

JOINT MEETING MINUTES

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

And

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts

Wednesday, January 17, 2024 – 9:00 AM

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

In attendance for KACD: Mr. Allan Bryant, President; Mr. Ted Jessup, Vice President; Mr. Steve Coleman, Secretary-Treasurer; Mr. David Rowlett, Kentucky NACD Director; Mr. Doug DeRossett; Ms. Crystal Renfro, Executive Director; Mr. Vincent Thompson; Mr. Doug McLaren; Ms. Jennifer Burgan; and Dr. Ernie Ezell.

Others Present: Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Ms. Melinda Murphy, Division of Conservation; Mr. Jay Nelson, Division of Conservation; Ms. Kim Barton, Division of Conservation; Mr. John Chism, Kentucky Department of Agriculture; Mr. Steve Beam, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Mr. Matt Wooten, Kenton County Conservation District; Ms. Sarah Bryant, Kentucky Office of Ag Policy; Mr. Bill McCloskey, Kentucky Office of Ag Policy; Mr. Steve Kull, Division of Forestry; and Mr. Eric Allness, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Quorum was met.

Call to Order and Introduction – by Mr. Danny Shipley, Chair (SWCC) and Mr. Allan Bryant, President (KACD). Introductions were made.

SWCC Minutes from the November 20, 2023, Meeting – A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes was made by Mr. Keith Tingle. Mr. Bill Harned seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

KACD Minutes from the November 16, 2023, Meeting – A motion was made by Mr. David Rowlett to approve the November meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Doug DeRossett seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

KACD Treasury Report – Mr. Steve Coleman gave an overview of the year-to-date Treasury report. Mr. Vincent Thompson made the motion to approve, and Mr. Ernie Ezell seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

KACD Foundation Account Report – Mr. Steve Coleman gave an overview of the year-to-date of the Foundation Account. Mr. Vincent Thompson made a motion to approve, and Mr. Ernie Ezell second the motion. **Motion carried.**

Agency Reports –

- **Division of Conservation** – Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the following with the Commission –
 - Update on the current situation of the hiring of new Division of Conservation Director.
 - DOC staff working with Division of Water staff to advertise Ag Water Quality Plans at commodity group conferences.
 - This is the last year with Titchener as the company to handle the districts audits.
 - District supervisor training to be held next week via Zoom (Tuesday and Wednesday).
 - Art and Writing Contest submissions will (January 31 completion) be judged on soon at Farm Bureau.
 - Update on Envirothon.
 - Three training days all in the same location this year.
 - East competition to be held at Tygert State Forest.
 - West competition to be held at Pennyrite State Forest.
 - State competition to be held in Nicholas County at the 4H camp.
 - Suggestions for future training topics are welcomed.
- **KACDE** – Ms. Natalie Browning discussed the following –
 - Discussed T-shirt sales (deadline is January 26th).
 - Upcoming March 13th meeting.
 - Upcoming Spring meetings.
- **KACD Auxiliary** – Ms. Crystal Renfro stated that KACD Auxiliary is currently working on the scholarship applications and working to add more auction items to this year's sale.
- **KACD** – Ms. Crystal Renfro – Report was presented under new business.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service** – Mr. Eric Allness discussed the following –
 - Mr. Eric Allness introduced himself as the new NRCS state conservationist for partnerships and gave an overview of his past accomplishments.
 - NRCS continuing resolution is set to expire Friday, January 19th.
 - Possible extension would extend the resolution until March 1st.
 - Farm bill is set to expire in September of this year.
 - Mr. Steve Beam discussed the following –
 - Discussion on the current 75/25 agreement.
 - EQIP funds to be increased.
 - 46 million in RCPP funding in next five years.

