

**Champaign County Soil and Water Conservation District**  
**December 3, 2009**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**

Directors present: Steve Stierwalt, Eleanor Blackmon, Joe Rothermel, and Eric Suits (arriving at 7:15).  
Staff present: Bruce Stickers and Renee Weitekamp.  
Natural Resource Conservation Service Staff present: Kevin Donoho.

Meeting was called to order at 5:37 p.m. on Thursday, December 3, 2009.

Joe Rothermel made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 30, 2009 board meeting. Eleanor Blackmon seconded, motion carried.

Eleanor Blackmon made the motion to approve the financial reports for November 2009. Joe Rothermel seconded, motion carried.

**Old Business**

*Annual Plan of Work* – The board continued reviewing the annual plan of work, starting with Water Quality Initiatives. It was decided to add an additional goal to address support for the CSREES Grant. Moving on to the Education category, Bruce talked about Extension's program, "Living on the Land". This is a program designed to educate people who are moving out into the country on small acreages on everything from soils to entrepreneurship. A pilot program was done in Kankakee County that lasted 14 weeks. Our Champaign County Extension is working with Parkland to hopefully set up the program in our area for February and March; there will be a registration fee for this class. Bruce has been trained on the program and therefore can be an educator. The board decided to add support/cooperate with Extension on Living on the Land Project as an education goal. Under Watershed Management Initiatives, a goal will be added to address the upcoming Mississippi River Basin Initiative Project. Monitor and assist with the development of TMDLs and continue formalizing the Headwaters group will remain goals; however, they will not be denoted as high priorities for the upcoming year. When addressing District Operations, the board decided to change the six-month review of the annual plan of work to a yearly review of annual plan of work, with the reason being, it usually takes a minimum of several months to complete each review.

*Annual Meeting* – The board approved the invitation as presented as well as the plaque and wording for the Friend of Conservation Award. Staff asked the board to review the invitation mailing list and provide additions and updates.

*Access to FSA's name and address database* – No discussion took place.

*St. Joseph Wetland Restoration Plan* – No discussion took place.

*Strip-till Soil Testing Invoice* – No discussion took place.

*Insurance* – No discussion took place.

*NACD Membership* – Discussion remained tabled.

**New Business**

*CPP* – The Department of Ag is referring to the program as the Partners for Conservation Program and moving away from the CPP name. Money has been released for Wayne Kinney to do preliminary and design work for SSRP projects. The board directed staff to work on informational letter to drainage districts, especially Fountain Head to inform them about the SSRP program.

*Contribution Agreement* – After working towards completing the contribution agreement, staff would like to adjust the number of work products completed in several categories. The total dollars for the agreement will remain the same. The requested changes were presented to the board. Eleanor Blackmon approved the revised agreement. Joe Rothermel seconded, motion carried.

*Cash Management Plan* – Currently, the district has three Certificate of Deposits; two of which are earning very low interest rates. The third CD is set to mature December 18, 2009. Staff asked for directive on whether a better plan for investing the money should be looked into. After discussion, the board came to the consensus to let CD#1 at just over \$30,000 automatically re-enroll every 6 months at the current interest rate and look for other investment options for the additional \$50,000 to \$100,000. Eleanor made a motion to allow Treasurer Eric Suits to look into paper options and bring the options back to the board at the next meeting. The CD#3 set to mature on December 18, 2009 shall be closed and put into a non interest bearing account until an investment strategy is defined. CD#2 will not mature until June 8, 2010. Closer to its maturity date, the district will into additional investment options. Joe Rothermel seconded, motion carried.

*Mississippi River Basin Initiative* – No additional information is known at this time other than the Salt Fork Watershed is still favorably looked upon for potential EQIP projects.

**D.C. Report** - is attached. Kevin and Matt Dasenbrock, the area engineer, have looked at a project that will be funded through the Partners for Conservation Program. Once the drainage area is established, which is difficult for this project, planning for a drop pipe structure will continue.

**A.C. Report** - is attached. Staff has been in contact with one of the winners from the Photo Contest. He would allow the district to print and use some of his pictures. The board thought this was a generous offer and may be interested into pursuing this. Staff also provided a quick overview of Winter Training which was held in Springfield on December 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**R.C. Report** – is attached. Staff is waiting for the final layout of the proposed wind farm; it is anticipated the layout will be received in December or January.

### **Committee Updates** –

Salt Fork – The intergovernmental agreement for the gaging station has been executed and the water quality subcommittee is moving along.

CIG Grant – In January staff will be working on the first report.

FREC Grant – Fabian submitted the grant proposal by the November 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Project approvals have not been announced yet.

### **Other**

Mr. Gradle spoke at Winter Training on the upcoming cost to districts to keep a second computer connected to the USDA network. Currently, NRCS provides service, software and server availability for two district computers. Due to national NRCS budget changes, Illinois NRCS will only be able to provide each district with these services for one computer. If the district would like to keep additional computers functioning as is, the districts will need to pay just over \$3100 per computer. At this point, there are still many unanswered questions. The board asked staff for their thoughts on this issue. Due to GIS reasons and the assistance given to NRCS, staff feels it may be important to keep both computers on the NRCS network. After additional discussion and based on the current information, the board consensus is to pay the fee and keep both computers connected to the USDA network.

