**MEETING MINUTES**

**Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission**

**Monday, November 21, 2022**

**9:00 AM**

**Zoom Conference ID: 845 5362 3580 Password: SWCC**

**In Attendance for SWCC**: Mr. Danny Shipley, SWCC Chair; Ms. Denise Hoffman; Mr. Bill Harned; Mr. Don Overbey; Mr. Aaron Lewis; Mr. Keith Tingle; and Mr. Lenville Martin.

**Others Present:** Ms. Paulette Akers, Division of Conservation; Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Ms. Bridget Abernathy, Division of Forestry; Mr. Allan Bryant, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Mr. Gordon R. Slone, Kentucky Department for Natural Resources; Mr. Keith Rogers, Department of Agriculture; Mr. Steve Coleman, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Ms. Crystal Renfro, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Ms. Natalie Browning, Kentucky Association of Conservation District Employees; Ms. Lisa Mullins, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts Auxiliary; Ms. Kathleen Saunier, Energy and Environment Cabinet; Ms. Laura Dyer, Nicholas County Conservation District; and Mr. Jeff Gravitt, Division of Conservation.

Quorum was met.

**Meeting Called to Order** – 9:00 AM by SWCC Chair Mr. Danny Shipley.

**SWCC Minutes from the September 19th, 2022 Meeting** - Motion to approve minutes was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**

**Agency Reports**

* **Division of Conservation –** Ms. Paulette Akers discussed how some of the funds from the Division of Water grant has been utilized thus far.
	+ Purchasing of rack cards. (AWQA information cards - Develop an Ag Water Quality Plan – eec.ky.gov/agwater).
	+ Notebooks with Ag Water Quality logo on the front.
* Purchased 3,000 metal AWQA signs (I Protect Water/I have an Ag Water Quality Plan).
* The signs (AWQA)will be issued to priority watershed areas.
* Slick ads for use in publications

Ms. Paulette Akers stated that since the new tool was developed and implemented, 2,500 Ag Water Quality Plans were created since July of last year.

Ms. Paulette Akers turned the meeting over to Ms. Johnna McHugh. Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the districts submission of their 5-year plans. Ms. Johnna McHugh asked the Commission to set a date of Sept. 1 of the year that they are due.  For example, if your district's long-range plan will go out of date anytime during 2023, it will now be due by Sept. 1, 2023.  If your district's long-range plan will go out of date anytime during 2024, it will now be due by Sept. 1, 2024.   This will ease the tracking of the long-range plans. Ms. Denise Hoffman made a motion to approve, and Mr. Keith Tingle seconded. **Motion carried**.

* **Division of Forestry** – Ms. Bridget Abernathy discussed the following with the Commission.
* Fires
* Since October 1 there have been 369 fires that have burned 29,155 (over 20,000 in November alone in 2 weeks)
* Fire crews from other states were released to return home on November 15.
* Virginia, Arkansas, Mississippi, Pennsylvania and Texas – crew was rerouted home on Nov 12 due to moisture received.
* Fire season continues until December 15
* IIJA/BIL Funds
* Increase capacity across many programs- fire, urban forestry, forest health, stewardship, nurseries
* Nurseries grant- equipment, supplies
* Community Tree Recovery Events
* 1000 trees from Division of Forestry with 500 additional trees funded by the Arbor Day Foundation
* Additional events- spring 2022
	+ Seedling Store
* New online tree seedling website.
	+ - Credit card orders only online.
* Large diversity in seedlings- 40 native species
	+ Running out of species, check our website for updates on species- <https://eec.ky.gov/Natural-Resources/Forestry/state-nuseries-and-tree-seedlings/Pages/default.aspx>

**Natural Resources Conservation Service** – Not attended.

**Farm Service Agency** – Not attended.

**Department for Natural Resources** – Mr. Gordon Slone discussed the 25 million dollars granted to the Division of Oil and Gas and how the funds will be allocated for disbursal.

**Kentucky Office of Ag Policy** **and** **Kentucky Department of Agriculture** – Mr. Keith Rogers discussed the following with the Commission.

* American International livestock Expo
	+ Largest purebred Livestock show in the world.
* Avian influenza outbreak.
	+ Two cases in October.
	+ Six states so far in the United States.
* Veterinarian shortage (Large animal vet).

**KACD** – Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following with the Commission.

* Technical assistance grant with NRCS.
* Legislative priorities for the upcoming year.
	+ Asking that the age limit raised to 21 as a minimum to serve as board member.
* Legislative reception to be held on February 21, 2023.
* Upcoming KACD spring meeting dates still to be decided.

**KACDE** – Ms. Natalie Browning discussed the following with the Commission.

* Mr. Steve Coleman received the 2022 District official Supervisor of the Year award.
* T-shirt design for the art and writing contest.
* Cost to districts has gone up due to the increased cost to make them.
* KACDE area trainings.

