

MEETING MINUTES

Agriculture Water Quality Authority

February 8, 2024, 9:30 AM

Frankfort, KY

In attendance: Mr. Larry Thomas, Chair, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Mr. Joseph Sisk, Vice Chair, Member-at-Large; Mr. Randy McCallon, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Ms. Megan-Bailey-Komar, Member-at-Large; Mr. Fred Sipes, Member-at-Large; Mr. Chris Howard, Environmental Group; Mr. Dean Schamore, U.S. Farm Service Agency; Mr. Charles Taylor, Kentucky Geological Survey; and Ms. Beth Williams, Division of Forestry.

Also in attendance: Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Mr. Jay Nelson, Division of Conservation; Ms. Renee Carrico, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Mr. Dean Schamore, USDA Farm Service Agency; Mr. Connor Giffin, Courier Journal; Mr. Larry Taylor, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Ms. Dawn Baase, Department for Natural Resources; Mr. Lee Moser, University of Kentucky; Ms. Angie Crain, U.S. Geological Survey; Ms. Shelby Lamar, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Mr. Steve Higgins, University of Kentucky; Mr. Warren Beeler, Department of Agriculture; Mr. Steve Beam, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Mr. John Reinstetle, University of Kentucky; Ms. Kathleen Saunier, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Mr. Abe Nielsen, Division of Forestry; Dr. Brad Lee, University of Kentucky; Ms. Angela Billings, Division of Water; Ms. Paulette Akers, Division of Water; and Mr. Jeff Gravitt, Division of Conservation.

Meeting Called to Order – 9:32 am by Mr. Larry Thomas.

Roll call of Authority members – Quorum was met.

Approval of previous meeting minutes from November 9, 2023 – A motion to approve the meeting minutes with updates was made by Mr. Fred Sipes and was seconded by Ms. Megan Komar. **Motion carried.**

Old Business – Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the following with the Authority –

- Ag Water Authority Membership status.
 - 5 open memberships open for the Authority due to members leaving current positions.
 - Department of Agriculture
 - Natural Resource Conservation Service
 - Division of Water
 - Department of Health and Services
 - Division of Conservation

- Update on the Division of Conservation Director position being filled.
- A total of 4 Authority positions are expiring October of this year.
 - Farm Bureau
 - UK College of Agriculture
 - KACD
 - Kentucky Geological Survey
 - Three nominees will need to be submitted to the Soil and Water Conservation Commission.

Mr. Warren Beeler informed the Authority that Mr. Brandon Reed, Mr. John Chism and himself have been chosen as the nominees from the Department of Agriculture. Ms. Johnna McHugh advised Mr. Warren Beeler to send the names to the Soil and Water Conservation Commission for approval.

New Business-

- Subcommittee Reports –
 - KASMC – No report given.
 - Farmstead – No report given.
 - Pesticides, Fertilizers, and other Agriculture Chemicals – No report given.
 - Livestock and Poultry – Mr. Fred Sipes discussed the upcoming meeting on Monday, February 12th to discuss updating BMP's (meeting to be held via Zoom).
 - Crops – No report given.
 - Silviculture – Ms. Beth Williams discussed the following with the Authority-
 - November 29th, 2023 meeting.
 - ❖ New Chairperson elected.
 - Mr. John Reinstetle.
 - Tour of the Division of Forestry BMP demonstration area.
 - Streams and Other Waters – Ms. Johnna McHugh stated Ms. Sarah Gaddis would like to step down as chair of the Streams and Other Waters committee. Ms. Sarah Gaddis recommended Ms. Paulette Akers to replace her as chair. Mr. Larry Thomas as acting Ag Water Quality Authority Chairperson accepted Ms. Paulette Akers as the new Streams and Other Waters chairperson. Ms. Paulette Akers stated that she would send out information to schedule a meeting.
 - Education and Outreach – Ms. Johnna McHugh gave the Education and Outreach report for Dr. Amanda Gumbert who was not able to attend. Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the following with the Authority-
 - The committee has attended the following winter farmer meetings.

- ❖ KY Farm Bureau (Nov. 30 – Dec 1, 2023).
- ❖ KY Cattlemen’s Convention (Jan. 11-12, 2024).
- ❖ KY Commodity Conference (Jan. 18, 2024).
- ❖ Owensboro Ag Expo (Jan. 31, 2024).
- ❖ KY Forest Health Conference (Feb. 7, 2024).
- Current education efforts related to Ag Water Quality Plans and Nutrient Reduction Strategy.
 - ❖ DOW has bookmarks, rack cards, notebooks.
 - ❖ DOW is scheduling meetings with nutrient working groups. DOW is planning to meet on March 4th with the new NRCS State Conservationist.
- UK and other land-grant partners from the Mississippi River basin to hosted 3 virtual farmer meet-ups on January 18th, January 25th and February 4th. Subjects discussed, when to terminate cover crops, managing water ways on rented crop land, and working landlords to allow conservation practice implementation and/or program participation on rented crop land. A follow up series is planned for late summer of 2024.
- Dr. Amanda Gumbert has sent out a meeting poll for scheduling the next meeting.
- **Quarterly update of AWQA related violations** - Ms. Johnna McHugh informed the Authority of the latest quarterly AWQA violations-
 - 4th quarter violations.
 - 2 beef, 3 dairy, 1 dead animal, and 1 miscellaneous.
 - 2023 total quarterly violations.
 - 9 beef, 2 crop, 8 dairy, 1 pork, 1 food manufacturing, 4 miscellaneous, 3 residence and 1 repair maintenance.
 - 11 violations were referred to enforcement. 3 are currently under enforcement, with the rest being no further action.

Updates from members –

Ms. Paulette Akers discussed the following with the Authority-

- Ag Committee for Nutrient Reduction Strategy will be held on March 4th at 1:30 pm at the Woodford County Conservation District.
- Creating a two-page summary of success stories about different agriculture producers who have best management practices that were installed and have actual data on the cost of the installation.
 - Two have been completed as of today.

Mr. Randy McCallon informed the Authority that the upcoming KACD annual meeting will be July 14 through the 16th at the Crowne Plaza in Louisville Kentucky. Mr. Randy McCallon discussed the upcoming KACD meetings.

Ms. Renee Carrico stated the Natural Resources committee has split to a Natural Resource Committee and an Environmental Stewardship committee.

Mr. Warren Beeler discussed the following with the Authority –

- Department of Agriculture discussing carbon credits with various groups.
- New Department of Agriculture Commissioner working with the idea in mind of agriculture economic development, sustainability, while expanding agriculture in the state.
- Department of Agriculture is meeting with people on finding new uses for waste products, such as making fuel from distiller's grains.

Ms. Angela Billings discussed her stepping away from the Authority and the Department for Public Health and accepting a new position with the Division of Water. Ms. Angela Billing stated she appreciated her time as an Authority member and thanked the Authority members.

Ms. Johnna McHugh wanted to remind the Authority that on Monday February 12th the Livestock subcommittee meeting will be held at 9:00am via Zoom. Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the upcoming Authority meeting that will be held at 9:30am on Thursday, April 11th at Eden Shale Farm. This meeting will not have a Zoom option.

Dr. Steve Higgins informed the Authority that he was happy to host the next Authority meeting at Eden Shale Farm and is looking forward to it.

Next Meeting – April 11th, 2024, at 9:30 am, Eden Shale Farm.

Adjourn – 10:06 am