

DUBUQUE SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSIONER'S MEETING

October 16, 2024

Dubuque SWCD Office

210 Bierman Road, Epworth IA 52045

Call Meeting to Order: The monthly meeting of the Dubuque Soil & Water Conservation District was called to order by Wayne Demmer, Chairperson, on October 16, 2024 at 7:02 pm at the SWCD District office in Epworth, IA and through Zoom. Those present included Vice Chairperson Jeff Schmitt, and Commissioners Jack Smith, Mike Freiburger and Dennis Rauen; Bill Meyer, DC; Helen Backes, CA; John Sewell, Watershed; and Harley Pothoff, Dubuque County Supervisor. Those attending via Zoom included Watershed staff Eric Schmechel and Scott Hendricks.

Adopt Agenda:

The agenda was approved with an addition of a funding request to IDALS for NACD TA Grant 2022.

Demmer called for a motion to approve the agenda with the addition of a funding request.

24-118 Motion was made by Freiburger to approve the agenda with the addition. Motion was seconded by Schmitt. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting:

Demmer called for a motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting held September 17, 2024.

24-119 Motion made by Rauen to approve the minutes from the previous meeting held September 17, 2024. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

Finance:

- September TR, bank statement & bills presented and reviewed.

Void Check #1161 to CDI \$1,000 written on wrong account, new Check # 3289 issued to CDI \$1,000.

Void Check #1164 to Scott Hendricks \$140.74 - CA signed check, issued new Check #1165 \$140.74 to Scott

Hendricks. Void Check #1166 \$140.74 to Allisen Freihage incorrect amount. Issued new Check #1169 \$281.48 to Allisen Freihage.

US Cellular bill for October has not been received in time for the commissioner's meeting.

On the September TR, on page 5 listed under "Other Funds Obligated by the District, there is a discrepancy listed as NACD Grant Round 3. CA Backes is unsure where these funds are from. She is in discussion with the state office and will also meet with Watershed staff Schmechel and Freihage to correct the amount. This will be updated for the next meeting.

With no further discussion, Demmer called for a motion to approve the September TR, bank statement, & bills presented with voided Checks #1161, 1164, and 1166 and to review and update the section of "Other Funds Obligated"

24-120 Motion made by Smith to approve the September TR, bank statement, & bills presented along with voided checks and review/update Other Funds Obligated. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- Funds Transfer for payroll for \$2,264.48 to the Watershed checking account.

Demmer called for a motion to transfer payroll funds in the amount of \$2,264.48.

24-121 Motion made by Freiburger to transfer \$2,264.48 for payroll funds. Motion seconded by Rauen. Motion carried unanimously.

- Deposits for September included \$3,000 (ACH) – St of IA Commissioner Funds and \$125,834.67 – City of Dubuque – 28 E Agreement FY25
- NACD '24 Outreach and Technical Assistance Grant (TA2024) was submitted on October 7, 2024 for project total of \$33,211. Requested funds from NACD Grant include \$26,569 with matching funds from IDALS - \$3,331 and Dubuque SWCD - \$3,321. Discussion was held on the benefits offered to the NACD employee. Backes will check with other Districts to on their benefits for NACD employees. The discussion will continue next month after more information is received.
- Backes discussed fundraising for the District. This would be tabled until January 2025.
- Watershed will need to purchase new computers for staff and the new consultant. Currently there is no estimate for the cost of the computers. Two of the computers will need Dubuque County IT to integrate with the County's programs. The cost will be over \$500 so the purchase needs to be approved by the Commissioners.

After a brief discussion, Demmer entertained a motion for the purchase of three computers for the Watershed.

24-122 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the purchase of three computers for the Watershed. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- Backes presented the funding request of \$792.57 to IDALS for their match of the NACD TA Grant 2022

Demmer called for a motion to request funds matching funds from IDALS for \$792.57.

24-123 Motion made by Freiburger to request matching funds from IDALS. Motion seconded by Rau. Motion carried unanimously.

