

# Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

## Meeting Minutes

November 18, 2024 @ 9:00 AM

300 Sower Boulevard, Room 214, Frankfort KY 40601

Zoom Conference ID: 845 5362 3580 Password: SWCC

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***In Attendance for SWCC:*** Mr. Danny Shipley, Ms. Denise Hoffman; Mr. Don Overbey; Mr. Bill Harned; Mr. Jeff Rice; and Mr. Keith Tingle.

***Others Present:*** Mr. Jay Nelson, Division of Conservation; Mr. Gordon Slone, Department for Natural Resources; Ms. Dawn Baase, Department for Natural Resources; Ms. Crystal Renfro, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Ms. Kathleen Saunier, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Mr. Steve Beam, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Ms. Kimberly Barton, Division of Conservation; Mr. Jeff Gravitt, Division of Conservation; Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Ms. Penny Warwick, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts Employee Organization; Mr. Steve Coleman, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Mr. Mike Wilson, Boone County Conservation District; Mr. Mark Jacobs, Boone County Conservation District; and Mr. Anthony Kenney, Kentucky Department of Forestry.

Quorum was met.

***Call to Order and Introduction:*** Mr. Danny Shipley

***SWCC Minutes from the September 16, 2024, Meeting:*** A motion to approve the meeting minutes was made by Mr. Bill Harned. Mr. Keith Tingle seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

### ***Agency Reports***

- **Division of Conservation:** Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the following:
  - Attended the Lower Cumberland RC&D meeting to discuss stream bank erosion.
  - DOC employees attended the NASCA meeting in October.
    - Mr. Jay Nelson complemented Ms. Kimberly Bartley on her presentation to the entire conference.
  - Mr. Nelson did a presentation for the Division of Water at their field staff meeting.
  - Discussed the DOC all hands staff meeting in Bowling Green in October.
  - Meeting with Ms. Crystal Renfro dealing with Envirothon.
  - Mr. Jay Nelson informed the Commission that the State Cost Share Program is down 200 applications this year from last year.
  - Discussed the progress of the Red Lick Water Conservancy District.
    - Their first meeting to be held on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- **Division of Forestry:** Mr. Gordon Slone discussed the following:
  - Discussed invasive plants and species and possible legislation (specifically on Bradford pear tree).

- Since September, the Division of Forestry has suppressed a total of 261 fires that burned a total of 10,355 acres.
  - In October, the Division assisted with a tree giveaway in Mayfield and Dawson Springs, which resulted in 690 trees disturbed.
  - The nurseries have sold 444,990 seedlings so far this year.
  - FY24 Completed 343 Stewardship Plans and 2,552 acres for practice plans.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service: Mr. Steve Beam discussed the following:
    - Previous year was the largest for EQIP and CSP in history of the Commonwealth. All money was obligated and there was an increase in IRA funds. There were 7 RCPP proposals this year and 2 were approved.
- Farm Service Agency: Not attended.
- Department for Natural Resources: Mr. Gordon Sloan discussed the following:
    - In 2022 DNR received \$25 million from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
      - 635 orphaned wells plugged.
    - Update on 2024 funding update.
    - Methane Emissions Reduction Program update.
    - Kentucky Abandoned Storage Tank and Orphan Well Program: \$500,000 in funds each year.
    - AML grant in the amount of \$74.25 million in funding for the next 15 years.
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture: Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the following:
    - On November 15<sup>th</sup> the Kentucky AG Development Board approved the 2025 program guidelines and should be finalized by December 1<sup>st</sup>.
    - KDP increase the administrative expenses from 5% to 6% for KDA's cost share programs.
- University of Kentucky, CAFE: Not attended.
- KACD: Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following:
    - KACD legislative priorities have been set for next year.
      - Included are increasing the limit for special audits, state cost share, direct aid, and watershed dam rehab funds.
    - Legislative reception will be held on February 4, 2025, in Frankfort Kentucky.
    - Meeting with Mr. Jay Nelson and Ms. Johnna McHugh discussing Envirothon.
    - Art and Writing contest: Awards Reception to be held on March 7<sup>th</sup> in Frankfort in the rotunda at the Capital.
    - Getting closer to hiring a new Public Affairs Specialist for KACD.
    - KACD's 75/25 partnership with NRCS (partnership employee agreement). The new program will be at the rate of 80/20%.
    - Upcoming NACD meeting to be held August 2<sup>nd</sup> through August 5<sup>th</sup>.
    - KACD committees are reforming. There will be legislative, natural resources, and education/youth committees.

