***Minutes Of April 22, 2025, LaGrange County SWCD Board of Supervisors Public Meeting***

*The LaGrange County Soil & Water Conservation District held a board meeting on April 22, 2025, at ParGil Natural Resources Learning Center, 2335 N State Road 9, LaGrange, IN 46761. The meeting was called to order by R.D. Wolheter, (Chairman) at 6:02 p.m. Those in attendance were Scott Beecher, (Vice Chairman); Aaron Fugate and Monroe Raber, Ron Vaughn; (Board Supervisors); Martin Franke, (District Manager); Kyle Burchett, (Program / Educator); Amy Renkenberger, (Office Coordinator),Steve Weideman; and Mike Holcomb, (Associate Supervisors); Geoff Wedwaldt, (Resident Fish/Royer Lake); Heath Hurst, (ISDA Resource Specialist); Pat Wiltshire,(Associate Supervisor/ Water Quality Volunteer); Jeff Burbrink, ( Natural Resources Educator/Purdue Extension), and Karen Eagleson; (LaGrange County Council Member).*

***Minutes:*** *Minutes of March 25, 2025: The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and Monroe mentioned that on page (1) second to the last paragraph the word (while) needed to be added instead of the word (by****). Monroe moved to approve the minutes as corrected, seconded by Ron, and passed by the unanimous voice vote of the Board.***

***Financial Report:*** *Amy presented the Financial Report and there were no changes or corrections.* ***Motion by Aaron to approve the financial report as presented by Amy, seconded by Monroe, approved by unanimous voice vote of the Board***

***Agency Reports: Erica Absent-***

***Purdue Extension:*** *Jeff Burbrink mentioned that Andy Mast will be hosting a field day on August 5th at his home, and that Purdue will have an Organic Specialist there to speak as well. Jeff also mentioned that the Purdue Extension office has an opening if you know anyone interested in this position.*

***County Council Report:*** *Karen Eagleson commented that the county is still working on the compost site. Aaron commented that he has 4-6 workers at the site trying to get it open, but they are making lots of progress.*

***County Commissioners Report****:* ***Kevin Absent-***

***ISDA****: Heath mentioned that the governor signed the first bill. He also mentioned that ISDA has opened a portal for clients to view and has funding information available.*

***OLD BUSINESS:***

***Pretty Lake****: Ron commented that Dr. Conway is still wanting to test the water at Diehl Ditch starting at the end of May, so that the weather conditions will remain about the same. Dr. Conway is planning on the last test being done in July then trying to solve the problem.*

***E Coli Concerns: fish/ Royer Lake:*** *Geoff Wedwaldt also spoke with Dr. Conway about his plans to conduct a three-phase-controlled data study at the DeBow Ditch and will report back at the next board meeting. Dr. Conway was still waiting for further E Coli test results.*

***Water Testing Program:*** *Pat mentioned that the 2025 (SWQMP) Water Quality Monitoring Program would start on April 30,2025. He also mentioned that Camille would be coming back to her position soon.*

***Erosion Control:*** *Kyle mentioned seventeen erosion control projects on file for this year. He mentioned that he had a few pamphlets to hand out that he picked up at the Pay Dirt event in Elkhart. Kyle mentioned that on April 15,2025 that Amy, Heath along with himself drove the county and entered in the data for the tillage transect.*

*Martin mentioned an issue over by Cooks Bison Ranch, along with some other culvert replacement projects being done in the area.*

***New Business/Plan of Work:*** *Amy mentioned that**the District had been quite busy with several school programs all over the county. She also commented on the fact she was finishing up on tree sales and several people had to be called and reminded to pick up their trees. The board then discussed charging people if they do not get them picked up on time, or charging a delivery fee for next year’s tree sale.*

*Martin mentioned the costs of getting the signs for Olive B. Cole Grant, to put up at the different waterways’ crossings. He said they would like to purchase 18 x 36 signs with at least four-inch letters so that they would be legible.*

***Education Programs****: Kyle mentioned that he has several schools’ programs scheduled, and that he had two Conservation Education awards that needed to be approved****. Scott moved to award Noah Owsley and Braden Rogers with the awards for 2025, seconded by Aaron. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote of the board.***

***SWCD Policy Manual:*** *Martin asked the board to read through all the highlighted pages and let him know if they saw any other corrections that needed to be made****. Scott moved to adopt the whole Internal Controls Policy for 2025 that Martin presented with the changes, seconded by Ron. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote of the board.***

***Wildlife Food Plot Seed:*** *Martin mentioned**that Amy had been in contact with Scott Kimmel who was helping in place of Dave Hurley with the Pheasant’s Forever Food Plot Seed. Amy stated that she had a list of people to contact as soon as Scott confirms that the seed is available.*

***Items from the Floor****: Ron asked about the Sexual Harassment Training for the Board Members.*

*Steve mentioned that he is willing to help fund the wildflower seed May fest at Shipshewana Lake.*

*Pat mentioned that the Saint Joe River Basin Commission would be holding a Symposium on May 16th at the YMCA Camp Potawatomi.*

*Aaron mentioned that he needs people to help mow the county this year if we know anyone interested.*

*R.D. said it was very nice to see Jeff Burbrink and Mike Holcomb attend the meeting.*

***Meeting adjourned: By*** *R.D. Wolheter, 7:36 pm*

***Minutes written and typed by Amy Renkenberger***

*\_\_\_\_\_as submitted \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as revised.*

*R.D. Wolheter, SWCD Board Chairman*

*Scott Beecher, SWCD Vice Chairman*

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*Ron Vaughn, SWCD Board Supervisor*

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*Monroe Raber, SWCD Board Supervisor*

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*Aaron Fugate, SWCD Board Supervisor*

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