
North Cook County Soil & Water Conservation District

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

899 Jay Street in Elgin

September 17, 2009

(Key: P = Present; E = Excused Absence)

PRESENT:

Directors

P James Singer, Chair
P Bob Murzyn, Vice Chair
P Mark Toberman, Treasurer
P Leo Kinsch; Director
E Deborah Perryman

Associate Directors

E Agnes Wojnarski
P Jay Coleman
E Hart Kargenian

District Staff

P Rick McAndless, Resource Conservationist
P Tonya Canania, Administrative Coordinator

USDA - NRCS

P Jim Rospopo, District Conservationist

CALL TO ORDER:

Jim Singer called the meeting of the board of directors of the North Cook County Soil & Water Conservation District ('District') to order at 7:10 p.m.

MINUTES:

Bob Murzyn motioned to accept the meetings minutes as presented for the August 13th, 2009 District board meeting; seconded by Leo Kinsch.

*Approved.

FINANCIALS:

Reconciliation:

The board was presented with August financial statements and reconciliations for all Illinois Fund accounts held and the August Harris checking account. Mark Toberman motioned to accept reconciliations for all August IL Fund account statements and August Harris bank checking account; seconded by Bob Murzyn.

*Approved

Fiscal Year 2010 Draft Budget Review & Discussion:

Tonya reviewed and discussed with the board the draft FY10 budget. The board will review the budget again in six months to determine if an amendment is necessary. Although the budget shows a year ending negative balance due to a reduction in grant funding the board feels there are currently no options available to balance the shortfall. Bob Murzyn motioned to accept the draft fiscal year 2010 budget balance ending -\$30,633; seconded by Mark Toberman.
*Approved Budget.

Illinois Department of Agriculture- SWCD Allocations:

Tonya reviewed and discussed with the board recent emails from the Association of Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts that outline current budget allocations. Districts believed that the Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA) would grant a minimum \$44,000 in Operations allocations per SWCD for FY10. In addition to this grant staff medical insurance would still be fully funded through the Partners for Conservation cost share. The Districts then received word that Governor Quinn had allocated money to SWCDs in addition to the IDOA's grant figures. This additional funding may have raised the total allocation per District to approximately \$64,883. However, Districts have recently received information indicating that IDOA has resolved to fund staff insurance from both Partners for Conservation (PFC) and Operations funds. This effectively lowered the SWCD Operations allocations to approximately \$50,712 for FY10. Funding to SWCDs is proving increasingly instable with IDOA Operations allocations ranging from FY09 \$67,680, FY08 \$80,719.29 and FY07 \$78,588. Instability compounds operating issues as the Districts' workloads steadily increase, funding levels become insufficient and subsequently highly qualified technical personnel are lost. The AISWCD has contact the IDOA to request that the Governor's Allocation Plan funds be removed from the insurance line and added to the Operations allocation for Districts. If IDOA grants this request Districts could then receive approximating \$59,459 for FY10 Operations. AISWCD also requested that these funds, taken from the insurance fund, be replace by additional funds from the Partners for Conservation dollars, effectively funding staff insurance solely from the PFC funds as has been done in pervious years. The AISWCD will also work to convey to legislators the vital need for a new more stable source of funding for Illinois' 98 SWCDs. The board will send follow up letters to local legislators to update them on current funding levels and budget shortfalls.

*Ongoing.

Old Business:

District Rain Barrel Fundraiser:

The next rain barrel fundraiser is scheduled for March of 2010. The District will take orders through March 12th and set up distribution days for March 19 & 22 at District office and March 18 & 20 at Kinsch Village Florist in Palatine. Tonya will place a display barrel and ordering information at the Palatine location, post flyers and ordering

brochure at area Panera Bread stores and Jewel-Osco stores and send it via email to local public works departments and partners. Over the coming fall and winter months staff will pursue partnerships with park districts, libraries, municipalities and township offices to offer the ordering brochures and/or display a barrel within high traffic areas of their facilities and advertisement of the program within community newsletters.

Urban Resource Conservation: USDA-NRCS- Urban / Cook Co. Services:

The board discussed resource conservation needs within the District. The board reported and discussed letters sent to members of the U.S. House and Senate in support of requests made by the National Associate of Conservation Districts, asking for continued support for the Conservation Technical Assistance program under the Conservation Operations account of the Agriculture bill. The board also expressed support for language provided in the House Agriculture bill that maintains Resource Conservation & Development funding as a separate line item. The board then discussed further past USDA-NRCS community conservation initiatives and programs applicable to urban resource needs. Staff was asked to develop a list of technical assistance and program funding needs for discussion next month.

*Ongoing

Fall Water Quality Luncheon (WQL) & Spring Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA)- Nonpoint Pollution Detection & Elimination System (NPDES) Workshop:

Tonya reported on time tables for both events. The board discussed the timelines, possible presentation topics and offering continuing education credit hours to participants. The Water Quality Luncheon will be held in November and feature the Web Soil Survey contingent on Tonya securing a host location for November. If a host site is not secured with sufficient promotional lead time then the WQL will be moved to early spring 2010. The Spring IEPA- NPDES Workshop will take place during spring 2010 and feature the essential steps to permitting. This will likely be held in late April or mid May.

