



ROCK ISLAND COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

3020 1st Avenue East, Milan, Illinois 61264
Phone: (309)764-1486 ext. 3

www.rockislandswcd.org

RISWCD Board Meeting Minutes Tuesday August 27, 2019 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Dawn Temple, AC
Gary Blanchard, Chair
Nathan Oak, Director
Sally Ferguson, Director
Joe Gates, Conservation Specialist
Brian Parkinson, Director
Rich Stewart, RC
Jason Hessman, NRCS DC
Bob Westfahl, RI County Board Rep.
Twila Cederstrom, Director
Julie Schumann, Public

ABSENT

Marty McManus, IDOA R.R.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Gary Blanchard called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM at the Rock Island County Soil and Water Conservation District Office. Roll call was taken.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – EMPLOYEE REVIEWS

*Ferguson moved to go into executive session at 5:10 pm for annual/bi-annual staff reviews. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.** Ferguson made a motion to leave Executive session. Session adjourned at 6:15 and regular meeting resumed at 6:22 pm.*

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. Ferguson reviewed minutes and financial packet. She stated everything looked in order. Ferguson made a motion to approve the consent agenda items.

3. Timesheets & Bills

Bills to be paid were sent out with the financial packet. Temple had some additional bills presented and reviewed during the meeting. Timesheets were reviewed and signed by Ferguson. Ferguson reported that everything was in order and made a motion to approve consent agenda items (above), bills & timesheets. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

4. Treasurer's Report

Ferguson introduced Julie Schuman as a potential board member. Since she is moving to Henry County she will probably be stepping down when her property in Moline sells. Ferguson reported that fiscal year ended June 30th. Revenue was under budget and expenses were also under budget.

5. Public Participation

None

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. FY20 Annual Plan of Work

Drafts of the Annual Plan of Work were distributed to all present. Stewart reported that a few things were removed, and a few things added from prior year. Going to be doing some work in Mill Creek as well as more projects with Copperas Creek through the next round of grant funding. Also added some criteria for Joe's work that he is doing for the NACD grant. Temple questioned the monitoring of the bioreactor on Randy Murdock's property and this isn't being done currently. Stewart suggested having an intern do this. Board decided to keep it on there for now. Stewart reported that he was going to see if we could get some special project funds for rain gardens, but the new cost share is not favorable for this program otherwise. Ferguson suggested simplifying the format in the future and who is responsible for what. Oak made a motion to approve the FY20 Annual plan of work. Cederstrom seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

2. FY20 Budget

Temple passed out a copy of the draft budget to everyone present. Temple and Ferguson met previously to discuss budget items and changes. Stewart has also reviewed. Ferguson made some suggestions and a few items will be adjusted based on staff payroll increases. Stewart presented a possible partnership with Rock Island County Forest Preserve. He spoke with Jeff Craver who is interested in sharing an education person. This person would be an employee of RI County Forest Preserve and we would "rent" this person for a certain number of hours per week. Terms would be annual. Proposing an annual budget of \$15,000, which would give us 600 hours annually based on \$22/hour. The candidate in mind does have prior NRCS experience as pathways student and has been a presenter at several Eco-Camps and Envirothon. Temple reported that we received FY19 funds from RI County in July (FY20), so the budget reflects receipt of FY19 and FY20 funds, but not due to an increase in funding. A meeting with Craver and Blanchard as well as Temple and Stewart will be set up to discuss further. Funds were allocated under Educational Activities in budget. Temple discussed other changes. Ferguson suggested increasing the advertising budget to \$1000 and bumping up the newsletter line if available. Ferguson made a motion to approve the FY20 Budget with the alterations discussed. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

3. **Eco-Camp**

Temple reported that the fall Eco-Camp will be partnering with Illiniwek. Focus on 4th & 5th grades and only doing 1-day event this fall. Rock Island schools are not in session during this date. Wanted to try it at new venue just 1 day and see how it goes. Nahant Marsh has joined the planning committee as an event partner and will be conducting several sessions. All presenters have been lined up. Event date will October 3rd. This event is one of the projects that the education person would be assisting with.

