

STATE SOIL CONSERVATION & WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE
Monthly Meeting, March 4th, 2021, 10:00 A.M

Minutes for March 4th, 2021

SSCWQC Members Called In

Kevin Pope, Colleen Miller, Sherman Lundy, Dennis Carlson, Dale Farnham, Margaret McQuown, Steve Hofmann, Paula Ellis, Patti Ruff

DSCWQ Staff Called In

Vince Sitzmann, Kate Bussanmas, Jake Hansen, Will Myers, Susan Kozak, Nicky Gubbels

Partners Called In

John Whitaker (CDI), Steve Hopkins (DNR), Jamie Benning (ISU), Jon Hubbert (NRCS), Scott Cagle (NRCS)

Other Called In

Rodrigo Acevedo, Jonathan Hendricks, Jana Coughlin, Mary Ellen Miller

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m.

2021-15 Carlson moved to approve the agenda; Lundy seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2021-16 Lundy moved to approve the February 4th, 2021 meeting minutes; Miller seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Subcommittee Report

Bureau Chief Reports (Reports on file)

Field Services – Myers

Myers highlighted the following topics in his report;

- IDALS has distributed approximately \$75k in cost share funding, provided though recall of REAP funding, for over 50 windbreak repairs across 8 counties
- Field Services will be filling the vacant Urban Conservationist position soon.

Mines and Minerals – Sitzmann

Sitzmann highlighted the following topics in his report;

- There are currently 3 active projects, with construction underway.
- Preliminary work addressing the Dubuque lead mine subsidence continues moving forward slowly.
- Sitzmann announced that Soil, Water, and Mineral Week will be April 25th – May 2nd.

Water Resources - Hansen

Hansen highlighted the following topics in his report;

- There are currently 3 projects out for bids. Several projects are in the final stages of permitting and will be bid in 2021.
- The funding appropriated for ADW closure should be enough to complete the program in 2021 or 2022.

Director's Report - Kozak

Bussanmas highlighted the following items in Kozak's report;

- Central Office will be increasing days staff are in the office with continued safety precautions.
- Staff has been attending multiple meetings with various partners such as NRCS, CDI board, and Ducks Unlimited.
- WQI hired an Education Info/Ed Outreach Coordinator for the West Fork Crooked Creek/Long Creek Project.

Partner Reports (Reports on file)

Conservation Districts of Iowa - Whitaker

Whitaker highlighted the following topics in his report;

- There are currently two open positions; WET position and Private Lands Wildlife position. One is currently filled and we hope to have the other filled by next meeting.
- The CDI board voted to host the annual meeting virtually for 2021.

Engineers –

No Report Given

Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Hopkins

Konrady highlighted the following topics in Hopkins's report;

- Megan Thul has been hired as the Trout Run Watershed Coordinator/Source Water Coordinator. She will be located at the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery.
- Former DNR Director and NRCS chief Paul Johnson sadly passed away on February 15th.

Iowa State Extension – Benning

Benning highlighted the following topics in her report;

- The registration for the virtual Iowa Water Conference Registration is now open.
- ISU is now hosting a podcast focusing on Engineering and Environmental issues in Agriculture called Engineering Your Farm.
- Iowa Learning Farms is continuing to host virtual field days.

Leopold Center – Farnham

Nothing to Report.

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Hubbert

Hubbert highlighted the following items in his report;

- IPC and State CIG are currently awaiting final approval from headquarters pending the budget allocations.
- The 2021 budget is continuing to be very tight due to reduced allocations and new staffing investments.
- Administration is finalizing reopening guides as COVID numbers are showing signs of improvement. More updates will be coming soon.

Business

- SSCWQC Research and Demonstration Grant Updates - Gubbels
 - Gubbels will provide a full report on all of the grants at the next meeting.
 - Summer Tour Discussion
 - The committee decided that due to the unknown state of the pandemic we will not be hosting and in person bus tour and postponing Summer Tour until 2022.

Subcommittee Reports

- DO Subcommittee report:
 - 5 Year plan – Cass County

2021-17 Ellis moved to approve the Cass County 5 year plan. McQuown seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- R&D Grant Application Review
 - The committee discussed that there was need for adjustments and there would be a subcommittee held prior to the next committee meeting to review and suggest changes.
- SWM Subcommittee Report:
 - Soil Loss Amendments – Black Hawk, Boone, Butler, Clarke, Hancock, Marion, Page, Sac, Worth

2021-18 Lundy moved to approve the above Soil Loss Limits amendments. Hofmann Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

- Nomination Committee:
 - The Nomination Committee suggested Colleen Miller for Chair and Steve Hofmann for Vice Chair. Formal vote will be held at the next meeting.

SWCD Vacancies / Appointments

- Vacancies
 - Hardin – Recommendation to appoint Jo Baumann to fill current vacancy
 - Webster– Recommendation to appoint Chris Lambert to fill current vacancy
 - Winnebago – Recommendation to appoint Neil Steffensen to fill unexpired term of Gary Wasmund
 - Woodbury – Recommendation to appoint Ted Bromander to fill the unexpired term of Charlie Bromander

2021-19 Lundy moved to approve the listed appointments. Farnham seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

SSCWQC Member Reports

- Lundy- Some of the snow is starting to melt, however there is still a good amount on the ground.
- Farnham- The snow is about 75% gone.

- McQuown- Snow is mostly gone and there have been no frost issues. People are ready to get in the field.
- Ruff- Pushing off property sales. Just now starting to see some of the ground through the snow.
- Hofmann- No issues with frost, the last few days have been beautiful. Seeing some fertilizer and small grain going on.
- Pope- Trying to get some grain moved and book work finished.
- Carlson- Now is the time to order tree seed if needed. A lot of Emerald Ash Borer will need to be treated or removed.
- Miller- Very muddy due to snow melt. People are seeing some robins return.

Pope adjourned the meeting at 11:08 a.m.

Kevin Pope, SSCWQC Chair

Susan Kozak, DSCWQ Division Director