*Ongoing

New Business:

USDA-NRCS: Equal Employment Opportunity, Civil Rights & MOU with District:

Jim Rospopo reviewed the USDA's Equal Opportunity policies, Civil Rights requirements and the District's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with US Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Services and the Illinois Department of Agriculture Division of Natural Resources. The board discussed opportunities to diversify board members and associate members referring back to the board's director outreach planning discussions. Jim Rospopo reported that staff meetings will be held to discuss topics of Equal Opportunity and Civil Rights further. The board received excerpt handouts from the CompassPoint Nonprofit Services publication *The Best of the Board Café* entitled "The Diversity Issue" which gives further thought to diversifying non-profit boards.

Committee Reports:

Bob Murzyn: - Metropolitan Water Reclamation Department of Greater Chicagoland (MWRD) - Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Report:

No meeting to report.

Jim Singer & Tonya Canania- Land Use Council 16 (LUC16) Quarterly Board Mtg. Reports: Jim, Tonya and Rick reported on discussions during the August 28th LUC16 quarterly board meeting. LUC16 listened to reports from area leaders, discussed the outreach plan and decided to invite the NACD Urban Committee to host their spring meeting in the Chicagoland area. LUC16 hopes to provide a regional urban conservation tour for NACD Urban Committee attendees. The next LUC16 quarterly board meeting is scheduled for November 20th at 10 a.m. at the DeKalb Co. Farm Bureau building in Sycamore.

Tonya Canania- LUC16 Leadership Outreach Committee: Update

Tonya reported that she and Rick presented the final revisions of the StopErosionNow.org marketing and outreach plan during the LUC16 quarterly board meeting for second approval and transmission to the Association of Illinois Soil & Water Conservation Districts' (AISWCD) Marketing Task Force for review. After putting together a short implementation outline Tonya will forward the proposed outreach plan to Don Lloyd, LUC16's Representative to AISWCD. Don will take the plan to the upcoming AISWCD quarterly board meeting for review and discussion.

Tonya Canania- LUC16 Leopold Education Project (LEP) Scholarship Sub Committee:

Tonya reported that the LEP Scholarship Sub Committee met via conference call August 18th to finalize the edit and update of the scholarship rules and application. Tonya is making the final edits and re-drafting the scholarship application page. The new LEP packet will be emailed to all LUC16 Districts when complete.

Tonya Canania- LUC16 Display Board Design Sub Committee:

Tonya reported that the committee met to review the draft design with the artist. Once the artist makes the requested changes and additions the committee will meet to review the second draft and overlay photos collected. Once the committee has decided which program photos will be featured they will call the artist back for a final meeting. Tonya also reported that the committee requested the approval of a \$100 cash card to be given to the artist for work she has completed. The artist has put nearly 25 hours into this project thus far without request for compensation. LUC16 approved the expenditure.

The background design will feature a watershed that winds from rural to urban lands across the entire display board. Photos of programs and practices will be overlaid to produce a call-out effect. The theme of the display will be the various projects and

programs that the SWCDs of Land Use Council 16 offer. Items that do not have a photo call-out will still be represented within the landscape of the watershed background. This display is intended as a backdrop for various SWCD attended events and can be used as a talking point to facilitate discussion.

Staff Reports:

Jim Rospopo; District Conservationist:

Jim reported on the Conservation Stewardship Program, year end activities and the progression of area soil mapping.

Rick McAndless, Resource Conservationist:

Rick reported on recent activities at the O'Hare inspection sites and various upcoming field inspections.

Tonya Canania, Administrative Coordinator:

Tonya reported working on the FY10 budgets, the spring rain barrel fundraiser, NE Illinois Envirothon 2010 sponsorship solicitations, LUC16 quarterly board preparations and website updating.

Bob Murzyn motioned to accept the reports as presented; seconded by Leo Kinsch.
*Approved.

Natural Resource Inventory Reports: No New Applications or Re-Submissions.

Close Session: The board deferred the close session.

Staff Reviews:

The board discussed employee contract budgeting and voted to approve staff contracts at the same pay levels as FY09. They deferred staff reviews to the October board meeting.

Bob Murzyn motioned to approve signature of staff contracts at the same pay levels as the fiscal year 2009 contracts; seconded by Mark Toberman.
*Approved Contracts.

Next Meeting:

The board discussed Jim Rospopo's scheduling conflict due to the Lake Co. SWCD board meeting arrangements.

Bob Murzyn motioned to move the October board meeting to the third Thursday of the month; seconded by Leo Kinsch.
*Approved meeting date.

The October North Cook Co. SWCD board meeting will be held on October 15th, 2009.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting was adjourned at 10:20 p.m. by motion made by Mark Toberman and seconded by Leo Kinsch.