

Minutes of Regular Meeting  
VANDERBURGH COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
(SWCD) Office, Evansville, Indiana  
7:00 p.m., Monday, December 22, 2009

**Present:**

David Ellison, Chairman  
Davie Sue W Litov, Vice-Chairman  
Laura Lamb, Secretary  
Maurice Berendes, Member  
Wayne Fehd, Member (Absent)  
Tom Niksch, Associate

**SWCD Personnel:**

Norma Duckworth  
Bonnie Bittner

**NRCS Personnel:**

Darrell Rice  
Lindsay Martinez

Davie Sue chaired the meeting until Dave (aka Santa Claus) arrived and asked for a motion to approve the minutes as mailed to supervisors with the draft agenda last week.

A motion was made by Laura Lamb to approve the minutes of the November, 2009 meeting, seconded by Maurice Berendes, and carried.

Davie Sue asked the board to refer to the November financial report, which showed the previous balance on 11-1-09, \$41,786.69, Receipts, \$548.34, Debits \$4,749.38 and balance as of 11-30-09 \$37,585.65.

A motion was made by Maurice Berendes to accept the treasurer's report, seconded by Laura Lamb, and carried.

**NOVEMBER CLAIMS:**

W4489 NACD (2010 Dues)	\$1,000.00
W4490 Khimaira (Website Hosting/Domain Name)	\$165.00
W4510 County Highway (Gas/Blazer)	\$22.63
W4487 Superior Ag Resources Co-op (Hand Spreader/Rye Seed)	\$60.74
W4488 CPESC (Renewal Fee/Norma)	\$100.00
W4511 County Highway (Gas/Blazer)	\$28.65
W4512 Laser Tone (HP 3500 Repair)	\$90.00
W4503 AT&T Mobility (Cell Phone)	\$16.66
W4513 Norma Duckworth (Education Supplies)	\$36.47
W4514 Office Depot (Office Supplies)	\$240.77
W4492 CMC (4 Registrations/Annual Conference)	\$980.00
W4493 CTIC Registration/Norma)	\$15.00
W4491 Indiana League RC&D (3 Registrations/Leadership Conference)	\$375.00
W4515 Bonnie Bittner (Mileage/Sugar Ridge)	\$26.40
W4502 Petty Cash (Replenish Petty Cash)	\$29.99
W4516 Oaks Printing (Letterhead/Envelopes)	\$160.01

***Claims Submitted to County:***

No claims this month

Finance Chairman, Maurice Berendes reviewed the claims.

Maurice Berendes made a motion to approve the claims, seconded by Laura Lamb, and carried.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### Natural Resource Committee – David Ellison-Chairperson

The Lake and River Enhancement item was tabled due to lack of new information.

The Tillage Plot cover crop was seeded by Darrell Rice and Lindsay Martinez. The Tri-County Districts are working on a Soil Quality Workshop to be held on August 4, 2010. We have three speakers committed.

The Tri-County Pond Pro Day scheduled for March 20, 2010 is on schedule with speakers committed. We have a law firm committed to speaking on Pond Liability but as yet not the name of who will speak. Vice-chairman asked staff to put together a budget for the Pond Pro Day and Soil Quality Workshop for the January meeting.

## **BUSINESS PLAN**

### **ACTIONS FOR 2009**

**Soil Erosion:** Continue developer's workshop to highlight urban control practices and legislation  
(Partnering with other agencies)  
Conservation tillage will be increased by 20% over 2002 amounts, with a minimum of 5% per year on highly erodible land.  
Promote No Till Workshop for producers  
Locate and promote programs that provide incentives to adopt conservation practices  
(Newsletter/ongoing)

**Water Quality:** Educate public on maintenance of septic related issues by SWCD & Partners with  
Newsletter, flyers, fair booth  
Nitrates and phosphates levels will be reduced in Locust Creek by 10% over 2002  
Levels  
Target Locust Creek with Core 4 grant (i.e. soil erosion, nutrient management, pesticide  
Management, & buffer strips)  
Partner with Health Department to address water quality concerns

**Preservation of Natural Areas:** Preserve existing wetlands, forests & wildlife areas  
Create additional wetlands, forest and wildlife areas  
Encourage the utilization of "green spaces" in subdivisions &  
Urban areas.  
Partner with the city to get rid of kudzu

**Preservation of Farmland:** Reduce the loss of prime farmland to urban development

### Land Use Committee – Wayne Fehd-Chairperson

The Eagle Slough Natural Area sign is up on the south side of Waterworks road. Maurice contacted Mr. Krietzer about hauling the two tractor tires out to the road so Raben Tire Co. can pick them up. Mr. Krietzer said he would call when it is not too wet. Eagle Slough Natural Area steering committee chairman, Greg Meyer sent a letter to each board member for consideration of acquiring property.

