**Coles County SWCD
Board Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2023**

The August board meeting of the Coles County SWCD was held on Tuesday, August 8th, 2023, at the USDA Service Center in Charleston.

**Directors Present:**Todd Easton, Bill Tapella, and J.C. Doty

**Associate Directors:**None

**SWCD Staff:**Lauren Spaniol

**Guests:**None

**Agenda:**Easton called the meeting to order at 7:33am. The agenda was reviewed. Doty made a motion to approve the agenda. Tapella seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Minutes:**Minutes from the July meeting were reviewed. Doty made a motion to approve the minutes. Tapella seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Timesheets:**Employee timesheets were reviewed.

**Travel Reports:**Employee travel reports were reviewed. Tapella made a motion to approve the travel report. Doty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Financial Reports:**Tapella made a motion to consult the accountant regarding the financial status of the district and to ensure everything is up to date and ready for the transition to the new AC. Doty seconded the motion. The motion carried. July’s financial reports will be reviewed at the August meeting after consultation with the accountant.

**Correspondence:**None

**Business:**

**No Action Required:**The AISWCD Annual Summer Conference was discussed. Easton, Doty, and Spaniol all attended and provided a summary of the event.

Bryson Gibson has accepted the Administrative Coordinator/Education Coordinator position and will be coming in to fill out onboarding paperwork after the meeting. His anticipated start dates is Aug 14, 2023.

**Action Required:**The draft of the Annual Plan of Work was reviewed. No changes to the presented draft were suggested. Tapella motioned to submit the APW as presented. Doty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The Lincoln Heritage Pheasant’s Forever Banquet is August 26, 2023. Tapella motioned that we pledge support at the level we have in the past, which is the Bronze level package which includes a quarter-page advertisement in the banquet program as well as a pair of tickets to the dinner. Doty seconded the motion. The motion carried. Easton offered to attend the meeting as the SWCD representative.

Spaniol requested to attend the National Land Conservation Conference in Portland, Oregon on Sep 7-10th. She was offered an unsolicited grant which covered a portion of her expenses (registration for the conference and a portion of travel costs), and with board approval will request an additional $500 in training funds from IDOA to cover the remaining expenses. Tapella motioned to approve her attendance at the conference and the training fund application. Doty seconded the motion. The motion carried.

A researcher from the Electric Power Research Institute (EPRI) who is a native of Coles County requested a letter of support from the district for a research proposal for which she is seeking a USDA Pollinator Health Grant. Spaniol presented the project overview and a draft letter of support to the board. Doty motioned to provide a letter of support as drafted. Tapella seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Staff Reports:**Lauren Spaniol’s report is attached.

**Open Discussion:**It was discussed that associate directors are a desirable part of the composition of our organization, and that it would be beneficial in the future to try to recruit some new associate directors to serve. The Coles County SWCD Foundation was also discussed. It has been quite a while since a Foundation meeting was held due to the COVID pandemic. All were in agreement that a meeting of the Foundation should be held soon, possibly after harvest this fall.

**Upcoming Events:**“Pollinator Habitat Field Day” at Ashmore Community Center, Aug 10th at 9AM
Lincoln Heritage PF Banquet at Mattoon Eagles, Aug 26th at 5PM
Pond Management Seminar at Lincoln Log Cabin State Historic Site, Aug 30th at 5PM

**Closing:**Tapella made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Doty seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:20AM.

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Bill Janes, Chairman