**KACDA** – Ms. Lisa Mullins discussed getting quilt blocks turned back in. We have received about half as of today.

**Correspondence** – Ms. Paulette Akers and Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the following with the Commission:

Ms. Johnna McHugh informed the Commission that Wolfe County Conservation District Board is requesting a review and increase in the direct aid funding for this year. A mistake was made on their annual financial report decreasing the allowed amount of funding. If allowed this would take Wolfe County Conservation District from $4,500 to $10,500. An increase of $6,000 dollars. Mr. Aaron Lewis asked about a prior request from Wolfe County Conservation and how that would impact this request. Ms. Johnna McHugh will check on this and update the Commission later in the meeting.

**Equipment Report** –

* Statement of Operation - Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed. Ms. Johnna McHugh gave an overview of the year-to-date equipment fund report. Ms. Denise Hoffman made the motion to approve and Mr. Bill Harned seconded the motion. **Motion carried**.

The Commission discussed the current interest rate for the equipment loan program and the process of raising or lowering the interest rate.

Ms. Paulette Akers asked Ms. Johnna McHugh to check and verify the subtotal of the equipment loan account to ensure its accuracy.

**Conservation District Supervisors** –

* Approval of vacancy petitions - Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the requests.
* Metcalfe County –
	+ - Tamara Poore to fill unexpired term of Tammy Hodges (2024) (1 petition received).

Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried**.

* Incentive pay for Supervisors- None to report this meeting.

**Agriculture District Program** - Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed. Three (3) new petitions were presented to the Commission for consideration for a total of 547.07 acres.

1. Campbell County (Petition No. 019-06 (A5)) – 33.57 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle.  **Motion carried.**
2. Henderson County (Petition No. 051-08(A1)) – 58.50 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman.  **Motion carried.**
3. Owen County (Petition No. 094-03 – 455.00 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Don Overbey.  **Motion carried.**

Eighteen (18) new agricultural districts have been submitted to the commission for five-year recertification for a total of 9,602.18 acres. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Don Overbey. **Motion carried**.

The Commission received a letter from Hardin County Planning and Development Commission that states that it has determined that the Ag district (Hardin County) 047-11 is not to be in agreement with the language of the county’s comprehensive plan. The Commission discussed current statues and past decisions concerning recertifications and approved the 5-year recertification of Hardin County Ag district (petition no. 047-11 / acres 498.30. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried**.

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| **COUNTY** | **PETITION NO.** | **ACRES** |
| Hardin | 047-09 | 254.00 |
| Henderson | 051-08 | 375.72 |
| Hardin | 047-11 | 498.30 |
| Kenton | 059-02 | 213.26 |
| Knox | 061-03 | 668.53 |
| Logan | 071-02 | 1496.92 |
| Logan | 071-03 | 500.00 |
| Logan | 071-05 | 278.00 |
| Logan | 071-07 | 384.00 |
| Logan | 071-13 | 550.00 |
| Logan | 071-14 | 736.00 |
| Logan | 071-15 | 631.25 |
| Logan | 071-19 | 251.00 |
| Logan | 071-20 | 679.00 |
| Logan | 071-21 | 967.00 |
| Logan | 071-25 | 271.00 |
| Logan | 071-26 | 359.00 |
| Shelby | 106-01 | 268.00 |
| Webster | 117-14 | 719.50 |

**Old Business** –

* AWQA nomination update – Ms. Paulette Akers informed the Commission of the following AWQA appointments.
* Mr. Chris Howard was appointed as the Environmental-at-Large.
* Mr. Joseph Sisk was reappointed as a Farmer-at- Large.
* Ms. Meghan Komar was appointed as a Farmer-at-Large.
* Watershed Dam Draft application – Ms. Paulette Akers presented and discussed the watershed funding application with the Commission. The Commission discussed needing further clarification and guidance on how the funds will be allocated out. Ms. Paulette Akers discussed using part of funds for an Administration fee for the Division of Conservation. Further information should be forthcoming by April of 2023.

Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the previous DIGs issue that Wolfe County Conservation District had earlier this year. It was found that it had no bearing on the current request for increase funding from $4,500.00 to $10,500.00 for bump in DIGs percentage. A motion to approve Wolfe’s County request was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Aaron Lewis. **Motion carried**.

**New Business** –

* Meeting Schedule 2023
* Joint meeting Feb 22nd at state vet office.
* April 24th.
* July 10th at 1:00 at KACD in Bowling Green.
* September 18th.
* November 20th.

Mr. Danny Shipley stated that the above dates will serve as the upcoming SWCC meeting dates. Meetings will be hybrid if the room allows.

Ms. Paulette Akers asked the Commission to allow the Division of Conservation to use e-mail as the form of communication in the future as opposed to postal mail. The Commission agreed.

**Next Board Meeting** – February 22, 2023, at 9:00 a.m. Kentucky Department of Agriculture, 109 Corporate Drive, Frankfort KY 40601.

**Adjourn** – A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried**.