application rolling.

2. Consent Agenda

The previous meeting Minutes, Paid Bills, Financial Packet and Agenda had been sent out via email to all board members for review. Blanchard filled in to sign checks and timesheets since Parchert could not attend. Ferguson (not in attendance) reviewed everything and other than a few minor things, everything looked in order per her email to Temple. Cedertstrom (not in attendance) also responded via email that she supported hiring Gates as conservation specialist, cell phone stipend, and the investment policy. Oak made a motion to accept previous minutes, financial statements, and bills. Parkinson seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: FY19 Budget Review – Temple reported that she has analyzed 3 years of historical figures on the expense side and presented a proposed budget to be amended including the new conservation specialist position. Parkinson and Oak both suggested that this be reviewed by Ferguson. And all Board members present agreed this was comprehensive and thorough and much improved. We will revisit this for a full budget amendment approval at the next meeting.

3. Timesheets

Timesheets were reviewed and signed by Blanchard prior to the meeting. Blanchard reported that everything was in order. Oak made a motion to approve. Parkinson seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

4. Public Participation

None

5. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Investment Policy – Skipped till next meeting due to bad weather

Cell Phone Stipend Agreement – A contract was created for employees to compensate for cell phone use. Gates will be considered an occasional user. Temple and Stewart will be categorized as moderate. Parkinson wants everyone to be happy and provide fair compensation to staff for using their phone. Parkinson made the motion to approve the cell phone stipends for staff. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

6. NEW BUSINESS

1. Zoning Report

Stewart presented a zoning change for 15 acres owned by Ron Heath from ag to residential. One (or more) house will be built on the property. Stewart recommends approving. Parkinson made a motion to approve the zoning report. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

9. OTHER BUSINESS

1. RC Report

The RC gave a brief verbal and full written report highlighting work and activities/projects during January and upcoming activities. Stewart met the Copperas Creek planning committee and the final report was handed out. Hope to hear in March or April if we get awarded another round of grant funding. He also met with the new Farm Bureau manager, Tara Mahew. Stewart will be on vacation from 2/15 – 2/26.

2. DC Report

Jason Hessman provided a written report for current and upcoming activities.

3. Bureau Report

December written report was provided for review.

10. Next Board Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday March 5th, 2019 at 5:00 pm.

11. Adjourn

A motion was made by Oak, seconded by Parkinson to adjourn at 5:55 pm. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Parchert, Secretary/Treasurer