



Dubois County Soil and Water Conservation District Meeting
1486 Executive Blvd., Suite A, Jasper, IN 47546
812-482-1171, Ext 3, www.duboisswcd.org
www.duboisswcd.org

Dubois County SWCD Annual Meeting Minutes
February 13th, 2024 6:30 PM
Huntingburg Event Center, Huntingburg, Indiana
114 present (85 complimentary, 29 paid)

The Soil and Water Conservation District Board Chair, Brenda Sermersheim began the SWCD 78th Annual Meeting at 6:30pm by welcoming everyone in attendance. Sermersheim introduced the SWCD Board Members, Associate Members, SWCD staff members, County Commissioners and County Council, and Partnership Agencies. She also thanked the Annual Meeting Sponsors: German American Bank, Beck's Hybrids, Old National Bank, and Freedom Bank. Sermersheim introduced Melissa Ruschau, Dubois SWCD Resource Specialist, who gave the invocation before the dinner. The dinner was prepared by Arnie's Catering and desserts by Joyce Hopf. Drinks were served by members of the Forest Park High School, Southridge High School, Northeast Dubois High School, and Jasper High School FFA teams.

After dinner, Sermersheim introduced the featured speaker, The Talon Trust. Their presentation included live raptors with information on each. They also informed us about their organization and what it takes to run the all-volunteer organization.

After The Talon Trust's presentation, Sermersheim thanked them for their informative presentation. Next up is the awards section of the meeting. She introduced SWCD Board Member, Arlene Fleck and Laura Fribley from the ISDA.

SWCD Board Member, Arlene Fleck, and Laura Fribley with ISDA presented Jeff Stenftenagel with the 2023 River Friendly Farmer award. This award was presented last summer at the Indiana State Fair for their conservation management practices. Tonight, he was presented with the River Friendly Farmer metal sign to post on his farm.

SWCD Board Member, Pat Eckerle presented the OFS Brands Forest Stewardship Award to Frank and Bill Otte. They were unable to attend the meeting this evening. Doug Brown of Multi-Resource Management accepted the award on their behalf.

SWCD Board Member, Mark Welp presented the SWCD Friend of Conservation Award to Sister Jean Marie Ballard. Sister Jean is currently participating in the Let's Dig program. She has been assisting landowners with taking soil samples. She is also involved in the Invasive Species Awareness Coalition of Dubois County (ISAC).

SWCD Chair, Brenda Sermersheim, representing German American Bank, presented the Otto J. Bauer Memorial Outstanding Conservation Farmer of the Year award to Andy Helming of Helming Family Farm. Helming was unable to attend this evening. Jack Welp accepted the award on his behalf.

Glenn Goepfner, Chair of the SWCD Election Committee which includes Andy Helming and Alan Smock conducted the election of a SWCD Supervisor. Mark Welp's term as an elected supervisor had concluded. He agreed to have his name on the ballot for another three-year term. Goepfner asked for any nominations for the position from the floor. No nominations were heard. Goepfner then asked for a motion to close nominations. A motion was heard and

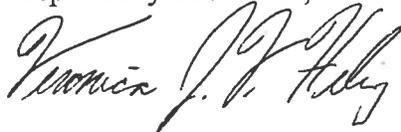
seconded to close the nominations. (Duane Hopf/Alan Smock) Goepfner asked for an "Aye" for all in favor and then a "No" for any opposed. There were no oppositions. Goepfner stated Pat Eckerle's appointed term is up, but the State Soil Board has approved his reappointment. Goepfner asked Welp and Eckerle to come forward for the Oath of Office. Mike Kluesner, president of the Dubois County Council also came forward to the podium to administer the oath of office.

Sermersheim then introduced our partners who would be giving reports. Bradley Hoffman, FSA County Executive Director gave updates on several programs. Chanis Cox, NRCS District Conservationist introduced himself and stated he planned on staying in the area a while and looks forward to working with local producers. Meg Leader, Director of Resilient Indiana with IASWCD, informed the audience there is a new program designed to offer district support and she looks forward to working with all the districts.

