

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

Monday, April 15, 2024 – 9:00 AM

Zoom Conference ID: 845 5362 3580 Password: SWCC

In attendance for SWCC: Mr. Danny Shipley, Chair; Ms. Denise Hoffman; Mr. Jason Kilmer; Mr. Bill Harned; Mr. Jeff Rice; Mr. Aaron Lewis; Mr. Keith Tingle and Mr. Lenville Martin.

Others Present: Mr. Jay Nelson, Division of Conservation; Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Ms. Bridget Abernathy, Division of Forestry; Ms. Crystal Renfro, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Mr. Steve Coleman, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Ms. Kathleen Saunier, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Mr. Steve Beam, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Melinda Murphy, Division of Conservation; Ms. Kim Barton, Division of Conservation; and Mr. Jeff Gravitt, Division of Conservation.

Quorum was met.

Call to Order and Introduction – by Mr. Danny Shipley.

SWCC Minutes from the February 13, 2023, Meeting – A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes was made by Mr. Keith Tingle. Ms. Denise Hoffman seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

SWCC Minutes from the January 17, 2023, Meeting – A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes was made by Mr. Lenville Martin. Mr. Bill Harned seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

Agency Reports –

- Division of Conservation – Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the following -
 - Mr. Steven Olt will be the Division of Conservation’s new State Cost Share Coordinator.
 - Mr. Steven Olt’s position is currently in the process of being filled by a transfer from the Division of Water.
 - Envirothon West competition was held on April 12th, 2024. A total of 22 teams participated.
 - State Cost Share was cut to \$ 2 million per year in the budget bill.
 - Mr. Jay Nelson and Mr. Steve Beam will meet to discuss other avenues for future funding possibilities.

- Division of Forestry – Ms. Bridget Abernathy discussed the following -
 - Division of Forestry’s participation with Envirothon at Pennyriple State Forest and upcoming Envirothon at Tygarts State Forest in Carter County.
 - Currently in spring fire season which runs through the end of April.
 - Prescribed burning in multiple forests this spring, in partnership with Kentucky Nature Preserves, and Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife.
 - Two new staffers (funded through infrastructure funds).
 - Discussed Timber Harvest Compliance program with improvements to BMP demonstration sites.
 - Kentucky Master Logger Program.
 - Nine 3-day classes being offered (runs through November).
 - Land, Water, Tree, and Wildlife Workshops (April 25th, April 27th, and May 23rd, 2024).
 - New employee for the Stewardship Program, Mr. Clay Turner.
 - Kentucky State Arbor Day was held on April 5th in cohabitation with Berea College.
 - New Program called the Independent Seed Orchard program. This is in collaboration with the University of Kentucky to establish 12 new orchards that will grow genetically superior white oaks for future harvesting.
 - The Division of Forestry is currently selling seedlings through the end of April 2024 from their two tree nurseries in Kentucky.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service –Mr. Steve Beam discussed the following –
 - Working through EQIP allocations and contracts through IRA funding EQIP funding has risen from \$28 million last year to \$40 million this year.
 - CSP funding has increased from \$12 million to \$14 million this year.
 - Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) application period is open now.
 - Wetland easement monitoring assistance in partnership with Ducks Unlimited.
- Farm Service Agency – Not attended.
- Department for Natural Resources – Not attended.
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture – Not attended.
- University of Kentucky, CAFE – Not attended.
- KACD – Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following –
 - Finishing up KACD area meetings. Area 8 has been rescheduled for June 12th, 2024.
 - Matt Rodgers is the new Area 2 KACD Area Director.
 - Ms. Crystal Renfro thanked Mr. Jay Nelson for attending the area meetings this year.
 - Area 5 resolution – dealing with millage tax and cleaning up the language of the statutes. The resolution did not pass and will be worked on and presented at the upcoming convention.
 - Area 9 resolution – Asking for assistance from KACD & DOC to find additional funding for the Environments Grant Program. The resolution did pass and will be presented at convention for a vote.

- KACD annual convention will be held in Louisville KY on July 14 - 16 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Registration information will be out by May 2024. Cost of the KACD banquet being looked at for cost saving measures.
- KACD is hosting the 2025 Southeast Region Convention with 14 states and territories to attend.
- House Bill 130, House Bill 27, and House Bill 418 update.
- Update on 75/25 extension into 2025.
- KACD/DOC Envirothon partnership discussed.
- KACDE – Not attended.

SWCC Correspondence – Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the following –

- Butler County requests to change their environment grant funds from household appliance program to building bat boxes and bird program. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**
- Carter County requests to carry over Environmental Grant leftover funding from their 2023 chemical container program to their 2024 chemical container program. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
- Graves County would like to change the Environmental Grant funds allocated for a FFA community garden to a community garden at the New Beginnings Women and Children’s shelter. A motion was made for approval by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**

Equipment Report – Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed.