Chairman asked members if they understood or wanted a discussion. Consensus was they understood the letter.

Maurice Berendes made a motion to allow the Eagle Slough Natural Area steering committee to make land acquisitions either by donation or purchase in the name of the Vanderburgh County SWCD in the amount up to, but not exceeding \$5,000 for expansion of the Natural Area, seconded by Davie Sue Litov and carried.

The University of Southern Indiana Locust Creek Water Monitoring Project is completed as per contract. A copy of the Locust Creek Bio-assessment, Analysis of Habitat, Chemical Parameters and Heavy Metals report was mailed to Doug Nussbaum. Dr. Summers wants to continue his study and hopes to partner with the district.

The Clean Water Indiana 2009 Grant projects are completed. The final checks were mailed to the clients participating and the Quarterly report was sent to Paul Hoffman today. Staff will work on a final report and press release to be submitted by March.

Dr. Batema who is heading the University of Evansville soils project in area wetlands in partnership with the district has not been reached. Norma said she was unable to connect with Dr Batema because he was involved with finals etc. She will contact him when classes resume either by email, phone or personal visit.

The district received a memo from Nola Gentry, Chair, and State Soil Conservation Board. On November 10, 2009 the State Soil Conservation Board approved eighty-eight 2010 Clean Water Indiana (CWI) grant proposals to be funded totaling \$584,409. The proposals were submitted to the State Budget Agency for approval to issue contracts to the 88 Soil and Water Conservation Districts with a beginning date of January 2010. As of December 22, 2009 approval from the State Budget Agency has not been received. There is no guarantee when these approvals may occur; therefore beginning a project without a signed contract is not recommended. Vanderburgh SWCD projects positioned for this grant is the Pond Pro Day and Soil Quality Workshop.

#### Education Outreach Committee – Laura Lamb, Chairperson

The district has a lot of interest in the Backyard Conservation Program. We have given rebates on three rain barrels and one native planting. We have one client who started a rain garden that is not functioning properly. Staff has visited and it probably can't be fixed until spring; she will do follow up. There are several projects on the books that will have to wait until spring.

#### District Operations Committee – Maurice Berendes, Chairperson

Bonnie reported she has the County Commissioner/Council Council meeting dates ready for 2010. Members need to check their schedule so they can begin signing up to attend.

Two board supervisors and one staff attended the Cornerstones of Leadership (Impacting Community) that was held in Wabash, IN. All agreed it was very helpful and think it would be a good idea to present a quarterly report on projects/budget to the Commissioners. Laura Lamb volunteered to help with the report.

Vanderburgh Co. SWCD Chairman, Dave Ellison will be given the Supervisor of the year award during the Banquet at Annual Conference in January. Members clapped and congratulated Dave.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Soil & Water Resource Committee – David Ellison – Chairperson

No Business This Month

Land Use Committee – Wayne Fehd, Chairperson

Doug Tallamy has been booked to speak at the district's Invasive Species Conference which will be held at University of Evansville. Mr. Tallamy was told he will receive \$1,000 honorarium and \$1,000 for expenses (plane ticket, hotel, etc). The conference is scheduled for June 19, 2010.

Members were asked to refer to copies in their packets for information on the Local Ranking Meeting. The meeting will be held to work on priorities for the 2010 Farm Bill. It will be held January 7, 2010 at 9:00 a.m. in the SWCD conference room. Letters and ranking sheets were sent out by mail and email by the Lindsay Martinez, Soil Conservationist. The ranking sheets can be filled out and sent to the office or people are welcome to attend the meeting. It is suggested by legislative statute that SWCDs are best suited to lead these workgroups so all resource concerns are identified and prioritized. Darrell explained what the NRCS state office does with the ranking provided by counties.

Education and Outreach Committee – Laura Lamb, Chairperson

A marketing piece was passed and members were asked if they wanted to have a marketing piece for Annual Meeting. After some discussion it was decided to have a brochure at each place explaining possible things such as SWCD, Board members, projects, etc.

Norma reported the American Forest Foundation who funds Project Learning Tree is asking for donations. They will match any donations made to Project Learning Tree which targets K through High School students and also teachers. She passed the information to members to view and will email to Vice Chairman as requested.

