

MINUTES OF THE DUBUQUE SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S MEETING
EPWORTH IA
March 9, 2021

Call Meeting to Order: The monthly meeting of the Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District Commissioners was called to order by Chairperson Melvin Wilgenbusch at 6:04 p.m. on the ZOOM platform on March 9, 2021. Those present included Staff: Theresa Weiss, Colleen Siefken & Eric Schmechel; Commissioners: Melvin Wilgenbusch, Wayne Demmer, Jeff Schmitt, Ron Lindblom* & Mike Freiburger; Assistant Commissioner: Dave Ruden; Guests: Claire Carlson – CDI, Harley Pothoff – BOS, Ed Raber.

Adopt Agenda: With the addition of CDI Scholarship the agenda was approved as presented:

21-30 Motion made by Demmer to approve the agenda. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting: Wilgenbusch called for a discussion of the February 9, 2021 meeting minutes.

21-31 Motion made by Freiburger to approve the meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Demmer. Motion carried unanimously.

FARMS Program Summary: Current **FARMS '21** Account information:

Program	Balance	Program	Balance
REAPP	\$ 0.00	REAPF/NG	\$ 0.00
Cost Share	\$ 2,150.50		

No REAP Supplemental Funding will be available this spring.

Soil & Water Resource Conservation Plan (SWRCP) Approval: Claire has put the finishing touches on the SWRCP and it is ready for Chairperson signature.

21-32 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the SWRCP. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

WQI No-Till applications: WQI email received allowing CAs to approve No-Till/Strip-Till applications as funding is available. The following have been funded during the month for spring application:

- Lloyd Kennedy 96 acres no-till \$960 cost share
- Schilling Limited Partnership – 140 ac no-till, \$1,400 cost share
- Gansen, Jeffrey – 124 ac no till, \$1,240 cost share
- Arlen, Charles & Dan – 160 acres no-till, \$1,600 cost share
- Gansen, James – 160 ac no-till, \$1,600 cost share

Behnke, Joshua – 160 ac no-till, \$1,600 cost share

2 additional applications are in the mail.

1M/Finance:

- February Bank Statement & Treasurer reports were reviewed.
- Additional Bills (not listed on Treasurer's report) to be approved this meeting:
 - Eric Schmechel - \$9.99 – Icloud
 - Andrew Gerend - \$1,000 – watershed logo
- Payment of NACD \$775 Dues – Siefken mentioned this expense is reimbursable

21-33 Motion made by Demmer to approve the February Treasurer Reports and payment to Schmechel. Watershed logo was further discussed under Watershed Update. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

21-34 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the NACD Dues payment. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

CDI Scholarships: Only one scholarship received this year. Amanda Klosterman will be forwarded as the District's representative for the CDI Scholarship.

Correspondence Received:

*Lindblom joined the meeting

- IDALS Contests & Awards – distributed to Board 3/2/21. Deadlines range from May 14- June 11th.
- CDI Resolution Process – distributed to Board 2/17. Siefken will contact CDI regarding past resolutions dealing with CRP.
- CDI Connections Newsletter (Feb) – distributed to Board 2/24/21. .
- \$1,000 Father Norman White Memorial Scholarship

21-35 Motion made by Schmitt to offer the scholarship this spring. Motion seconded by Demmer. Motion carried unanimously.

- SWCD Cover Crop Survey – distributed to Board 3/9/21.
- PF Farm Bill Wildlife Biologist, Blaine Becker, has resigned.

Watershed Project Report: Schmechel is planning a budget worksession for the board one of the last two weeks of the month. Date is still being worked out. Staff is working on a website and twitter account for dubuquecowatersheds. Billboard proposal, funded through NRCS ICG grant, was reviewed. Staff has been discusses ideas for a watershed logo. Board reviewed and approved a \$1,000 proposal for development of the logo. Signs (similar to seed corn signs) are being considered to be provided to all producers who are involved with the watershed program in Dubuque county. University of Dubuque Water sampling proposal was presented to the board for comment. At this point it is estimated that 638 samples will be taken over a 9 month period and the total cost will be \$11,512.00. Contract to be drafted for Board signature. Eric mentioned perhaps a program for producers who are ranking extremely high already in Truterra (75+ ?? with not many/any options for advancement) to receive some type of one time award payment by agreeing to participate in a

mentorship program. IE mentor an FFA student, host a field day, agree to be a contact for those with soil health related questions, etc. **Eric is looking for your ideas for a title for this award.** Tim Daly has agreed to host a field day in late May. Nick Smith has also agreed to host a field day.

21-36 Motion made by Lindblom to approve the creation of the watershed logo. Motion seconded by Demmer. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting Updates:

CDI Spring Regional Commissioner Meeting – Held virtually. Freiburger, Schmitt, Demmer, Siefken, Weiss attended. Annual Commissioner Conference Aug 23-24 – to be held virtually. 5 new commissioner training videos are available on the CDI website. Statewide Cost share and WQI annual reports were reviewed. New EQIP Soil Health Initiative and CSP Cropland Enhancement Bundle were discussed.

Personnel Updates:

Freiburger mentioned possible letter being sent to IDALS from the Board regarding need for state technician in Dubuque SWCD. Previous conversations have been had with IDLAS Field Rep Bobby Kuennen by Freiburger and Siefken. Board thought a letter would be a good idea.

NRCS Updates: Weiss reported the following:

- General CRP has been extended indefinitely.
- National problem with EQIP/CSP ranking has caused all applications to be unranked as they address software problems.
- Office staffing has reversed and gone back to not more than 25% of the staff in the office at any one time per FPAC guidance out of Washington. This is nationwide policy effective immediately.



CRP Conservation Plans & Revisions/Conservation Plans: 0 plans to be approved.

Being no further business to discuss, Wilgenbusch requested a motion to adjourn.

21-37 Motion made by Freiburger to adjourn. Motion seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at **6:00 p.m.** for the unforeseeable future on the ZOOM platform.

 Melvin Wilgenbusch 4/13/21  William Siefken 3/11/21
Chairperson Date Secretary Date