

**2024 March
-McLean County SWCD Minutes**

The Board of Directors of the McLean County SWCD had their regular board meeting on March 13, 2024, at the USDA Service Center in Normal. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mike Kelley at 7:34 a.m. Directors present were Irvin Bane, Sally Breese, Jeff Mathews, Howard Heatherwick and Associate Director Garrett Conaty. District employees present were Brett Irwin, Ross Fogle and Jackie Kraft. FSA County Committee members Patrick Killian and Cheryl Sommer were present. Aidan Walton with Precision Conservation Management was present. NRCS District Conservationist Adam Wyant was also present.

~New and Beginning Farmer Meeting:

Patrick Killian and Cheryl Sommer introduced themselves to the board and discussed their thoughts on the planned New and Beginning Farmer Meeting. They were on board with having a meeting in our county and discussed promotional ideas with the board such as social media outreach and contacting commercial agriculture lenders. Ross laid out a meeting outline with them and they will follow up with Jonathan Evers, McLean County FSA Executive Director, at their County Committee Meeting on April 9.

~Financials/Minutes:

Irvin motioned to approve the February minutes as written. Howard seconded. Motion carried. Irvin made a motion to approve the March checks for payment, Howard seconded. Motion carried. Jeff made a motion to approve the financials as written. Irvin seconded. Motion carried.

~Aidan presented updates from PCM: Hosted a Cover Crop 101 meeting in Woodford County. Presented a PCM 2023 Data Summary showing different farming practices with PCM growers and how they related to ROI. Within Aidan's territory of Ford, LaSalle, Livingston, Logan, McLean, Tazewell & Woodford counties there are currently 95 growers and approximately 100,000 acres that are signed up through PCM.

~Jackie gave the Watershed report as written: No comments yet from IEPA on Watershed Plan Update 319 grant. Waiting on approval of Constructed Wetland and Saturated Buffer designs for Evergreen Lake and a Rain Garden at Lake Bloomington from IEPA. A site showing for these projects for bid is tentatively scheduled for April 1. Ross's TA Grant Agreement was approved for \$39,400. A State of the Lakes presentation is scheduled for April 18 at Davis Lodge.

~Brett gave the District report as written: 2024 PFC first sign-up deadline set for March 29, 2024. Spring Tree and Fish sale order forms are complete and being distributed in E-Newsletter, Spring Newsletter, and Tree and Fish Direct mailing list. Title Commitment being completed by Chicago Title Insurance Company for Jon Thompson CREP easement. Tom Herr with Dunn Law Firm will be completing the Legal Review once Title Commitment is completed.

~Ross gave the Watershed report as written: March E-Newsletter campaign has been developed and distributed. So far, we have 26 Newsletter sponsors for 2024 totaling \$3600 in donations. Spring newsletter has been distributed. Pheasants Forever Banquet was a success with over 300 people in attendance.

~Adam gave the NRCS report as written: Currently working on ranking EQIP applications for the upcoming March 22 ranking deadline. CSP renewal application deadline for expiring 2020 contracts is May 3. First CRP batching period is open until March 15.

~New Business: The next Board Meeting was set for April 10 at 7:30 a.m. at the USDA Service Center in Normal. The meeting adjourned at 8:54 a.m.