- Equipment Loan Statement of Operations – Ms. Johnna McHugh provided an overview of the Equipment Loan State of Operations with copies of report distributed to all board members. Mr. Bill Harned made a motion to approve the report as stated. Ms. Denise Hoffman seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**
- Approval of Equipment Loan Requests –
 - Russell County requested a loan of \$63,516.67 to purchase a Gehl VT315 Track Loader, Auger Drive, Auger Bit. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried** (On the condition of 2 more bids being sent into Ms. Johnna McHugh).
 - Taylor County requested a loan of \$102,580.00 to purchase a 23 CAT 305 Excavator. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
 - Daviess County requested a loan of \$18,000.00 to purchase a 10 PTT-FT Lime Spreader. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**

Conservation District Supervisors – Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the requests with copies distributed.

- Approval of vacancy petitions – Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the following requests.
 - Edmonson County - Roy Gibson to fill the unexpired term of Wayne Thompson (2026) (1 petition received)
 - Gallatin County - Deborah Brown to fill the unexpired term of Cindy Sullivan (2026) (1 petition received)
 - Grayson County - Dustin Hayes to fill the unexpired term of Jerry Shartzter (2024) (1 petition received)
 - Harrison County - Luke Arthur to fill the unexpired term of William Roberts (2024) (1 petition received)
 - Meade County - Melody Dodson to fill the unexpired term of Jamie Barger (2026) (1 petition received)
 - Menifee County - Ralph Collinsworth to fill the unexpired term of Elizabeth Mullins (2026) (1 petition received)
 - Nelson County - William Craig Ice to fill the unexpired term of Ricky Humphrey (2026) (1 petition received)
 - Webster County - David Asher to fill the unexpired term of Sharon Edwards (2026) (1 petition received)
 - Whitley County - Owen “Glen” Croley to fill the unexpired term of Charlie Ohler (2026) (1 petition received)
 - Woodford County - Joseph Greathouse to fill the unexpired term of David Dotson (2024) (1 petition received)
 - Approval contingent on correct number of signatures provided. A new individual will need to be submitted by the next Commission meeting if signatures are not provided.

A motion to approve the above vacancy petitions was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**

- Incentive Pay for Supervisors – Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the following requests –
 - Hancock County
 - Gary Long – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Loyd P. Ray, Jr. – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Stephen Ogle – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Dennis Johnson – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Joseph Hagman – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Anthony Johnson – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Daniel Emmick – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Morgan County
 - Chris Lindon – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Henry Ronald Cole – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Deborah Wilson – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training
 - Travis Stacy – At least 8 ten-minute training, DOC virtual training
 - Phillip Byrd – At least 8 ten-minute trainings, DOC virtual training

A motion to approve the above Incentive Per Diem Requests was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

Agriculture District Program - Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed. Seven (7) new petitions were presented to the Commission for consideration for a total of 3,149.92 acres.

1. Caldwell County (Petition No. 017-01 (A2)) – 353.44 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**
2. Daviess County (Petition No. 030-05) – 309.08 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
3. LaRue County (Petition No. 062-07 (A1)) – 168.01 acres. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**
4. LaRue County (Petition No. 062-12) – 1,110.12 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**
5. LaRue County (Petition No. 062-13) – 514.47 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**
6. Meade County (Petition No. 082-04 (A1)) – 40.82 acres. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**
7. Taylor County (Petition No. 109-21) – 653.75 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**

Eighteen Agricultural districts have been submitted to the commission for five-year recertification for a total of 35,915.70 acres.

COUNTY	PETITION NO.	ACRES
Boone	008-05	407.51
Boone	008-06	103.67
Bourbon	009-04	584.50
Bourbon	009-05	263.50
Bourbon	009-06	584.00
Bourbon	009-07	155.00
Bourbon	009-08	350.00
Bracken	012-04	136.022
Caldwell	017-01	5,638.211
Christian	024-03	21,030.91
LaRue	062-07	256.00
Lincoln	069-04	257.78
Marion	078-05	245.46
Meade	082-04	841.73
Meade	082-05	1,604.44
Meade	082-04	841.73
Todd	110-02	265.00
Todd	110-04	2,440.98

A motion to approve the above 18 recertifications was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Aaron Lewis. **Motion carried.**

Old Business –

- Cut-off dates for State Cost Share and Environmental Grants.
 - Mr. Jay Nelson asked the Commission to approve November 15th as the cut-off date for the submission for state cost share and environmental grants. Mr. Jay Nelson asked the Commission to approve November 15th as the cut-off date for the submission for State Cost Share and Environmental Grant applications. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**
- Environmental Grant Program discussion.
- The Commission discussed options on how to distribute funds going forward for the Environmental Grant Program. The Commission will work on forming a committee to discuss this and will email Mr. Jay Nelson if they would like to join the committee.
- Direct Aid Funding.
 - Allocate the remaining balance of Direct Aid to the 119 qualifying counties in the amount of approximately \$75.00 each. A motion to approve the payments was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**

New Business – No new business discussed.

Adjourn -

A motion to adjourn the SWCC meeting was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**

Next SWCC meeting is July 15th at 1:00 PM at KACD convention.