

**DEKALB COUNTY SWCD**  
**Minutes from October 20, 2022 Board Meeting**

**Supervisors:**

Sarah Delbecq, Chair  
Steve Provines  
Jeff Conrad  
Steve Watson

**SWCD:**

Nellie Peffley, District Director  
Julie Knudson, District Coordinator  
Cameron Bell, Regional Technician  
Bill Ward, Conservation Technician

**Absent:**

Judy Strock, Vice Chair  
Justin Hoover, Associate Supervisor  
Cody Burniston, Associate Supervisor  
Derek Thompson, NRCS  
Kate Sanders, ISDA

Chair Sarah Delbecq called the October 20, 2022 board meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**DISTRICT BUSINESS**

- **Minutes:** Sarah Delbecq, Chair asked if there were any additions or corrections to the September 2022 minutes that had been provided to the board members. No additions or corrections were made. Jeff Conrad moved to approve the September 13, 2022 minutes as written. Steve Provines seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous. Motion passed.
- **Financial Report:** Sarah Delbecq asked for approval of September claims 8672-8684 and deposits D740-D744. The board reviewed all claims and deposits. No corrections were made. Jeff Conrad moved to approve claims 8672 through 8684 and deposits D740-D744 as presented. Steve Provines seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous. Motion passed.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- **LARE Grant:** Nellie reported she attended a meeting with DNR, Surveyor's office, City of Auburn's Engineer and Parks Dept, 2 members of Cedar Creek Drainage Board and Mike Watson representing DeKalb Commissioners to discuss the bidding process for installation of bank stabilization. At the meeting it was determined the County will take the lead for the process. The City of Auburn's Parks Dept had a few issues with the grant requirements. They will meet with Flatland Resources to discuss and correct the issues. When the final design report is finalized the bidding process can take place. Nellie will keep the board updated.
- **CWI Grant:** Nellie informed the board the next State Soil Board meeting is scheduled for October 25. She believes the CWI grant proposals will be discussed at this meeting. The State Soil Board meetings are virtual so she will watch and let SWCD board know if our grant is approved.
- **October Events:** Nellie reported both the weed wrangle and rain barrel workshop were cancelled due to lack of RSVPs. The staff is looking into ways to better promote future events.

**NEW BUSINESS**

- **Election Committee:** Nellie reported the election committee form is due to ISDA by November 1. She informed the board Steve Watson's term will be up in March 2023. Chair Sarah Delbecq will let Nellie and/or Julie know who she appoints to the nomination committee by the deadline.
- **2023 Budget:** Nellie had a copy of the 2023 County budget submitted. She pointed out the budget included a 5% increase in operating expenses as well as salaries. This was the amount suggested by the county council. She has since been informed the salary increase has been cut to only a 1% increase.

She attended a council meeting to further discuss the issue. The council told Nellie the staff salaries are at the top level of their categories. They suggested updating the job descriptions. The council will continue to discuss the salary increases at the next scheduled meeting on Nov 8. Nellie plans to attend the meeting. She will keep the board updated.

- **Evaluation/Performance Reviews:** Nellie has requested the staff complete a self-evaluation and will complete the in person reviews before the November board meeting. The board will perform Nellie's evaluation/performance review during an executive session prior to the November 17<sup>th</sup> board meeting.
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- **IASWCD Annual Conference:** Nellie informed the board the 2023 IASWCD Annual Conference is scheduled for January 8-10. The cost is \$350/person and need to register by November 16<sup>th</sup>. After the 16<sup>th</sup> the cost will increase. She asked for board approval to allow and pay registration plus travel costs for staff to attend. Jeff Conrad moved to approve payment of registration, lodging and any other travel costs for staff and any supervisors attend the IASWCD Annual Conference in January 2023. Steve Provines seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous. Motion passed. Nellie asked if any supervisors plan to attend to let her or Julie know ASAP.
- **Leadership for Midwester Watersheds Conference:** Nellie reported an invitation was received to attend the Leadership for Midwestern Watersheds Conference to be held in Ft. Wayne on November 3-4. The registration cost is \$125/person. Her and Bill Ward are interested in attending and are asking for approval. Jeff Conrad moved to approve Nellie Peffley and Bill Ward attend the Leadership for Midwestern Watersheds Conference November 3-4 and pay the registration fee of \$125/person. Steve Watson seconded. Vote was unanimous. Motion passed.
- **DCSP:**
  - Nellie reported she received 2 payment requests from D. Hagar for completion of septic replacement and Lakewood Park School for tree planting. The board reviewed the files. Jeff Conrad moved to approve payment of \$2500 each to both D. Hagar and Lakewood Park School from District Cost Share funds. Steve Provines seconded. Vote was unanimous. Motion passed.
  - Nellie had another request for payment from C. White for 2 separate contracts. One was for a pollinator plot and the other invasive tree removal. There were a few issues that Nellie and Bill Ward wanted to discuss with the board. The White's did the work for both the plot and removal themselves and charged \$50/hour. The contract states the district follows NRCS standards which sets self-labor at \$18/hour. The board agreed the district will follow the NRCS standards. Nellie had 2 options for the board to decide on how to pay the 2 contracts. After much discussion the board decided to approve the option where the native trees/shrubs were included in the pollinator plot contract paying \$1980.40 and the invasive removal at \$249.89. Jeff Conrad moved to approve payment of \$2230.29 to C. White from District Cost Share funds. Steve Provines seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous. Motion passed.
- **Annual Meeting:** Nellie reminded the board it's time to start thinking annual meeting. Such as date, format, speaker, etc. The board discussed the meeting and decided on a full dinner. They would like to check out the exhibit hall cost. They are open for ideas on a speaker. Nellie and the staff will put together more information and bring to next meeting.
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- **Wood-Land-Lakes, RC&D:** Jeff Conrad reported he sits on the Wood-Land-Lakes, RC&D board representing DeKalb SWCD. He recently attended a County Commissioners meeting requesting the county include a \$500 annual payment for support of the RC&D. The commissioners agreed to add the amount to their budget. He also reported the Steuben County Community Foundation has an anonymous donor that will match any amount paid to the RC&D thru the foundation. Jeff asked the board if the District could also pay \$500 to Wood-Land-Lakes, RC&D through the Steuben Community

Foundation to take advantage of the match. The board discussed Jeff's request. Jeff Conrad moved to put into the Steuben Community Foundation \$500 for the Wood-Land-Lakes, RC&D. Steve Watson seconded. Vote was 2 yay, 1 nay. Motion passed.

**NEXT MEETING:**

- Thursday November 17, 2022 @7:00pm

Jeff Conrad moved to adjourn the meeting. Steve Provines seconded. Vote was unanimous. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:04pm.

Chairman: Sarah Delbecq \_\_\_\_\_

Judy Strock \_\_\_\_\_

Jeff Conrad \_\_\_\_\_

Steve Provines \_\_\_\_\_

Steve Watson \_\_\_\_\_

Recorder \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_