- Kentucky Department of Agriculture – Mr. John Chism discussed the addition of Mr. Shale to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture. Mr. Bill McCloskey and Mr. John Chism discussed the following –
 - Commissioner Shell is working on filling positions to fully staff the department.
 - All of KDA on the same campus.
 - Mr. Brandon Reed is the new Executive Director of KOAP.
 - CAIP program updates
 - ❖ 64 conservation districts.
 - ❖ \$14 million allocated to counties.
 - ❖ KOAP is supporting House Bill 27.
 - Master settlement agreement funds.
 - ❖ Last year \$118 million in funds down to \$103 million this year.
 - House Bill 27 discussed.
- Farm Service Agency – Not attended.
- Department for Natural Resources – Not attended.
- University of Kentucky, CAFE – Not attended.
- Kentucky Farm Bureau – Not attended.
- Kentucky Division of Forestry – Mr. Steve Kull discussed the following –
 - Conservation had first opportunity for tree seedling orders this year.
 - Update on last year’s total acres of forest fires.
 - Looking at increasing current capacity on fighting forest fires.
 - \$6.7 million dollars secured for strike team for tornado assistance.

KACD Correspondence – Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following –

- KACD thank you letter received.

SWCC Correspondence – Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the following –

- Madison County requests to change their environment grant funds from Soil Quality Demonstration program to dead animal removal. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**
- Wayne County requests to use state cost share contingency funding to assist Mr. Joshua Simpson who received a Notice of Violation. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
- Boone County would like to appeal the Commission’s denial of their DIG’s appeal. A motion was made for approval by Mr. Jason Kilmer. The motion was not seconded.

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. Mr. Lenville seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**
- **Approval of Equipment Loan Requests** –
 - Green County requested a loan of \$54,705.33 to purchase a JCB ICXT Track hole Model ICXTHF4EC. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **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.
 - **Boone County** - John Stork to fill the unexpired term of Matt Wooten (2026) (1 petition received)
 - **Christian County** - Dustin Love to fill the unexpired term of Harold Stooksbury (2026) (1 petition received)
 - **Hart County** - Robert Thompson to fill the unexpired term of Leon Logsdon (2024) (1 petition received)
 - **Letcher County** - James R. McAuley to fill the unexpired term of Jim McAuley (2024) (1 petition received)
 - **Martin County** - Floyd Jude to fill the unexpired term of Terry Howell (2024) (1 petition received)
 - **Menifee County** - April Smith to fill unexpired term of Kenneth Pugh (2024) (1 petition received)
 - **Simpson County** – Chris Thurman to fill unexpired term of Buster Estes (2026) (1 petition received)

A motion to approve the above vacancy petitions was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

- **Incentive Pay for Supervisors** – None presented.

Agriculture District Program - Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed. Eight (8) new petitions were presented to the Commission for consideration for a total of 1,034.82 acres.

1. **Boyle County** (Petition No. 011-04 (A6)) – 112.97 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**
2. **Boyle County** (Petition No. 011-06 (A2)) – 167.39 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
3. **Boyle County** (Petition No. 011-07 (A8)) – 41.48 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**
4. **Boyle County** (Petition No. 011-24) – 333.62 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

5. Boyle County (Petition No. 011-25) – 283.79 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**
6. Bullitt County (Petition No. 015-08 (A5)) – 12.44 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.** Mr. Keith Tingle abstained.
7. Campbell County (Petition No. 019-14 (A8)) – 13.00 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Jason Kilmer and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
8. Kenton County (Petition No. 059-06 (A2)) – 70.13 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Jeff Rice and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**

Eighteen Agricultural districts have been submitted to the commission for five-year recertification for a total of 15,085.75 acres.

COUNTY	PETITION NO.	ACRES
Boone	008-07	Removed remaining acres
Bullitt	015-08(A4)	126.92
Christian	024-01	696.94
Christian	024-02	1,040.20
Christian	024-04	2985.67
Christian	024-05	295.03
Christian	024-06	3,682.86
Christian	024-07	345.67
Christian	024-10	789.81
Christian	024-11	609.77
Christian	024-12	Removed remaining acres
Christian	024-13	446.95
Hart	050-01	341.79
Meade	082-03	761.89
Muhlenberg	089-01	419.95
Muhlenberg	089-02	1,453.73
Muhlenberg	089-03	501.49
Muhlenberg	089-04	587.08