Norma reported the Library Association is broke into districts and on February 17<sup>th</sup> she is doing a Project WET for this region so libraries can promote it. Karen Barnhill & Brenda Jeffers offered to assist her with the presentation. She asked to go to Plainfield for the first presentation of its kind to assist Angie Tilton. It is a day trip and she feels it will help her in the presentation in Vanderburgh County.

Maurice Berendes made a motion to send Norma to Plainfield  
To assist with workshop, seconded by Laura Lamb and carried.

Members were asked to refer to copies in their packets of an e-mail from a Purdue student who wants to intern this summer for the district. Norma explained her plan for water monitoring, would like for her to work 20 hours a week. After much discussion it was decided for Norma to present a work plan at the January meeting, Bonnie should contact Laura Fribley with the boards' questions and the County Insurance Co.

Members were asked to refer to copies in their packets for information on an Exhibit on Farm Life (A Century of Change for Farm Families and their Neighbors) Mike Linderman sent an e-mail asking the district if they would partner with Angel Mounds to bring this exhibit to Vanderburgh County. The Rental fee is \$1,000 and the shipping to the site he thinks would be comparable. They would pay the shipping, set it up, take it down and advertise it extensively through press releases and in the schools. They asked if the district would pay the rental fee and they would give credit for the exhibit coming to Vanderburgh County to the Vanderburgh County SWCD. After some discussion

Maurice Berendes made a motion to partner with Angel Mounds to bring the Exhibit on Farm Life to Angel Mounds by paying the rental Fee (\$1,000), Seconded by Laura Lamb and carried.

Norma was congratulated on receiving the 2009 River Watch Instructor of the Year award. She will be recognized at Annual Meeting. Staff is working on a piece to send to the media and Evansville Business Journal.

Water Quality Specialist passed her report to members. She currently involved with three clients on the Backyard Conservation Program. She is giving Riverwatch classes at Central High School and the Incredible Journey to 160 students at Highland Elementary School. Upcoming Programs that are scheduled is a meeting with Riverwatch volunteers on January 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss spring monitoring schedule and E.coli training class. She and Karen Barnhill plan to approach United Neighborhoods and USI for volunteers. Project WET for the entire region will be held on February 17<sup>th</sup> at Central Library to encourage library personnel to develop water quality and conservation activities. She will speak at AARP on March 2 regarding water quality to about 80 people, Extension Homemakers on rain gardens & rain barrels on March 25<sup>th</sup>, Earth Day with Evans School, Master Gardeners on July 13<sup>th</sup> and the Professional Training School on September 21<sup>st</sup>. She attended a Watershed Meeting in Terre Haute on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, Riverwatch, Project WET and WILD retreat at Camby on December 3 &4 and a soils workshop in the Vanderburgh office. Norma and Karen Barnhill will give a Riverwatch program in Warrick County for teachers and others in the Pigeon Creek watershed area. They will also partner with Keep Evansville Beautiful in a booth at the home show. Two SWP3s were evaluated and approve this month, one complaint regarding the airport turned over to Ronnie Boehm,

District Operations Committee – Maurice Berendes, Chairperson

Bonnie requested an audit committed for the district books. Tom Nicksch volunteered and Bonnie will contact Wayne Fehd.

Members were asked to refer to copies in their packets of a letter from Jane Hardisty on the 2010 Rent Process. Basically she is informing the board they will be charged on the calendar year instead of the federal fiscal year.

Maurice checked the petty cash against the petty cash report and passed the report for members to initial.

Darrell gave the NRCS report saying the 2010 Farm Bill programs were rolled out. Conservation plans and program contracts will developed for the 2010 Farm Bill Programs between now and April 1, 2010 which is the deadline for obligating these funds. The Mississippi River Basin Initiative was funded. Land in six (Vermillion, Eel, Upper East Fork White, Wildcat, Upper Wabash & Y Upper Great Miami) eight-digit Indiana watershed has been selected for this targeted NRCS initiative. The Non-discrimination Statement should be included when NRCS is co-sponsoring an event or publication with a conservation partner. When advertising an NRCS public meeting an Accessibility Statement should be included. Board asked Darrell to check to see if they had a release form.

County employee time sheets were passed for review and signature.

The next board meeting was scheduled for January 26, 2010.

Due to lack of business the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted  
Bonnie Bittner  
Executive Assistant/Fiscal Officer

Minutes approved on January 26, 2010

David Ellison \_\_\_\_\_

Davie Sue W Litov \_\_\_\_\_

Laura Lamb \_\_\_\_\_

Maurice Berendes \_\_\_\_\_

Wayne Fehd \_\_\_\_\_