

## JOINT MEETING MINUTES

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission  
and  
Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts  
Wednesday, February 5, 2025 | 9:00 AM  
300 Sower Blvd., #TR-A, Frankfort, KY

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**Members in attendance for SWCC:** Mr. Danny Shipley, Chair; Mr. Bill Harned; Mr. Jeff Rice; Ms. Denise Hoffman; Mr. Don Overbey; Mr. Keith Tingle and Mr. Lenville Martin.

**Members 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; Mr. Matt Rodgers; Mr. Rodney Dick; Mr. Ron Murphy; Ms. Jennifer Burgan; and Mr. Doug Hensley.

**Others In Attendance:** Mr. Jay Nelson, Division of Conservation; Ms. Melinda Murphy, Division of Conservation; Ms. Kim Barton, Division of Conservation; Mr. John Chism, Kentucky Department of Agriculture; Mr. Eric Allness, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Mr. Steve Beam, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Ms. Bridget Abernathy, Kentucky Division of Forestry; Ms. Penny Warwick, Warren County Conservation District/KACDE; Ms. Kayleigh Evans, Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts; Mr. Mike Wilson, Boone County Conservation District; Ms. Debra Waller, Boone County Conservation District; Ms. Kristine Whybark, Division of Conservation; Ms. Shanna Drake, Division of Conservation; Mr. Robert Guess, Crittenden County Conservation District; Ms. Vivian Richmond, Woodford County Conservation District; Ms. Debbie Boyd, Hopkins County Conservation District; Ms. Tammy McCallon, Calloway County Conservation District; Ms. Jennifer Swain, Ballard County Conservation District; Mr. Jeff Gravitt, Division of Conservation; and Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation.

Quorum was met.

**Meeting Called to Order and Introductions:** by Mr. Danny Shipley, Chair (SWCC) and Mr. Allan Bryant, President (KACD). Introductions were made.

**SWCC Minutes from the November 18, 2024, Meeting:** A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes by Mr. Jeff Rice. Mr. Keith Tingle seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

**KACD Minutes from the November 21, 2024, Meeting:** A motion was made by Mr. David Rowlett to approve the November meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Steve Coleman seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

### **KACD Treasurer's Report:**

- **General fund:** A motion was made by Mr. Doug DeRossett, second by Mr. Ted Jessup to accept the KACD General Fund Treasurer's Report as presented. **Motion carried.**
- **Foundation account:** Motion by Mr. Rodney Dick, second by Mr. Doug Hensley to accept the KACD Foundation Account Treasurer's Report as presented. **Motion carried.**
- Motion by Mr. Ted Jessup, second by Mr. Rodney Dick to transfer \$25,000 from Foundation account to the General Fund. **Motion carried.**
- A motion by Mr. Ted Jessup, second by Mr. Doug Hensley to pay the Ky Ag Council Annual Membership Renewal Invoice for \$250 from the KACD General Account. **Motion carried.**
- A motion by Mr. Doug McLaren, second by Mr. Matt Rodgers to donate \$500 to the Hopkins Central FFA Land Judging and Homesite Evaluation Teams to attend the National Contest, funds to come from KACD General Account. **Motion carried.**
- A motion by Ms. Jennifer Burgan, second by Mr. David Rowlett to sponsor KACDE Area Trainings for \$1,000, out of the KACD General Account. **Motion carried.**
- Motion by Mr. Doug Hensley, second by Mr. Matt Rodgers to approve the 2025-2026 KACD Foundation Account Budget as presented. **Motion carried.**

### **Agency Reports:**

- **Division of Conservation:** Mr. Jay Nelson discussed the following:
  - Upcoming town hall meetings and area meetings.
  - Jim Claypool Art and Conservation Contest winners have been chosen. There were approximately 41,000 entries this year. Next year's topic will be water quality.
  - Envirothon training date (March 14, March 24, and April 1)
  - Update on watershed conservancy districts and dam rehabilitation.
  - New/Updated Division of Conservation SOP's.
- **KACD:** Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following:
  - KACD outreach pamphlet and 2025 SENACD Save the Date flyer.
  - Letters prepared for Art & Writing ceremony at Capitol Rotunda on March 7<sup>th</sup> from 11am-12pm
  - KACD lifetime membership pins/possible general KACD pins. A motion by Mr. Vincent Thompson, second by Mr. Doug Hensley to order 100 of the full color pins to be lifetime pins and 100 of the silver pins for general members to purchase. **Motion carried.**
  - Lifetime artwork print. A motion by Mr. Steve Coleman, second by Mr. Vincent Thompson to pay \$400 down to Eden Wray for the Digital Art Commission. **Motion carried.**
  - General sponsorship and Envirothon sponsorship letters will be going out soon.
  - A motion by Mr. Doug McLaren, second by Mr. Vincent Thompson to purchase lunches for Envirothon contests. **Motion carried.**
  - Public Affairs position is open for applications until February 28<sup>th</sup>
  - The KACD May meeting will be held at the Crowne Plaza hotel in Louisville on May 22.
- **KACDE:** Ms. Penny Warwick discussed the following:
  - There are 4 joint area spring training meetings planned in April.
  - Art and Writing t shirt availability
  - Master Conservationist signs
  - 2025 KACD Conference will be held in Frankfort September 8-10.
- **KACD Auxiliary:** Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed scholarship applications.
- **Natural Resources Conservation Service:** Mr. Steve Beam discussed the following:
  - Ms. Brooke Rawlins' nomination for USDA Secretary is out of committee, waiting on full Senate vote.
  - Mr. Louis Aspey is the current acting NRCS Chief.