FARMS Summary:

Current FARMS '25 Account information: *Cost Share \$45,998; REAP F/NG \$0.00; & REAP P \$2546.91*

FARMS Cost Share Application:

Applicant	Practice ID	Program	Practice	Total Cost Share	Approval Status
Whitewater Valley – Mitch McDermott	123405	IFIP	Grassed Stabilization	\$20,500	Approve Application
Zauche Daniel	123392	IFIP	Grassed Waterway	\$5,695	Approve Application
Hosch David	123406	IFIP	Grassed Waterway	\$10,150	Approve Application

Demmer called for a motion to approve the FARMS Cost Share applications for Whitewater Valley, Zauche and Hosch.

24-124 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the FARMS Cost Share applications. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

- FARMS Cost Share Cancellations:
None
- FARMS Cost Share Amendments:
None
- FARMS Cost Share Certification & Maintenance Agreement:
None

NRCS Updates:

Meyer presented the Commissioners with a list of watersheds within the county. The District needs to rank the top three priority watersheds that will be used with rankings for CSP and EQIP. A lengthy discussion was held regarding the projects within the watersheds. The Commissioners would like to continue the discussion for another meeting.

Demmer called for a motion to list the top three priority watersheds for Dubuque SWCD. They are North Fork Little Maquoketa River, Prairie Creek-Lytle Creek and Coffee Creek -North Fork Maquoketa River.

24-125 Motion made by Schmitt to approve the top priority watersheds. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

Watershed Project Update:

- IPC Grant – Started October 1, 2024. Andrew W and Megan G have been hired as the consultants for the Watershed. Megan will work mainly with Dubuque farmers but will also work with Delaware and Jones counties as well and invite those farmers to join the Farmer-to-Farmer group. There are questions to answer yet as to the planning process for Megan and NRCS.
- The Farmer-to-Farmer Conference is scheduled for February 4 and 5, 2025. The first day would be a half day of workshops with an evening event and the next day would be a full day of workshops/events. The theme is Landowner/Tenant Relationships. The Watershed team is busy finding sponsorships for the event, so it is free to participants. They are also seeking relevant speakers for the Conference.
- Hendricks gave an update on their drone cover crop program. Everything is complete. Rain is needed for the cover crops to grow. Schmitt complimented Hendricks on the success of the drone cover crop program. It was a huge endeavor for the first year.
- Sewell presented the Commissioners with information and documentation on the water testing sites in Dubuque County. Discussion was held with the Commissioners on the types of tests needed for the water samples, testing at specific times and continuing our partnership with University of Dubuque (UD) Sewell stated UD has provided

phosphorus data for May/June. UD has a limited time frame with other responsibilities to maintain a manageable timetable for SWCD test results. Sewell said he could schedule a time for the Department head could speak to the Commissioners at a future meeting. Sewell will continue to improve the water sampling documentation so the Commissioners can analyze the data and make recommendations if necessary.

Meeting Update:

Commissioner Dennis Rauen attended the Soul to Soil Conference at Sinsinawa. There were approximately 70-75 participants. The conference included a tour of the farm. The conference also had interesting speakers for the participants. Rauen also encouraged the Commissioners attend the movie "Common Ground" which is a sequel to the popular "Kiss the Ground" film. The film will be November 19th at the Manchester theater

Correspondence:

- Backes shared with the Commissioners the current CDI Connections Newsletter was available in hard copy for them. She also had SWCD news articles from local papers available for the Commissioners to view.

Other:

- Only 2 individuals are on the ballot for the SWCD Commissioner election on November 5th. Current Commissioners, Jeff Schmitt and Dennis Rauen, submitted their candidacy to the Auditor's office. A write in candidate will determine the 3rd commissioner.
- Dubuque SWCD will celebrate their 80th anniversary in March 2025. Perhaps the anniversary can be recognized at the Farmer-to-Farmer Conference in February. This will be discussed at future meetings.
- Former Dubuque SWCD Commissioner Marvin Recker 1979-1985 recently passed away.
- Harley Pothoff, Dubuque County Supervisor, discussed the solar ordinance that the Supervisors are working on. The Supervisors are trying to find common ground for the ordinance.

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

24-126 Motion made by Smith to adjourn. Motion seconded by Freiburger. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

The next meeting date is to be determined.

Wayne Demmer 11/13/24
Chairperson Date

Heidi Backes 11/13/24
Secretary Date