



ROCK ISLAND COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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RISWCD Board Meeting Minutes Tuesday, March 12th, 2019 (rescheduled from 3/5) 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Dawn Temple, AC
Rich Stewart, RC
Gary Blanchard, Chair
Nathan Oak, Director
Sally Ferguson, Associate Director
Marty McManus, IDOA R.R.
Twila Cederstrom, Director

ABSENT

Joe Gates, Conservation Specialist
Jason Hessman, NRCS DC
Bob Westfahl, RI County Board
Rep.
Bill Parchert, Treasurer/Secretary

1. Call to Order

Chairman Gary Blanchard called the meeting to order at 5:16 PM at the Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation District Office. Roll call was taken.

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. Temple brought up the issue of the past meeting minutes needing to be signed since Parchert has not been able to attend the meetings for several months. McManus suggested that the new treasurer/secretary sign the past ones once the reorganization of the Board takes place. Ferguson reviewed the financial statements and they are in order with the understanding that there will be some changes to the current statements once the FY18 year-end journal entries from the auditor are entered. This will change the balance sheet specifically. Ferguson recommends approving and motioned to accept consent agenda items. Oak seconded.

MOTION PASSED.

3. Timesheets

Timesheets were reviewed and signed by Ferguson. Ferguson reported that everything was in order and made a motion to approve. Cederstrom seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

4. Bills to be Paid

Temple received a request for donation for 4-H Sponsorship and asked the Board if they wanted to donate and if so, at what level. Prior levels have included \$40 and \$100. Ferguson motioned to support at the \$100 level. Oak seconded. MOTION PASSED. And Ferguson suggested to indicate to use towards supporting conservation efforts

however they see fit.

5. Public Participation

None

6. REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

Temple reported there was one new Board member elected at the annual election on 2/28/19 – Sarah “Sally” Ferguson (former Associate Director). 15 votes were cast for Ferguson. Oak was also reelected for a director position with 14 votes cast. IDOA election documents were distributed and signed by the appropriate parties.

Ferguson nominated Blanchard to be Chairperson for next year’s term. Cederstrom seconded. Blanchard accepted. Cederstrom stated that nominations were closed for Chairman and asked for all those in favor, vote was unanimous. Blanchard opened up nominations for Vice-Chairman. Blanchard then nominated Parkinson for Vice-Chair (not in attendance). Ferguson seconded. Passed. Blanchard opened Secretary-Treasurer for nominations. Oak nominated Ferguson. Cederstrom seconded. Ferguson accepted. Passed. Nominations completed.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Audit Update

Temple passed out the full audit report to all Board members with letters to directions, representation letter and a summary of findings. The audit received an adverse opinion due to accounting errors in prior years and correcting those errors and with it being the first ever audit completed. Changing the methods of accounting from accrual-based accounting to cash-based accounting going forward will help clean things up and makes things simpler, but doing the transition caused a lot of adjustments to be needed as well as balance sheet items that needed clearing out due to accumulation of uncleared accrual items (i.e.. inconsistent accounting practices). No fraud or theft or any other suspicious activity was implied or found during the audit. The auditor doesn’t think this determination should have any effect at this point on our grants, comptroller’s office, or IDOA standing. Not uncommon with first audit and we are on a path for corrective action and should have a much better opinion after next fiscal year. Temple suggested getting another audit after this fiscal year whether required or not in order to make sure all the corrective action items are being done. Temple is working through the journal entries, but needs some clarification on some items and is awaiting feedback from the auditor. GATA also needs to be updated as well with audit documentation. Ferguson reported that she was on the conference call with Temple and the auditor to discuss the outcome. She clarified that the opinion is due not due to people mismanaging money or any fraudulent activity, but due to the statements not being free of material misstatements which have accumulated from prior years and adjustments to clear the items off the books that are no longer being used. Ferguson would like to continue to do an audit, annually if funds are available, and perhaps create a policy

regarding this. This provides necessary professional oversight and protection for the AC position. Ferguson requested it to be put on the agenda in the future to discuss this topic further.

2. **FY19 Budget Review**

The budget revision has been completed. Temple pointed out that the auditor's report highlighted concerns with how far off the budget was from actual figures and that having a better and more accurate budget is necessary. After discussing the various parts at the last 4 meetings, this budget more accurately reflects the actual and projected funding and expenses for FY19. Ferguson made a motion to approve the revised budget. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

3. **Grant Applications**

Temple wanted to follow-up on the grants presented at the prior meeting. The NFWF grant was submitted requesting \$200,000 for projects within the Copperas Creek Watershed. Board approval via email was given for Mark Jackson to assist with the pre-application due to time constraints for Temple. The grant was titled – Copperas Creek: A Tribute(ary) to the Mississippi River. This would be additional funding for streambank, cover crops and other conservation efforts within the watershed. This is a national level grant and very competitive. A more regional affect approach was taken. Should know by April.

The NACD grant for the Conservation Specialist position was submitted by Temple requesting \$10,000 to assist with the salary of this position. The focus is on getting additional EQIP contracts and working with landowners on conservation plans. Should know by end of March.