- Mr. Steve Blanford retired recently in 2024 and was hired through the ACES program.
- NRCS is currently in a hiring freeze.
- Current budget issues, including the pause on federal funds directly related to funds dealing with IRA funding
- The Farm Bill was extended through September 30, 2025.
- Farm Service Agency: Not attended.
- Department for Natural Resources: Not attended.
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture: Mr. John Chism discussed the following:
  - KDA is promoting the Leopold award on its webpage.
  - Commissioner Shell designated February as Lamb Month.
  - The AgLand Booth from the state fair won a first-place award from the International Association of Fairs and Expositions (IAFE) in the agricultural category of Newly Established/Evolving Program.
  - A new program called Farm to School Stars will honor schools that use local agriculture for their produce needs.
  - The 2024 Kentucky Ag Tag program raised \$931,201.
  - Commissioner Shell is starting a new contest. The Kentucky Proud Classic will be a livestock show for Kentucky's youth that will feature livestock that is bred, raised, and owned in Kentucky.
  - CAIP payments are expected to be distributed around April 15.
  - 67 county conservation districts are running the local CAIP programs.
- University of Kentucky, CAFE: Not attended.
- Kentucky Division of Forestry: Ms. Bridget Abernathy reported the following:
  - KDF is awaiting news on federal funding streams
  - Tree nursery sales are on-going.
  - Update on the Independent Seed Orchard Initiative, which is planting small white oak seed orchards in 27 orchards in Kentucky.
  - Upcoming Forest Health Conference at UK
  - Update on spring fire season preparations.
  - KDF will be advertising the availability of summer intern positions.
- KACD Program Coordinator: Kayleigh Evans discussed the updates made to the KACD website, the save the date flyer for the 2025 KACD/SENACD Annual Meeting, and the recent newsletters.

**Correspondence: Ms. Crystal Renfro, KACD and Mr. Jay Nelson, DOC:** No correspondence to present.

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

- Statement of Operations: Ms. Johnna McHugh provided an overview of the Equipment Loan Statement of Operations with copies of report distributed to all board members. Mr. Keith Tingle made a motion to approve the report as stated. Ms. Denise Hoffman seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**
- Approval of Equipment Loan Requests:  
Floyd County requested a loan of \$45,801.57 to purchase a 2024 Caterpillar 302.7 Excavator. A motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

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

- **Approval of Vacancy Petitions:**
  - Christian County: Mr. Alan Cunningham
  - Daviess County: Mr. Ray Wright
  - Edmonson County: Mr. James Riddle
  - Grant County: Mr. Joseph Clemons
  - Jefferson County: Mr. Thomas Edison
  - Kenton County: Mr. James Brown
  - Larue County: Mr. Karl Stankovic, Mr. Kenley Conner, Mr. Kelly Flanders, and Mr. Michael Lawless
  - Lewis County: Mr. Dwight Malone
  - North Logan County: Mr. Nathaniel Logsdon
  - Pike County: Mr. Matthew Hager
  - South Logan County: Mr. Jordan Walker and Mr. Bob Allen
  - Taylor County: Mr. Doug Underwood

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

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

**Agriculture District Program:** Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed. Five (5) new petitions were presented to the Commission for consideration for a total of 425.99 acres.

1. **Barren County** (Petition No. 005-15) – 203.16 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**
2. **Campbell County** (Petition No. 019-03 (A7)) – 10.04 acres. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**
3. **Campbell County** (Petition No. 019-25 (A1)) – 124.83 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**
4. **Carter County** (Petition No. 022-05 (A1)) – 30.0 acres. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice. **Motion carried.**
5. **Jefferson County** (Petition No. 056-08) – 57.96 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

Fourteen Agricultural districts have been submitted to the commission for five-year recertification for a total of 2,799.30 acres.