Sermersheim then introduced SWCD Executive Director, Aubree Pond to give the updated on the SWCD 2023 accomplishments. The Annual Report was a special insert of the Ferdinand News. Two Clean Water Indiana grants were completed this year which included a grant on invasive species and one to focus on clean water/runoff awareness. Also in 2023, the SWCD started the Let's Dig program with Purdue Extension, Sisters of St. Benedict, and the county FFA chapters. This program offers free soil testing to citizens with small gardens. For other accomplishments from 2023 they are in the Annual Report.

Lastly, Sermersheim reminded the audience to fill out the surveys on the tables, to help the SWCD plan future events. She thanked the Annual Meeting sponsors and the Annual Report sponsors. She also thanked the FFA members and their advisors for assisting with tonight's meeting. She also announced there will be a SWCD reorganizational meeting following this meeting. The meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Veronica Helming
Administrative Assistant

Approved On: March 7, 2024

Aubree A. Fleck

Mark Welp

Glenn Goepfner

Patrick Eckerle

Brenda Sermersheim



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Tuesday, February 13, 2024 @ 4:30 pm
SWCD Annual Meeting: The Venue in Huntingburg

Present:

Brenda Sermersheim, Supervisor
Glenn Goepfner, Supervisor
Arlene Fleck, Supervisor
Pat Eckerle, Supervisor
Mark Welp, Supervisor

Aubree Pond, SWCD Executive Director
Melissa Ruschau, SWCD Resource Specialist
Justin Bary, SWCD Resource Specialist
Laura Fribley, ISDA DSS Team Leader

SWCD Executive Director, Aubree Pond opened the meeting at 9:24pm.

SWCD Board of Supervisor Elections

Pond asked the board if there were any interested parties in becoming Chair, Vice Chair, and Treasurer. After some discussion, Brenda, Glenn, and Arlene agreed to continue in their current roles. A motion was heard and seconded to approve Brenda Sermersheim as Board Chair. (*Eckerle/Welp*). A motion was heard and seconded to approve Glenn Goepfner as Vice Chair (*Fleck/Sermersheim*). A motion was heard and seconded to approve Arlene Fleck as Board Treasurer (*Sermersheim/Eckerle*).

MINUTES

Sermersheim asked for a motion to approve the February 1st, Board Meeting Minutes as presented. A motion was heard and seconded to approve the minutes. (*Fleck/Eckerle*) The motion was carried unanimously.

SWCD Strategic Action Updates

A. Operations

a. Annual Meeting Recap

- i. Overall, everyone felt the Annual Meeting was a success. There were a few recommendations made for improvements for the 2025 meeting. A suggestion as made to work on the timing of the Newsletter release.
- ii. A few sponsors were not included in the Ferdinand News. It was agreed to reach out to each business and offer them a refund, or a free ad in next year's report.

b. Krueger and Associates Question

- i. Arlene Fleck brought it to the board's attention that Krueger and Associates has asked if the SWCD would like to maintain their "InTime" account. This account is used to pay employees of the district. Even though the SWCD does not currently have an employee, it would be easier to keep the account rather than recreate it later. Arlene is going to double check the price.

B. Annual meeting Meal

- a. The bill for Arnie's Catering came out to \$1750.00 (\$14.00/plate)
- b. A motion was heard and approved to pay Arnie the \$1,750.00 for the Annual meeting meal. (*Fleck/Eckerle*)

C. Update from Laura Fribley

- a. The State Board of Accounts has information coming out for CISMAs and working groups. More info will be coming out soon.
 - i. Boards would need to approve expenditures from each groups.
- b. Sermersheim asked Fribley what the Board can approve via email. The list is as follows
 - i. Payroll, insurance, bulk mailing, utilities, lease/rent, emergency, recurring, maintenance.

Other Business

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 7th at 4:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted,


Aubree Pond
Executive Director

Approved On: March 7, 2024

Arlene A Fleck

Mark Welp

Glenn Goepfert

Patrick Eckert

Brenda L Sermersheim