

**STARK COUNTY SWCD
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2024 - MEETING: 8:30 A.M.
USDA Service Center – Toulon, IL**

CALL TO ORDER: The Stark County Soil & Water Conservation District board meeting on **Thursday, December 19, 2024** at the USDA Service Center, Toulon, IL. Chairman Keith Bush noted a quorum was present and called the **meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.** then led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

PRESENT:

Directors: Keith Bush, Chairman; Phil Webster, Director; Nick Rumbold, Director;. **Absent:** Trevor Nelson, Vice Chairman; Miriam Mock, Secretary/Treasurer;,
Associate Directors: None. **Absent:** David Sager, Lee Hager, Robin Nowlan, Frank Schafer, Ethan Ely.
Staff: Katie McCauley, RC; Christian Reiner, AC.
NRCS: Zane Downing, SC. Erika Luft, DC **Absent:** None.
Guests: None.

MINUTES APPROVAL

- ★ *Motion by Webster to approve the 9/21/2024 Board Meeting Minutes as submitted; seconded by Rumbold; all present voted aye; motion carried.*

TREASURER’S REPORT / BILLS PAID & PENDING APPROVAL (See Financial Report)

- ★ *Motion by Webster to approve the August Treasurer’s Reports seconded by Rumbold; all present voted aye; motion carried.*

EMPLOYEE TIMESHEETS APPROVAL

- ★ *Motion by Rumbold to approve the employee time sheets as submitted (11/29, 12/13) seconded by Webster; all present voted aye; motion carried.*

STANDING BUSINESS

PFC (Partners for Conservation) –

- ★ There was discussion of the breakdown for PFC funds and funds went. Bush thinks it would be best to focus on structures, pollinators, and then cover crops next year since the district was heavily focused on cover crops this year.

CRP - McCauley and Reiner have both been working on their conservation planner level one, McCauley almost has hers, Reiner is still working on his.

CREP- The CREP yearly invoice for six hundred forty has been submitted to IDNR.

CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT - McCauley and Reiner are working on Conservation 1 and 2 planner status by Luft’s guidance.

EDUCATION UPDATE - Land Use Council 2 (LUC2) Envirothon is scheduled for March 12, 2025 at Black Hawk East Auditorium. Other Spring planning for upcoming events: earth day, arbor day, Soil Health Week, Stewardship Week, and 5th grade Conservation Day.

FUNDRAISER UPDATE - Spring tree sale with Winding Creek orders are due March 25 with Henry Co dropping off trees on April 7. Spring Grass Carp orders due March 28 and other Fish due April 4; customer fish pick up is April 11. McCauley is working with Joe Gates on organizing a Native Plant Sale.

OLD BUSINESS

Education Donation Letters- Reiner sent out 107 education donation letters, and so far had gotten \$700 from three different donations.

Annual Meeting Plans-The district was able to get a hold of the FFA, they are able to make breakfast, the district also was able to get a hold of the fairgrounds, and is waiting on getting the contract. It will cost about \$400 to host at the fairgrounds, so the district will be mailing donation letters to a few individuals at the bank. Bush also had the idea to send letters to contractors for a donation for the fairgrounds, while also inviting them. The district is hoping to send invitation letters to individuals that have previously won contests from the district, or who have worked with the district in the past. The meal will be prepared by the Stark County FFA, and they are able to decide what to cook. The SWCD, and board also discussed the speakers for the annual meeting.

Board Member Re-Election-Mock is still planning to step down as treasurer, and Ely stated that he may be willing to join the board at the November meeting, however he is not wanting to be the treasurer.

Tax Levy-

CD Renewal- Savings 1 and Saving 2 CD's were renewed into 3 month CDs with a rate of 4.07.

Winter Training-Reiner and McCauley went to winter training and were able to learn about other funding possibilities, and they were able to find out how other districts operate too.

OTHER –Stark County SWCD received a letter in the mail from the IRS that our taxes had an inconsistency last year. So it was in need of correction.

NEW BUSINESS

District Laptop Screen-

- ★ **Motion by webster to try and get a laptop for \$1000 seconded by Rumbold; *all present voted aye; motion carried.***

Working From Home- Bush stated if there is a government shutdown do what you can and make a plan with Zane for the potential government shut down, and make do at home for the time being. Reiner brought up the topic of working from home as McCauley had been doing it, and wanted to see where the board stood. Rumbold didn't see the value in working from home. Bush also thinks it is beneficial to have people in the office, extenuating circumstances are the only option for working from home. The district can remain somewhat flexible if there is an extenuating circumstance, and it doesn't happen too often.

Local Work Group-Bush stated to do the local work groups and bring in some money, doing it right after the annual meeting may be a possibility to bring in more people.

Watershed Planning-None

Climate Smart Agriculture Outreach and Education-None

LUC 2 Bank Account-

- ★ **Motion for a new bank, account by Webster seconded by Rumbold; *all present voted aye; motion carried.***

Zoning- Bush said to talk to zoning, talk to districts, and others who have a foot in the game to get a better idea for the next meeting.

Funding for 2025- None

Christmas Bonus-

★ **Motion by Webster to have the district meet last year's bonus at a 30 hour weeks pay, seconded by Rumbold; all present voted aye; motion carried.**

Other- McCauley brought up how the district had previously stated in a prior meeting that they would pay directors for each meeting, so she wanted to see if the board wanted to be paid out. Rumbold said he doesn't, Webster doesn't either. McCauley also met with Alan Curry earlier this year to help plan a tree planing with Stark County FFA and 4H around the cross country trails.

AGENCY REPORTS

AISWCD (Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts) - None.

N.R.C.S. (Natural Resources Conservation Service) - Erika Luft supplied an NRCS update that was given by Downing. NRCS is training the new AC (Reiner) and RC(McCauley).

B.LW.R. (Bureau of Land & Water Resources)- None.

F.S.A. (Farm Service Agency) - None.

FARM BUREAU - None.

CORRESPONDENCE- None.

NEXT BOARD MEETING DATE - The next board meeting will be at the USDA Service Center, Toulon, Illinois on Thursday, **January 16, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.**

ADJOURNMENT

★ ***Motion to adjourn the meeting by Bush; seconded by Mock; all present voted aye; motion carried. Adjourned at 9:44 a.m.***

Minutes Taken and Transcribed by: _____
Christian Reiner, Administrative Coordinator _____
Date

Minutes Approved by: _____
Miriam Mock, Secretary-Treasurer _____
Date