A motion to approve the above 18 recertifications was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

NACD Director's Report - Mr. David Rowlett discussed the following -

- Annual NACD meeting in February in San Diego.
- New President will be elected this year. A nomination for Mr. Gary Blair was issued.
- Mr. Vincent Thompson was accepted to the National Next Generation Leadership Institute.
- NACD foundation funding.
 - Envirothon is funded by NACD.
 - Next Generation Leadership Institution is funded by NACD.
- Asked for more donations to NACD.
- Purchase of baseball bat from Louisville slugger to be auctioned off at the upcoming NACD convention.
- Mr. David Rowlett stated that the NACD Spring Fly-in will be held on March 21st.

Old Business – No old business.

New Business –

- NACD Spring Fly-in – Ms. Crystal Renfro stated meeting will be held on March 21st.
- KACD Area meeting update – Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed forthcoming KACD Area meetings.
 - Area 1 – March 5th (Marshal County).
 - Area 2 – March 6th (Logan County).
 - Area 3 – March 19th (Hardin County).
 - Area 4 – March 12th (Washington County).
 - Area 5 – March 22nd (Gallatin County).
 - Area 6 – March 20th (Anderson County).
 - Area 7 – March 28th (Pulaski County).
 - Area 8 – Tentatively for April 3rd. Location to be determined later.
 - Area 9 – April 5th – (Buckhorn Lake State Park).

Mr. Allan Bryant gave an update on the current legislative session and thanked everyone who attended the legislative reception.

- Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following –
 - 75/25 grant funding.
 - Currently have 26 positions and enough funding for 50 positions.
 - KACD bonding Ms. Crystal Renfro is currently looking for bids.
 - KACD credit card funds - \$500.00 in cash back.
 - Ms. Crystal Renfro asked the board to approve the funds to be used for sponsorship. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Doug DeRossett and was seconded by Mr. Steve Coleman. **Motion carried.**
 - \$500.00 in funds to be used as a donation to FFA. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Doug DeRossett and was seconded by Mr. Steve Coleman. **Motion carried.**
 - KACD sponsorship letter have been mailed out (over 100).
 - KACD 2024 Convention will be held at the Crown Plaza on July 14-16. (80th annual meeting).

- KACD 2025 Convention will be held August 2-6. This will be in conjunction with Southeast NACD meeting.
- Ms. Crystal Renfro stated Ms. Patty Fugate lost her home due to a house fire.
 - Ms. Crystal Renfro is taking donations.
- Presented job announcement for contract employee. Vincent moved to approve as presented, with the addition that executive committee can accept applications and move forward with choosing a candidate. Mr. Steve Coleman seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**
- Ms. Crystal Renfro presented her timesheet for approval. Mr. Steve Coleman made a motion to approve. A second motion was made by Ms. Jennifer Burgan. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Matt Wooter asked that a board overhaul of KRS 262 be a future legislative priority, particularly the part about conservation districts receiving funding. Mr. Allan Bryant suffused Kenton County draft changes and put them through the resolution process.

- 2024 State Cost Share approval – Mr. Jay Nelson presented the 2024 State Cost Share recommendation options. The commission decided that applicants with a score of 61 or higher be funded for a total allocation of \$3,870,784.14 to 319 applicants. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**
- 2024 Environmental Grants - Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the 2024 environmental grant recommendation options. The Commission decided to fund the requests that included Dead Animal Removal at \$284,000. That would allow you to carry over \$37,878 to add to next year’s available balance. Ms. Johnna McHugh asked the Commission to establish a cut-off for the next round of funding to be November 15, 2024. A motion to approve the funding and cut-off date was made by Mr. Lenville Martin and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

Adjourn -

A motion to adjourn the SWCC meeting was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**

A motion to adjourn the KACD meeting was made by Mr. Doug DeRossett and was seconded by Mr. Ernie Ezell. **Motion carried.**

Next SWCC meeting is April 15th at 9:00 am with.

Next KACD meeting is March 21st at 9:30 am