COUNTY	PETITION NO.	ACRES
Anderson	003-03	428.00
Anderson	003-04	296.60
Bracken	012-06	53.79
Bracken	012-09	434.82
Carter	022-05	155.00
Jefferson	056-04	39.17
Jefferson	056-05	266.95
Jefferson	056-06	159.56

Whitley	118-01	60.00
Whitley	118-02	130.46
Whitley	118-03	43.80
Whitley	118-04	15.92
Woodford	120-04	327.21
Woodford	120-05	388.02

A motion to approve the above 14 recertifications was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**

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

- Upcoming NACD Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, UT.
- NACD Summer meeting will be held in Wisconsin.
- Legislative Committee
  - Status of the IRA funds (approximately \$17 Billion)
  - Legislative Fly-In is March 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Old Business:** No old business discussed

**New Business:**

- **NACD Spring Fly-in:** Crystal Renfro stated the board discussed participating in the Fly-In day via Zoom, Mr. Vincent Thompson spoke to the importance of the meeting with our legislators in person.
- **KACD Area meeting update:** Ms. Crystal Renfro stated all 9 Area meetings are scheduled
  - Area 1 – March 6, Marshall County
  - Area 2 – March 4, Logan County
  - Area 3 – March 11, Hardin County
  - Area 4 – March 31, Bullitt County
  - Area 5 – March 13, Grant County
  - Area 6 – March 18, Bourbon County
  - Area 7 – March 19, Pulaski County
  - Area 8 – April 9, Elliott County
  - Area 9 – March 27, Buckhorn State Park.
  - Meetings will be from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm.
  - Area director elections will be held in the odd numbered areas. Areas 5 and 9 must choose new directors, due to term limits.
  - Commissioner nominations will be gathered in Areas 7 and 9.
- **2025 KACD/SENACD Annual Meeting:** Ms. Crystal Renfro presented possible fees and prices for the annual meeting, including the following:
  - Joint meeting (SENACD and KACD) will be \$375
  - KACD meeting only will be \$225
  - SENACD spouse rate will be \$215
  - Sunday Taste of Kentucky Night will be an additional \$100
  - Tours will be \$75 each
    - 2 offered on Sunday 9 am – 4 pm, details still being worked out.
    - Potentially a Tuesday afternoon tour offered for SE attendees during KACD Business Session.

A motion by Mr. Steve Coleman, second by Mr. Doug DeRossett to approve the SENACD Meeting registration and ticket prices as presented. **Motion carried.**

- *KACD Employee/Contractor Update:* Ms. Crystal Renfro stated that the NACD Technical Grant has been approved. This will allow KACD to hire several part-time contract employees to assist with the outreach and promotion of Farm Bill programs across the Commonwealth while working with district staff and supervisors. KACD is considering 5 contractors spread across the state for 500 hours each. These positions may be able to assist with junior boards development as well. A motion by Mr. Doug DeRossett, second by Mr. Rodney Dick to move forward with the NACD Technical Grant Agreement Plan. **Motion carried.**

Ms. Crystal Renfro stated that KACD is eligible for a partner employee through the new agreement and is considering an 80/20 partnership. The executive members are talking with NRCS about pursuing this opportunity. A motion by Mr. Doug DeRossett, second by Mr. Rodney Dick to move forward with the 80/20 partnership employee opportunity. **Motion carried.**

- *2025 State Cost Share approval:* Mr. Jay Nelson presented 3 options for the 2025 *State Cost Share Program* application approval. Mr. Bill Harned moved, seconded by Mr. Jeff Rice, to choose the option that included applications with scores of 62 or higher be funded. This would allocate \$3,935,016 to 363 applicants. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Jay Nelson asked the Commission to establish a cut-off date for the next round of funding. The Commission decided on November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Bill Harned and seconded by Mr. Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Jay Nelson asked the commission to approve changing future start dates for the state cost share practices to March 1, regardless of when the commission meets to approve the practices. Mr. Bill Harned moved, seconded by Keith Tingle. **Motion carried.**

- *2025 Environmental Grant approval:* Mr. Jay Nelson presented 3 options for *Environmental Grant* county application approvals. The Commission chose the option that included considering Districts in Good Standing (DIGS) scores, carry over funds from previously approved years, and budgetary needs of the district. The motion was amended to include 2 additional dead animal removal grant applications to spend the maximum funding available. The motion was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Amendment and motion carried.**

Mr. Jay Nelson asked the Commission to establish a cut-off date for the next round of funding and for the allocations of funded categories to be kept the same. The Commission decided on November 15, 2025. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Keith Tingle and seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

Mr. Allan Bryant thanked everyone for attending the legislative reception last night. Mr. Allan Bryant stated that next year is a budget year. He highlighted HB24 which would increase the amount that triggers a special audit from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. Mr. Allan Bryant also discussed an agreement with UK to do an economic study of conservation districts. A motion to apply for Ag Development funds to pay the \$5,000 cost of the study was made by Mr. Steve Coleman and seconded by Mr. Vincent Thompson. **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. Vincent Thompson and was seconded by Mr. Steve Coleman. **Motion carried.**

***Next SWCC meeting:*** May 19<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am.

***Next KACD meeting:*** March 20<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am