Temple requested approval for applying for a training grant through IDOA for a 1-day grant writing course at UIC. There is \$500 available. The grant is \$300, and the additional funds would cover the travel expenses incurred. Blanchard asked about time constraints and if there would be time for grant writing. Temple thinks down the road when there is a better routine established, she would be able to work it in. Ferguson pointed out that it might also be good to have the info to provide better oversight to interns that may be assisting with grant writing opportunities. Oak made a motion to approve Temple to attend the grant writing course on April 4th if approved by IDOA. Ferguson seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

We did not receive a “no” letter for the next 319 grant so we will be getting a letter probably in April with further info on that.

4. **Cell Phone Stipend Agreement**

Temple presented the cell phone agreements for staff members (previously approved) to be signed. Blanchard signed the agreements.

5. **Stormwater Conference**

Stewart reported that over 150 people attended the 6th annual conference. Very well received and gaining popularity in Quad Cities area for all stormwater professionals including municipal representatives. He explained about MS4 Plans & Audits which is one of the topics addressed at the conference. Already discussing plans for next year's conference.

Temple reconciled the Stormwater restricted account (for 2018 & 2019) to reflect the payments made via credit card and not previously recorded in the restricted register. She requested to transfer via check funds from one bank account to the other to properly reflect that expenses to that account.

Stewart asked the purpose of using 2 bank accounts. Temple wasn't sure why there was 2 either. The IHMVCU has majority of funds including several restricted sub-accounts (IDOA Cost-share and Stormwater Conference) and this account is also used for payroll purposes. SENB Bank has the restricted account for Eco-Camp as well as the NAGS account. Blanchard asked why there was 2 bank accounts, and no one remembered why exactly or the purpose of both accounts so it was decided it wasn't really necessary going forward. Ferguson made a motion to close the SENB bank account and move all funds to the IHMVCU account. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

6. Investment Policy

This item was tabled at the last meeting due to weather and was discussed at the January board meeting as a recommendation from the auditor. The auditor provided a sample policy and that was used just amending for our district. Ferguson made a motion to approve. Cederstrom seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

8. NEW BUSINESS

1. Zoning Report

Stewart presented a zoning change for 5 acres for a special use change for a house that is already located on an ag-zoned property in Cole Township outside of Port Byron. Stewart recommends approving. Cederstrom made a motion to approve the zoning report. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

2. Flower & Garden Show

Stewart reported that we are attending this show at QCCA. Set-up 21st with it running 22nd – 24th. Looking to promote rain gardens, pollinators, and plant & tree sales. Stewart and Temple will be doing a presentation there on Saturday about rain gardens. Stewart was interviewed by the QC Times about this. We need to provide some flowers for our booth per our contract. Stewart asked about doing a door prize? Ferguson suggested doing a credit for plant/tree sales for \$50 and we can figure out how to disperse. Temple stated that Joe Gates put together a nice spring plant sale. All conservation sale forms are now finalized, and newsletter is in progress.

Ferguson made a motion to put \$50 from budget towards a raffle at the flower &

garden show. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

3. LUC Teleconference

This conference occurred the prior week. Blanchard was on the call. LUC needs a treasurer. Ferguson declined and no other Board members were interested. Josh Curry is the new Chairman.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

1. AC Report

Temple gave a brief verbal and full written report highlighting work and activities/projects during February and upcoming activities. Will not be attending Envirothon due to family illness and may not be able to attend the Women in Ag conference either. Did finally get Linc card. Gates will be assisting with training for ProTracts & DMS. He will not be allowed to work on current contracts with NRCS, only new ones. They will be teaming up on the NRCS Admin work going forward.

2. RC Report

Stewart gave a brief verbal and full written report highlighting work and activities/projects during February and upcoming activities. Envirothon tomorrow at Blackhawk College.

3. DC Report

Jason Hessman provided a written report for current and upcoming activities. We will now be having group meetings bi-monthly rotating between offices as well as each office to have bi-weekly staff meetings to discuss schedules. Stewart reported that there will be a full-time Soil Conservationist intern for the summer for the group. Cole Harris. Will rotate between 3 offices. EQIP deadlines are 4/19 & 5/17.

4. Bureau Report

February written report was provided for review and a verbal summary of the report was given by McManus. DARTS will be going away soon.

10. EXECUTIVE SESSION – AC 6 MONTH REVIEW

Board adjourned at 6:37 pm for Executive Session.

The meeting reconvened at 7:24 pm.

The Board made a motion to provide Temple with a raise of \$2.50/hour from \$15.25 to \$17.50/hour based on performance over the past 6 months. Blanchard also wanted to point out the opportunity for another review and potential raise after 1 year of employment. Temple accepted.

11. Next Board Meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled for Tuesday April 2nd, 2019 at 5:00 pm.

12. Adjourn

A motion was made by Oak, seconded by Cederstrom to adjourn at 7:15 pm. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Ferguson, Secretary/Treasurer