

JOINT MEETING MINUTES

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

And

Kentucky Association of Conservation Districts

Monday January 24, 2022 – 9:00 AM

Zoom meeting ID: 845 5362 3580 Passcode: SWCC

In attendance for SWCC: Mr. Danny Shipley, Chair; Mr. Bill Harned; Mr. Jim Morris; Ms. Denise Hoffman; Mr. Aaron Lewis; and Mr. Lenville Martin.

In attendance for KACD: Mr. Shane Wells, President; Mr. Allan Bryant, Vice President; Mr. Ted Jessup, Treasure; Mr. David Rowlett, Past President; Mr. Steve Coleman; Mr. Doug Hensley; Mr. Doug DeRossett; Mr. Jeff Rice; Mr. Rhodes Hester; Mr. Roy Reynolds; Ms. Crystal Renfro; and Dr. Ernie Ezell.

Others Present: Ms. Paulette Akers, Division of Conservation; Ms. Johnna McHugh, Division of Conservation; Mr. Gordon R. Slone, Kentucky Department for Natural Resources; Mr. Steve Kull, Kentucky Division of Forestry; Ms. Sonya Keith, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Mr. Tim Hughes, Kentucky Department of Agriculture; Mr. Greg Stone, Natural Resources Conservation Service; Mr. John Chism, Kentucky Department of Agriculture; Ms. Kathleen Saunier, Energy Environment Cabinet OLS; Mr. Martin Williams, Kentucky Office of Ag Policy; Mr. Dean Schamore, Farm Service Agency; and Mr. Jeff Gravitt, Division of Conservation.

Quorum was met.

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

SWCC Minutes from the November 1, 2021 Meeting – A motion was made to approve the November 1st meeting minutes was made by Mr. Bill Harned. Mr. Lenville Martin seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

SWCC Minutes from the November 15, 2021 Meeting – A motion was made to approve the November 15th meeting minutes by Mr. Lenville Martin. Mr. Jim Morris seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

KACD Minutes from the November 18, 2021 Meeting – A motion was made by Mr. David Rowlett to approve the November meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Roy Reynolds seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

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

KACD Foundation Account Report – Mr. Ted Jessup gave an overview of the year-to-date of the Foundation Account. Mr. Ted Jessup made a motion to approve, and Mr. Doug DeRossett second the motion. **Motion carried.**

KACD Correspondence – Ms. Crystal Renfro informed the board that the Kentucky FFA Association is requesting a donation for the 2022 National Land Judging contest. Mr. Roy Reynolds suggested that \$400.00 dollars be allocated to the winning team. Mr. Roy Reynolds made the motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Rhodes Hester. **Motion carried.**

SWCC Correspondence – Ms. Paulette Akers informed the Commission that Henry County received an environmental grant last year. They have been using the funds for lime and fertilizer projects. Henry County would like to shift part of these funds to do tree seedling purchase. Henry County will continue the lime and fertilizer program but would use the funds to purchase tree seedlings as well. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Jim Morris and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

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. Ms. Denise Hoffman seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**
- **Approval of Equipment Loan Requests** – None presented.

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

- **Approval of vacancy petitions** – Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the following requests.
 - Allen County – Marcus Landers to fill unexpired term from Maxie Brown (2022), (1 petition).
 - Clay County – Tim Lunsford to fill unexpired term from Jo Ann Corum (2024), (1 petition).
 - Fleming County – Cassie Porter to fill unexpired term from Robert Fossett (2022), (1 petition).
 - Logan County - Charles Miles Jr. to fill unexpired term (2024), (1 petition).
 - Pulaski County – Mark Burnett to fill unexpired term from Wayne Cox (2022), (3 petitions).

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 to report.

Ms. Johnna McHugh asked the Commission how it would like to have future vacancy petitions reported so the Commission members are aware of how many petitions were received by the conservation districts. The Commission asked that the number of petitions submitted be included with the request to fill the vacancy.

Agriculture District Program - Ms. Johnna McHugh presented the report with copies distributed. Two (2) new petitions were presented to the Commission for consideration for a total of 731.48 acres.

1. Boyle County (Petition No. 011-23) – 275.25 acres. Motion to approve was made by Ms. Denise Hoffman and was seconded by Mr. Lenville Martin. **Motion carried.**
2. Campbell County (Petition No. 019-11 (A14)) – 456.23 acres. Motion to approve was made by Mr. Jim Morris and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

Six (6) new agricultural districts have been submitted to the commission for five-year recertification for a total of 11,201.50 acres.

