

Minutes for June 12th, 2023

SSCWQC Members Called In/Present

Colleen Miller, Paula Ellis, John Tuthill, Matt Bormann, Steve Hofmann, Dennis Carlson

DSCWQ Staff

Susan Kozak, Jake Hansen, Will Myers, Vince Sitzmann, Nicky McEuen

Partners Present

Catherine Delong (ISU), Jaia Fischer (NRCS), Kyle Ament (DNR)

Miller called the meeting to order at 3:28 p.m.

2023-16 Hofmann moved to approve the agenda; Miller seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2023-17 Ellis moved to approve the April 6th, 2023, meeting minutes; Hofmann seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Bureau Chief Reports (Reports on file)

Field Services –Myers

Myers highlighted the following topics in his report;

- Finalizing watershed project agreements for FY24
- SWCDs are currently hosting 16 summer interns with orientation starting June 8th
- Deborah Morgan-Lennie has been hired as the new SE Field Representative

Mines and Minerals – Sitzmann

Sitzmann highlighted the following topics in his report;

- There are currently 6 active construction projects
- Pathfinders submitted an award nomination to office staff for the Patrick AML site
- AML staff held a field day at the Kuiper site in Marion County

Water Resources - Hansen

Hansen highlighted the following topics in his report;

- The next WRCC meeting will be June 23rd and a WPAC meeting on June 29th
- Drew Weisskopf-Desmet was hired as an Environmental Specialist with his first day on May 12th
- Staff has been meeting with partners to clarify the “Batch and Build” process

Director’s Report – Kozak

Kozak highlighted the following topics in her report;

- The May Employee of the month was awarded to Gina Parker, the CA in Clayton County
- IDALs is finalizing the new expansion of the Taylor Co. WQI project
- Staff worked to develop new target areas for cover crop adoption

Partner Reports (Reports on file)

Conservation Districts of Iowa - Whitaker

No formal report – discussion had at joint meeting

Engineers – Bjerke

No Report

Iowa Department of Natural Resources –Ament

Ament highlighted the following topics in his report;

- DNR 319 program receives \$5 million in requests for 319 Watershed Projects
- Underserved farmer to farmer grant applications are under review, expected to be announced in July
- The streambank restoration at Yellow River State Forest is now complete

Iowa State Extension – Delong

DeLong highlighted the following items in her report;

- The Iowa Watershed Academy provides learning and networking opportunities for coordinators in the state
- The Native Iowa Woodland Understorey Restoration page is available to help you decide what native plants would be best to plant on your property

Natural Resources Conservation Service – Fischer

Fischer highlighted the following items in her report;

- The cutoff for new FY23 CSP, FY23 IRA-CSP, and FY23 OTI applications is June 15th 2023
- The notice of finding opportunity for RCPP was announced and proposals are due August 18th 2023
- There are 27 projects that involve Iowa through the Climate Smart Commodities program

Business

Subcommittee Reports

- District Operations -
 - 5 year plan review;
 - Adair
 - Clinton
 - Emmet
 - Harrison
 - Henry
 - Keokuk
 - Lyon
 - Monroe
 - Ringgold
 - Taylor
 - Union
 - Wapello
 - West Pottawattamie

2023-18 Ellis moved to approve the 5 year plans listed above. Bormann seconded. Motioned carried unanimously.

- SSCWQC Innovation and Demonstration Grant Application Review
 - The committee reviewed the FY24 Grant applications suggested by the District Operations Subcommittee. With unanimous agreement the committee agreed to fund the following grants.
 - ▲ Allamakee SWCD-Kernza
 - ▲ East Pottawattamie Soil Health and Conservation Education Plan
 - ▲ UNI-Update Statewide LiDAR
 - ▲ PFI-Leveraging Relationships Drives Non-Operating Landowners to Implement Conservation Practices

2023-19 Ellis moved to approve the FY24 Innovation & Demonstration Grant applications presented by the subcommittee. Bormann seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

SSCWQC Member Reports

- Hofmann- The hay crop is 1/3 of what it should have been, due to the lack of rain.
- Tuthill- Local area is very dry however, as you move west you see improvement in crops. With high winds you can see the downfall of vertical till.
- Carlson- Crops and new trees are looking great. We are seeing the peak of emerald ash borer infestations.
- Ellis- Presented to a 2nd grade classroom on the benefits of cover crops. Working with the Common Grounds group doing a Farm to Fork tour.
- Miller- NW Iowa got a good amount of rain, with that, you could really see the benefit of no-till practices.
- Bormann- Discussed the sociological issue of “how farmers make decisions”.

Miller adjourned the meeting at 4:27 p.m.

Colleen Miller, SSCWQC Chair

Susan Kozak, DSCWQ Division Director