- KACDE: Ms. Penny Warwick discussed the following:
  - KACDE Southeast Conference in Pigeon Forge with 27 people from Kentucky attending.

*SWCC Correspondence*: Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the following:

- Barren County requested reconsideration for the disbursement of Direct Aid funds. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Don Overbey. **Motion denied.**
- Carter County requested Environmental Grant unused funds for heavy use area installation be moved to their chemical program under the same grant. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**
- Morgan County informed the Commission the loan for the purchase of equipment is no longer needed at this time.
- Owsley County is requesting an additional \$1,500.00 in Direct Aid Funding. A correction on Owsley County's Annual Report was made. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**
- Taylor County would like to move the \$1,500 left in the Environmental Grant funding to the dead animal removal category. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

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

- Equipment Loan Statement 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: None to report.

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

- Approval of vacancy petitions: Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the following requests:
  - Hickman County – Jonathan Reynolds to fill unexpired term of Jerry Peery (2026) (1 petition received).

A motion to approve the above vacancy petition was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

- Incentive Pay for Supervisors: Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the following requests:
  - Pike County: Mr. Charlie Pinson and Ms. Leanne Coleman.

A motion to approve the above Incentive Per Diem Requests was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**

**Agriculture District Program:** Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed. Four (4) new petitions were presented to the Commission for consideration for a total of 1,103.00 acres.

1. Bourbon County (Petition No. 009-10(A1)): 719.81 acres. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
  2. Bourbon County (Petition No. 009-11(A2)): 309.46 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**
  3. Campbell County (Petition No. 019-27): 51.23 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**
  4. Kenton County (Petition No. 059-06 (A3)): 22.50 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Don Overbey and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**
- 24 Agricultural districts have been submitted to the commission for five-year recertification for a total of 17,968.91 acres.

COUNTY	PETITION NO.	ACRES
Boone County	008-02	785.84
Boone County	008-08	290.74
Boone County	008-13	123.12
Bourbon County	009-01	44.74
Bourbon County	009-02	1,135.23
Bourbon County	009-03	215.18
Bourbon County	009-09	484.98
Bourbon County	009-10	1,097.71
Bourbon County	009-11	662.06
Bourbon County	009-12	485.73
Bourbon County	009-13	440.00
Bullitt County	015-13	232.58
Fleming County	035-01	1,450.39
Fleming County	035-02	2,686.15
Fleming County	035-03	333.54
Fleming County	035-04	1,969.20
Fleming County	035-06	463.00
Fleming County	035-09	445.66
Fleming County	035-11	1,214.47
Fleming County	035-12	147.22
Fleming County	035-13	599.91
Fleming County	035-14	1,650.20
Fleming County	035-17	558.15
Mercer County	084-11	453.11

A motion to approve the above 24 recertifications was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

*Old Business:*

- Environmental Grant Application Timeline: Mr. Jay Nelson updated the Commission on the current state of the Environmental Grant Program. Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the current partnership with the Department of Agriculture and possible extra grant funding. Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the current application timeline. The Commission took no action.

*New Business:*

- Determine meeting dates for 2025
  - Joint Meeting with KACD February 5<sup>th</sup>
  - May 19<sup>th</sup>
  - August: will be at KACD convention, date TBD
  - September 15<sup>th</sup>
  - November 17<sup>th</sup>

*Adjourn:*

A motion to adjourn the SWCC meeting was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

Next SWCC meeting is February 5, 2025, at 9:00 AM.