COUNTY	PETITION NO.	ACRES
Campbell	019.11	3,738.54
Campbell	019-16	517.00
Christian	024-09	4,278.86
Henderson	051-02	1,977.45
Henderson	051-07	604.65
Scott	105-06	85.00

A motion to approve the above 6 recertifications was made by Mr. Jim Morris and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman. **Motion carried.**

NACD Director’s Report - Mr. Jeff Rice discussed the following with the board:

- NACD annual meeting will be held in two weeks.
 - Resolutions will be voted on.
- EQIP, CSP, and cover crop programs.
- Southeast NACD convention will be held this July in Puerto Rico
- More money coming in conservation.

Old Business –

- AWQA Farmer-at-large nominee – Ms. Paulette Akers stated that two out of the last three nominees have completed their applications. We are still holding on Mr. Fred Sipes to complete his application. Mr. Bill Harned stated he will reach out to Mr. Fred Sipes to see if any help is needed.
- Nicholas County update – Ms. Paulette Akers stated that the total cost for the Nicholas Counties multiple year audit will be \$15,840.00. Mr. Jim Morris made a motion to approve the total cost of the Nicholas County audit. Mr. Lenville Martin seconded the motion. **Motion carried.**

New Business -

- NACD Spring Fly-in – Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following with the board.
 - Will be held on March 22nd.
 - Meeting will be held via Zoom.

- KACD Area meeting update – Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following with the board.
 - Upcoming KACD meetings.
 - Area 1 will be held on March 1st.
 - Area 2 will be held on March 2nd.
 - Area 3 will be held on March 10th.
 - Area 6 will be held on March 8th.
 - ❖ Meetings will be held as a hybrid meeting (both in person and Zoom).
- 2022 State Cost Share approval – Ms. Paulette Akers discussed the following State Cost Share information with the Commission before the Commission decides which option to approve:
 - The Kentucky General Assembly allocated \$2,516,100 in state cost share funding for the fiscal year 2022. Due to canceled practices, \$4,614,248.27 is currently unobligated.
 - Districts submitted 1016 applications requesting \$12,766,485.21 in state cost share, although many applications requested funds greater than those allowed for the practice or multiple applications for the same applicant. When practice caps were corrected and multiples removed, total funds requested were 1000 individuals for \$11,146,582.80 with an average request of \$11,146.58.
 - The majority of applications were for the Livestock Pastureland practices (761 applications). 214 applications were for Cropland practices, 18 for Livestock AFO and 7 Forestland.

Ms. Paulette Akers made the following recommendations:

- Option 1 - Applicants with scores of 60 or higher be funded for a total allocation of \$3,645,880.72 to 337 applicants. Of the 337 – 247 pastureland, 16 AFO, 73 cropland and 1 forestland.
- Option 2 – Applicants with scores of 59 or higher be funded for a total allocation of \$4,058,631.17 to 367 applicants. Of the 367 – 264 pastureland, 16 AFO, 86 cropland and 1 forestland.
- Option 3 – Applicants with scores of 58 or higher be funded for a total allocation of \$4,301,477.16 to 387 applicants. Of the 387- 279 pastureland, 16 AFO, 91 cropland, and 1 forestland

A motion to approve option 3 was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Ms. Denise Hoffman.

Motion carried.

Ms. Paulette Akers asked the Commission to approve the cutoff date of November 15th for State Cost Share submissions for 2022. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Aaron Lewis and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

- 2022 Environmental Grants - Ms. Paulette Akers discussed the following Environmental Grant information with the Commission before the Commission decides which option to approve:
 - Environmental Grants are funded out of the Ky Department of Agriculture pesticide funds and limited to \$7,500 per district per year. The KDA has been supporting this program at \$300,000 per year. The current balance in the account is \$925,242.97. We currently have allotment to spend \$670,000. Last year \$568,200 was awarded.
 - The current funding level allotment pulls \$370,000 each year from old funds. Funding at this pace will allow the program to proceed for 2 more years before it is limited to \$300,000 per year.

Ms. Paulette Akers made the following recommendations:

- Option 1 – Fund all of the requests as submitted. Funds 80 districts with \$615,500.
- Option 2 – Fund all of the requests that were received on time. Funds 79 districts with \$588,000.
- Option 3 - Fund only Dead Animal Removal. Funds 49 districts with \$367,500.

And establish a cut-off for the next round of funding at November 15, 2022

A motion to approve option 2 and establish November 15th as the cutoff date was made by Mr. Jim Morris and was seconded by Mr. Bill Harned. **Motion carried.**

Agency Reports –

- Division of Conservation Report – Ms. Paulette Akers discussed the following with the Commission:
 - No in-person meeting currently due to Covid.

