

MEETING MINUTES

Agriculture Water Quality Authority

February 10, 2022, 9:30 AM

Zoom Video Conference

Meeting ID: 836 4605 1552

Passcode: AWQA

In attendance: Mr. Larry Thomas, Chair, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Mr. Joseph Sisk, Vice Chair, Member-at-Large; Ms. Paulette Akers, Division of Conservation; Mr. Ron Brunty, Environmental Groups; Dr. Amanda Gumbert, UK College of Agriculture; Mr. Greg Stone, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Mr. Chuck Taylor, Kentucky Geological Survey; Mr. Mark Burnett, Member-at-large; and Ms. Beth Williams, Division of Forestry.

Also in attendance : Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Mr. Abe Nielson, Division of Forestry; Ms. Kathleen Saunier, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Mr. Glynn Beck, Kentucky Geological Survey; Mr. Todd Clark; Ms. Renee Carrico, Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation; Sarah Gaddis, Division of Water; Mr. John Pitcock, Kentucky Department of Agriculture; Mr. Peter Cinotto, United States Geological Survey; Mr. David Chinn, Monty's Plant Food; Mr. Joe Cain, Kentucky Farm Bureau; Mr. Ben Koostra, Ms. Amanda LeFevre, Department for Environmental Protection; Ms. Mahtaab Bagherzadeh, Division of Water; Mr. Larry Taylor, Energy and Environment Cabinet and Mr. Jeff Gravitt, Division of Conservation.

Meeting Called to Order – 9:31 AM by Mr. Larry Thomas.

Roll call of Authority members – Quorum was met.

Introduction of guests – Introductions were made.

Oath of office for new members - Ms. Johnna McHugh began the swearing in process of Ms. Beth Williams and Ms. Paulette Akers. Ms. Johnna McHugh spoke the oath of office and both Ms. Beth Williams and Ms. Paulette Akers accepted.

Approval of previous meeting minutes from April 8, 2021 – A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Mr. Joseph Sisk and was seconded by Dr. Amanda Gumbert. **Motion carried.**

Approval of previous meeting minutes notes from November 18, 2021 – A motion to approve the meeting minutes (notes) was made by Mr. Ron Brunty and was seconded by Mr. Chuck Taylor. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Larry Thomas asked for a discussion on waiving the need for two farmer-at-large members to be required to achieve quorum at the Authority meetings. Mr. Joseph Sisk and Mr. Ron Brunty both had concerns about farmer representation not being met by doing this. The Authority decided to table the discussion until the May meeting. Ms. Paulette Akers will send out the current business rules for the Authority to review before the next meeting.

Ms. Paulette Akers informed the Authority there is a possibility that all three farmer-at-large positions could be vacant due to one position currently being open and two positions expiring on October 1st.

Mr. Larry Thomas discussed the upcoming Authority field meeting visit. Mr. Larry Thomas stated that Mr. Joseph Sisk has offered to host the upcoming May 5th Authority meeting at his farm. All members agreed with this. Mr. Abe Nielson from the Division of Forestry gave an open invitation to the Authority to host future events.

Old Business –

- **Strategic plan** – Ms. Paulette Akers stated that the Strategic Planning Committee met in January and put together a revision of the strategic plan. Most changes were just to update dates. Items that have been highlighted in green are the ones that were changed. A motion to approve the strategic plan updates was made by Mr. Joseph Sisk and was seconded by Mr. Ron Brunty. **Motion carried.**
- **Marketing plan update** – Ms. Paulette Akers gave an update on Red7E progress. Red7E has provided some broad ideas, and the Education Outreach Committee has reviewed and provided their feedback. RedE7 has been trying to address all the concerns that the Education Outreach Committee had. The Secretary's office will review the next update before it is released.

New Business –

- **Distillers grains presentation** – Ms. Amanda LeFevre gave a presentation on distillers grains. Ms. Amanda LeFevre discussed the Annual Sustainable Spirits Summit. Items that were discussed were resource materials, webinars, Energy Star bench marking and energy assessment through partnership with KPPC. Ms. Amanda LeFevre discussed the growing stillage issues facing Kentucky. The main issues of concern are the amount of stillage per gallon of bourbon, high biological oxygen demand, the low pH of stillage, short shelf-life, food grade byproduct and that stillage does not fit into regulatory framework. Ms. Amanda LeFevre discussed where the stillage goes and how it is determined where it goes. Ms. Amanda LeFevre stated a lot of it depends on where you are and the size of your operation. Dewatering, pressing, drying, landfills, no discharge lagoons, traditional agricultural use, and discharge to a wastewater plant after pretreatment are a few examples.

Ms. Amanda LeFevre stated that stillage is used on farms as a low-cost feed amendment because it reduces costs for farmers and is plentiful in supply. Ms. Amanda LeFevre discussed issues in transporting stillage, excessive stillage in lagoons, stillage and sinkholes, land applications and current permitting of stillage. Ms. Amanda LeFevre discussed the provided information on the Distillers Grains Forum held in December of 2020. The event was held virtually, with stakeholders in distiller grains attending. Determining intermittent steps to be taken, identify resources and mechanisms to help deal with excess stillage was discussed at the forum. Ms. Amanda LeFevre stated that the next steps will include a Beam Institute conference in March and Distillers Grains Technology Council meeting in May.

Subcommittee Reports

- **KASMC** – Mr. Pete Cinotto discussed the following with the Authority –
 - KASMC last meeting was in November.
 - Agricultural use of groundwater.
 - USGS has started to produce maps locating wells.
 - More people are looking at Kentucky for agriculture.
- **Farmstead** – Dr. Steve Higgins - Not attended.
- **Pesticides Fertilizers and other Agriculture Chemicals** – John Pitcock has not met.
- **Livestock and Poultry** – Keith Rogers - not attended.
- **Crops** – Mr. Adam Andrews - not attended.
- **Silviculture** – Ms. Beth Williams stated the board has not met and the last meeting was canceled due to Covid and the next meeting is still to be determined.
- **Streams and Other Waters** – Ms. Sarah Gaddis discussed the following with the Authority –
 - Last meeting was in January.
 - Farm ponds, installing ponds and replacing areas upstream of ponds.
 - BMPs for farm ponds.
 - Flooding.
 - Urban expansion adjacent or near agricultural land.
 - Possible BMP for sinkholes.
 - The only BMP that provides sinkhole protection is in the silviculture section.
- **Education and Outreach** - Mr. Todd Clark discussed the following with the Authority –
 - Discussed the marketing plan of Red7e.

Quarterly update of AWQA related violations – Ms. Paulette Akers informed the Authority of 15 violations of the Ag Water Quality Act since the last meeting. Thirteen of the violations were from dairy operations (one from distillers grain usage), one from beef operation and one from a menagerie farm.

- **Updates from members** –
 - Dr. Amanda Gumbert discussed the following with the Authority:
 - One Good Idea virtual platform for farmers. Organized by topic.
 - ❖ Virtual
 - ❖ Organized by topic.
 - ❖ Highlighting issues.
 - ❖ Farmer testimonies.
 - Salt River Watershed Watch regarding riparian buffers in forested landscapes. A virtual field day will be held in March.
- **Next Meeting** – May 5, 2022, 9:30 am at Mr. Joseph Sisk farm.
- **Adjourn** – 11:04 am