4. **PFC Program**

Stewart present the new cost list for FY20. Pretty much the same except they completely cut the rain garden program. Parkinson made a motion to approve. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

5. **Edgy Conversation Field Day**

Stewart reported that they field day went pretty well, but not many farmers showed up. Presenters were good. Discussion about the schedule and time of the event may have hindered some from going. Maybe do an evening thing for only a couple hours to try to get more farmers available to come. Gates reported that he filled in for Stewart on the tour of the saturated buffer and bioreactor sites.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

1. **Certificate of Deposit Funds**

The prior CD investment of approx. \$150K expired in July and the funds were deposited in the IHMVCU savings account. Temple discussed the current rates at local banks for 1 year and 2-year CD's. Best rates at 2.53% at several local banks for 2 year and 2.31% for a 1 year at IHMVCU. Ferguson and Temple concurred that we could increase the investment amount to \$125K with no risk of needing those funds during that time. Blanchard suggested splitting the investments \$75,000 in a 2 year and \$50,000 in a 1 year. Ferguson made a motion to put \$75K in a 2 year at Vermillion Bank in Milan and \$50K in a 1 year at IHMVCU. A discussion about choice of bank followed. Ferguson struck her motion on the basis that the investment policy allows a decision to be made jointly between her and Temple about the location of the investment. She and Temple will do some research on the best location prior to making the deposits. The \$75k/\$50k split will stand.

2. **Cheri Bustos Green Rural Partnership Plan**

Temple presented the proposed Green Rural Partnership Plan recently rolled out from Rep. Cheri Bustos. Stewart and Temple attended a discussion panel at University of Illinois Extension to discuss the plan and ways it could be improved. Stewart stated that soil & water districts are able to help in ways that NRCS can't due to various restrictions and ways to streamline processes between NRCS & FSA. Stewart pointed out that the AISWCD is looking to support the plan officially. Stewart asked Board if it was something they wanted to support or had any comments. She encouraged us to bring funding requests. Temple pointed out that maybe losing the

IEPA NPDES grant might be something to bring to her attention. No other feedback or suggested were made or provided by Board members. Stewart noted that if something came to mind, to let us know.

3. **Mill Creek Watershed Stakeholder Meeting**

This was discussed previously. Top concern was streambank & tributary erosion. Log jams, farmland gully erosion, lack of wildlife habitat/pollinators, pond issues and nutrient loss were other concerns. Haley Haverback will move forward with writing the 604b grant. This grant will fully pay for the resource plan and Haverback will write the grant for free. Thus, there will be no cost to do this for the district. There was agreement that there was enough landowner interest to move forward. Timeline would be:

Grant due: 12/19

Receipt of Grant: summer 2020

Process to complete resource plan: 2020 - 2021

4. **Update Per Diem rates**

Stewart reported that per diem rates have not been updated (currently at \$28/day, should be at \$55/day). He requested approval to increase the rate to the current IRS rate (and noted that we are already using the IRS current mileage rate). Parkinson made a motion to approve the increase in per diem rate. Oak seconded. **MOTION PASSED.**

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **AC Report**

Temple gave a brief verbal and full written report highlighting work and activities/projects during July & August and upcoming events. Currently working on tree and fish sales. The auditor will be on site September 12th to conduct the audit.

2. **RC Report**

Stewart provided a written report highlighting work and activities/projects during July and August and upcoming activities. Stewart attended the BI-CAN network Invasive Species Workshop. About 80-90 people turned out. Looking to do another similar workshop next year. He also attended the Regional SWCD Employee Association conference in South Dakota. He thought it was interesting to see and compare notes about how the soil & water districts work in other states. He will be writing conservation plans for CRP contracts – deadline of September 15th.

3. **Conservation Specialist Report**

Gates provided a brief verbal and full written report highlighting work and activities/projects during July and August as well as upcoming activities. Working on

a SSRP project, but on hold due to no technical assistance funds. Surveyed 4 basins at Flemings. Has a couple people looking for assistance with micro irrigation systems. Surveyed for pond at Steve Layer property. He created custom mailing list for Mill Creek landowners. Attended RI Land Use Update Planning meeting. Requested NRCS additional computer. Filled in for Stewart at the NLRs Edgy Conversation tour. Set up Citrix on computer.

4. DC Report

Jason Hessman provided a written and verbal report for current and upcoming activities. He provided some programming reports for the past year and discussed them briefly. CSP was a total flop for the year and hoping that having Joe on board will help with that. He reported that NRCS will be removing the 2nd computer to districts. There is a new engineer hired in Cambridge, but overall short staffed so there continue to be problems due to that.

9. Next Board Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday October 1st, 2019 at 6:30 pm.

10. Adjourn

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at approx. 8:00 pm. (Note: recording was cut off prior to the motion). MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sally Ferguson, Secretary/Treasurer