Ms. Paulette Akers turned the floor over to Ms. Johnna McHugh. Ms. Johnna McHugh discussed the following with the Commission:

- Jim Claypool Art and Writing contest
 - Numbers are down from previous years but up from last year's numbers.
 - Thanked KACD for judging the contest.
- Envirothon
 - State Envirothon will be held at the North Central 4H Camp in Nicholas County."
 - Training will be held in March at Feltner 4H camp and at Green County Cattlemen Association property.
 - Regional competitions will be held in April at Bernheim and at Maywoods in Garrard County.
 - Planning for the competition to be held in-person, but will shift to virtual if needed
- Supervisor Training
 - There is no plan for in-person meetings. The field staff are planning for virtual trainings to be held this spring.

- KACD – Ms. Crystal Renfro discussed the following with the board:
 - KACD/NRCS TA Grants
 - Total of 27 people on board.
 - New contract with Allen County.
 - Currently working on 3 possible contracts with other counties.
 - Still have a few open spots available.
 - Currently having employee turnover.
 - NACD Southeast region meeting will be held in July.
 - Federal audits.
 - Cost is between \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00.
 - Still looking for a location to store KACD tree bags.
 - Current Legislative Priorities.
 - Senate Bill 53 and 54.
 - State Cost Share.
 - Direct Aid.

Mr. Steve Coleman asked the board to authorize the Executive Committee to sign and engage a letter with the auditing firm for \$2,500 or less for service's to be rendered. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Steve Coleman and was seconded by Mr. Doug Hensley. **Motion carried.**

Ms. Crystal Renfro asked the board to approve the amount of \$19,564.12 to Estill County Conservation District for services rendered. A motion to approve was made by Mr. Steve Coleman and was seconded by Mr. Roy Reynolds. **Motion carried.**

- KACDE – Natalie Browning -Not attended.
- KACD Auxiliary – Lisa Mullins – Not attended.
- Natural Resources Conservation Service – Mr. Greg Stone discussed the following with the Board:
 - NRCS Tornado response.
 - Woodlands heavily impacted.
 - Funds available per acre for farmers to help with cleanup of downed trees to help restore safe conditions.
 - EWPS – Emergency Watershed Protection Program.
 - Partnership between NRCS and FSA.
 - Working toward reopening NRCS USDA offices.
- Farm Service Agency - Mr. Shane Wells introduced Mr. Dean Schamore, the new FSA Director. Mr. Dean Schamore gave an overview of his past accomplishments and discussed his plans going forward with FSA.

- Department for Natural Resources – Ms. Paulette Akers spoke on behalf of Mr. Gordon Slone. Ms. Paulette Akers discussed the following with the Board:
 - Division of Oil and Gas to receive infrastructure funds to plug abandoned wells.
 - With the additional funds, the Division of Oil and Gas will be able to plug close to 1,000 wells as opposed to 200 per year with past funding.
- Kentucky Office of Ag Policy – Mr. Martin Williams discussed the following with the board-
 - County Ag Investment Program.
 - Tobacco Master Settlement fund update.
 - Updated the Kentucky Office of Ag Policy producer application for the County Ag Investment Program.
- Kentucky Department of Agriculture – Mr. Tim Hughes discussed the following with the board:
 - KDA and Kentucky Farm Bureau tornado requests and responses.
 - Kentucky Agriculture Disaster Assistance Program.
 - \$70,000.00 in farmer appreciation grants.
 - Athlete scholarship program.
 - Application deadline is January 31st.
 - Total of \$731,000 taken in by donations for farm tag licensees.
 - KDA attention to forest and wind resources.
 - KDA is currently dealing with employee turnovers.
- University of Kentucky, CAFE – Dr. Steve Higgins – Not attended.
- Division of Forestry – Mr. Steve Kull discussed the following with the board:
 - Division of Forestry tornado response.
 - FSA and NRCS funding for recovery.
 - Over 7,000 acres impacted.
 - FSA and NRCS funds.
 - Forest restoration plan.
 - KACD tree bag storage options.
 - DOF tree seedling distribution.
 - Approximately 100,000 seedlings still available to sell
- Kentucky Farm Bureau – Kyle Kelly – Not attended.

Mr. Shane Wells stated he will be in Frankfort on the January 26th to talk to Senator Hornback to talk about Senate Bill 53 and 54.

A motion to adjourn the SWCC meeting was made by Mr. Bill Harned and was seconded by Mr. Jim Morris. **Motion carried.**

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

Next SWCC meeting is April 18th at 9:00 am via Zoom

Next KACD meeting is March 17th at 9:30 am

