

STATE SOIL CONSERVATION & WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE
Monthly Meeting, Tuesday, February 6th 2019, 10:00 A.M.
Wallace Building, 2nd floor conference room

Minutes for February 6th, 2019

SSCWQC Members Present

Kevin Pope, Vance Hjelm,

SSCWQC Members Called In

Paula Ellis, Dale Farnham, Dennis Carlson, Steve Hofmann, Sherman Lundy, Linda Querry

Partners Present

Jon Hubbert (NRCS), Steve Hopkins (DNR), Jamie Benning (ISU)

DSCWQ Staff Present

Vince Sitzmann, Jake Hansen, Nicky Gubbels

The meeting was called to order at 10:11 a.m.

2019-4 Lundy moved to approve the agenda; Kevin Pope seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2019-5 Lundy moved to approve the January 15th, 2019 meeting minutes; Dale Farnham seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Bureau Chief Reports

Field Services-Sitzmann (Report on file)

Sitzmann highlighted that in his report that after all the listed CA positions are filled IDALS will have 6 remaining offices that continue to have shared CA's. As the budget allows the remaining position will be filled. He then shared that they are still working toward the development of standardized treasurers reports for all SWCD's.

Mines and Minerals-Kozak (Report on File)

Kozak was unable to attend the meeting. See report on file.

Water Resources-Hansen (Report on File)

Hansen shared that staff has been working on the implementation of SF512 funds and staffing. He also shared that on February 14th he and Kozak will be participating in the Iowa Learning Farms Leadership Circle in Ames. Lastly he shared that he, Kozak and Secretary Naig will tour a dewatered lock and dam on the Mississippi river in Dubuque on February 22nd.

Director's Report-Kozak (Report on File)

See report on file for more details.

Pula Ellis announced to the committee that the director's position is now open to the public and will close March 5th.

2019-6 Hoffman moved to approve the committee meeting as a small group first to discuss candidates for the director's position prior to meeting as a full committee. Querry seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Partner Reports

Conservation Districts of Iowa- Whitaker (Report on File)

Whitaker was unable to attend the meeting, see report on file.

Engineers – No Report

Roehl was unable to attend the meeting, see report on file.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Hopkins (Report on File)

Steve Hopkins shared that pre-applications for Watershed Planning Grants for groups interested in funding to develop 9-element Watershed Management Plans are due February 28th, 2019. A completed, approved 9-element WMP is a pre-requisite for EPA section 319 funding for watershed project implementation. Hopkins also shared that Jon Tack, DNR Water Quality Chief will be leaving DNR and has accepted a position with the Iowa utilities board.

Iowa State Extension –Benning

Benning shared that they just wrapped up both the Crop Advantage series as well as the Soil Health Conference; due to these events, there is no written report to be shared. Each events had good attendance and are still thriving events.

Leopold Center – Farnham

Dale Farnham stated that he had nothing new to share and that their next meeting will be in June.

Natural Resource Conservation Service – Hubbert

Hubbert highlighted the following items in his report

- Matthew Lohr announced as the new USDA-NRCS Chief
- Coordination with FSA has resumed to work on implementation on the new Farm Bill
- Workload assessment raised the Iowa NRCS hiring cap for 463-483
- 2019 hiring plan will be implemented in 3 phases and opening 37 positions.
- Staff is now back on the 6th floor, with a reduced space to modernize the office.
- The NRCS conservation planner certification process has been updated.

Old Business

Sitzmann read the drafted response letter concerning the Master Matrix. This letter will be the reply to the letter given to the committee last January.

2019-7 Lundy motioned to approve the response letter concerning the Master Matrix. Pope seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Business

- SSCWQC Research & Demonstration Grant Updates- Gubbels (Report on File)
 - Gubbels stated that there were some invoices turned in but due to some mistakes they needed revisions. A full update on all current grants will be provided at the next meeting.
- R& D Grant-FY20 request for proposals
 - A draft of the FY 2020 app will be sent to the Districts Operations committee to then be presented and approved at the March meeting.
- Summer Tour Planning- Summer tour will be held in SW Iowa on June 17th & 18th. Sitzmann proposed holding a phone meeting with Query and Ellis to discuss location and meeting accommodations.
- Spring Regionals Discussion- The committee decided that at least one committee member would attend each spring regional, and scheduled accordingly.

2019-8 Lundy moved to approve the soil loss amendments. Pope seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

SWCD Vacancies / Appointments

- Sitzmann shared that there is a potential vacancy in Linn County due to missing paperwork.

SSCWQC Member Reports

- Farnham- Very windy conditions, causing a lot of soil movement.
- Lundy- There is a big concern around potential flooding. It may be a very wet spring.
- Hjelm- Attended the Soil Health conference, as well as the Sustainability and Ag. NW Iowa Nutrient Management Summit.
- Pope- Weather has been very sporadic.
- Hofmann- Gravel roads are not faring well.
- Query- Fields are very muddy; it might be a rough spring.
- Carlson- New wind turban farm coming to the area this summer. It will bring in 300 workers to install, and a big concern is where these workers will be housed.
- Ellis- Just returned from Arizona. Watershed meetings coming up that Ellis plans on attending.

Adjournment

Ellis adjourned the meeting at 11:16 a.m.