The next Lincoln Heritage RC&D meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2009.

eRecycle – The original eRecycle dates for St. Joseph and Mahomet are over. Staff is working with the RC&D to schedule future eRecycling opportunities. Due to changes in the state law, fees associated with the program will be changing after January 1, 2010.

AISWCD sponsorship – Eric Suits gave a brief overview on the AISWCD’s new sponsorship program. By becoming a sponsor of the AISWCD, people are helping support soil and water conservation across the state which provides a healthy environment for future generations. Fifty percent of the sponsorship comes back to help conservation efforts in the local county designated.

The Champaign County SWCD Board will hold a short board meeting on Friday, December 18, 2009 at 11:00 a.m. with lunch at El Toro’s to follow at 11:30 am.

Joe Rothermel moved to adjourn the meeting. Eleanor Blackmon seconded, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M.

Minutes prepared by Renee Weitekamp for Eric Suits, Secretary  
Champaign County SWCD

Please Join Us for Our 67th Annual Meeting!



***Champaign County  
Soil & Water  
Conservation District***

January 29, 2010 - 12:00 p.m.

Round Barn Banquet Center

1900 Round Barn Rd, Champaign, IL

Free Buffet Lunch

Followed by a short business meeting and guest presentation.

(Event should conclude around 2 p.m.)

## ***The Changing Skyline of Champaign County***

*You may be surprised by the different ways we are working to protect and enhance the natural resources of Champaign County.*

*As the eastern part of the county prepares for the first wind farm; the district has been proactively working to ensure the stewardship of our natural resources.*

*Our need for energy with the conservation of our natural resources is a delicate balance. Come hear how Invenergy will address these issues on their proposed California Ridge Wind Farm Project in Champaign and Vermilion Counties.*

***Everyone is Welcome—No tickets necessary***

***Please R.S.V.P by calling 217-352-3536 x 3***

***by January 22, 2010***

Renee Weitekamp  
Board Report  
November 2009

Items that need action from the board:

Water Quality

- In the process of designing a brochure addressing proper lawn fertilization (Salt Fork Nutrient Mgmt Sub-committee).

Soil Erosion

- CRP waterway plans as part of our contribution agreement, including CPA52's for all reenrollments.

Prime Farmland Preservation

Water Management

- Updated the drainage district contact list.

Wildlife Habitat

Education & Public Information

- Updated the ISWCDEA Website.

Watershed Management

District Operations

- Participated in the ISWCDEA conference call meeting.
- Secured presenters for Winter Training sessions.
- Annual Meeting (Election notice to paper, nominating committee is set, prices for Award, Invitation, etc)
- Attended Prairie Rivers IEPA Building Partnerships and Conducting Watershed Outreach Seminar.
- Prepared meeting packet for the Salt Fork Implementation Committee Meeting.

Monthly Board Report  
Bruce Stickers  
Resource Conservationist  
November 2009

***Items that need board action:***

***Items for your information:***

***Water Quality***

No information on the USDA Mississippi River Basin Initiative has been released. I understand the State Technical Committee meets next week and they are supposed to provide information on the choice for the watersheds that will be asked to submit proposals.

The Sangamon River project ends in December, so we are writing the final report send to EPA.

***Soil Erosion control***

We received payment for 10 soil erosion inspections completed by Mike Hirschi.

The state government has not released the funding for CPP to the Illinois Department of Agriculture, so we do not have any new 2010 CPP money yet.

***Farmland Protection***

***Water Management***

***Wildlife Habitat***

We hope to do 10 acres of dormant seeding in early December at the Champaign Park District site at Boulder Ridge (Staley Road by the sod farm).

***Education, Natural Resource Data, Public Information, and Participation***

The 5:40 a.m. show this month featured the Illinois Department of Agriculture transect survey. I also did a WICD interview on the transect survey that aired 11/03.

Renee and I participated in a watershed group planning course in Peoria 11/13. The class helped us gain knowledge on working with watershed groups. Illinois EPA and Prairie Rivers Network sponsored it

I attended the Prairie Rivers Network Annual Dinner 11/6.

Ariane Peralta is the U of I student doing research on our wetland and how microbes break down pollutants. She is applying for a grant to pay for the development of educational materials that can be used for classes and for our display to be constructed at the viewing area. This will help us get grants to finish the parking/viewing area.

I will spend most of 2 days 11/18-19 with U of I Extension learning about a "Living on the Land" program aimed at those landowners that live in the country with a few acres. It covers everything from wildlife habitat to small enterprises that can take advantage of the acreage (herb gardens, etc). This fits with the many residents of the county that have acreages, but don't know what to do with them.