

Ross Soil & Water Conservation District
Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting
Wednesday February 8, 2023
Ross County Service Center Conference Room D

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The board of supervisors met at the Ross County Service Center in conference room D. The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. by presiding officer, Chairman Brice Acton.

District Supervisors present in person:

Chair Brice Acton, Supervisor Nancy Ames, Treasurer Philip Gray, Vice Chair Pam Snyder

District Supervisor not present: Secretary Mike Anderson

District Staff present in person:

JT Flowers, Engineering Tech
Ben Givens, Engineering Tech
Bob Neal, District Administrator
Greg Rouse, GIS Coordinator
Tabby Sharp, Engineering Tech

Professional Staff present: ODA Specialist Cody Hacker, ODA Region 4 Watershed Mgr. Chris Pancake

Guest present: Heather "Billie" Helterbrand

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Supervisors reviewed the previous meeting minutes. Philip Gray moved to approve the January minutes as presented. Nancy Ames seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS

TREASURER'S REPORT

The administrator presented details of the February treasurer's report listing bills paid and bills to be paid. The report now itemizes monthly QuickBooks sales. A large influx into the Special Fund represented county funding and the state match quarterly payment. The financial obligation report increased to \$90,489.78 under new 2023 pay rates. Philip Gray moved to approve the treasurer's report and pay bills in the amount of exactly \$41,097.20. Brice Acton seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

Education Committee:

The administrator reported on an adventurous line up in the education pipeline including:

- 401 Meeting - regional EPA meeting in Pike County today (2/8/23) with over 12 from Ross County
- Envirothon - Registration info sent to FFA clubs and science teachers - new reply from Paint Valley
- Discussing presentations for Unioto Middle School
- Responding to 4H group request for a speaker or field trip
- Developing programs for children this summer at the Frankfort library branch
- March UAV Workshop

- Pump House Earth Day
- Woodlands
- Pheasants Forever Banquet
- FFA Career Day

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

The administrator requested feedback on new reporting methods and reported:

- The tree sale is going very well with a backload of orders
- Wildlife specialist grant will increase from \$17,500 to \$20,000
- GIS provided EMA search maps and also provided the Sheriff's office with several support maps
- More GIS drone flying with Greg, Ben and Tabby
- Greg Wells meeting with Ben and Tabby to discuss job approval authority

FOR THE RECORD

1/05/2023 - sent inventory sheet to commissioners

1/12/2023 - filed for OFSWCD contribution agreement in the amount of \$7,365

1/17/2023 - paid \$32.16 sales tax on \$446.92 of taxable sales from 7/1/22-12/31/22

1/18/2023 - mailed David Edgington letter approved at January meeting

1/20/2023 - received and distributed W-2 forms

1/26/2023 - posted PERRP report (worker's comp no injury report)

1/31/2023 - entries complete for 2022 OSWCC report

DC REPORT

District Conservationist Landry Roe reported:

- Contracts with a wide variety of projects are among 25-30 EQIP applications
- More than a dozen CSP payments that had been deferred are now being processed
- Pheasants Forever biologist Garret Caudill has been conducting CRP reenroll assessments
- NRCS Soil Con Trenton Collins and Landry will attend training
- The NRCS office is addressing findings from the recent "5%" spot check evaluation

ODA REPORT

Cody Hacker announced the new appointee as ODA chief is Brian Baldrige from Adams County.

WATERSHED REPORT

Chris Pancake reported plan development continues as the managers focus on BMP's appropriate for our region, and the implementation or barriers to implementation. Producers will see a renewed effort on soil testing, the first step in a Voluntary Nutrient Management Plan (VNMP) that will be required for possible anticipated H2Ohio funding in SFY24.

STAFF AND SUPERVISOR COMMENTS

Greg Rouse has been asked to serve on a committee for EMS, providing technical advice on a request for proposal from EMA and townships. The consensus of the board is that there is no conflict of interest.

The administrator noted the 7-year-old Epson printer has stopped working. There is no local or affordable repair support. The district may need to buy a low end printer as a back up to the Xerox.

OLD BUSINESS

ANNUAL MEETING

BANQUET

Supervisors reviewed the fairgrounds rental agreement. No discount was requested since last year's fee was waived. Brice Acton moved to pay the \$300 rental fee. Nancy Ames seconded. Discussion included

the centrality and accessibility of other past locations including the service center available at no fee. The motion passed unanimously.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Supervisors discussed possible community members to approach. Brice announced his intention to run effectively tasking the committee to recruit at least one more candidate.

SUPERVISOR APPOINTMENT

Brice Acton read a resignation letter from Mike Anderson. Philip Gray moved to accept the resignation. Nancy Ames seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Brice appointed Pam Snyder as acting Secretary. Brice explained the appointment process including approval by the OSWCC which could approve an appointment at their meetings in February or July. Brice introduced the board to meeting guest Billie Helterbrand, describing her as a former FSA employee with a firm understanding of conservation programs. Brice Acton moved to appoint Heather “Billie” Helterbrand to the board of supervisors to complete Mike Anderson’s term expiring 12/31/2025. Philip Gray seconded. After supervisors and staff discussed the unique and unprecedented situation of a former partner employee joining the board, supervisors proceeded to the roll call vote on the motion. Acton, yes; Ames, yes; Gray, yes; Snyder, yes. The motion passed unanimously.

COOPERATOR OF THE YEAR

The administrator presented reports to begin the process to select a cooperator of the year award winner at the annual meeting. Supervisors reviewed time spent on cooperators and installed BMP’s.

NEW BUSINESS

AUTO CAD

GIS Coordinator Greg Rouse presented price quotes to renew the district’s AutoCAD design software. The current structure of sharing 2 licenses among 3 computers is no longer offered. A three-year renewal package includes support on 4 licenses for the price of 3. Brice Acton moved to renew for three years the district AutoCAD license and authorize the purchase in the amount of \$8,580.32. Pam Snyder seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

LAEPP

The administrator reported there were no obstructions for the 2 participants in the LAEPP 2022 funding round. Anthony Drummond responded in person to a deadline letter from ODA. One intent to apply form has been issued to a resident for the 2023 funding round and the staff is anticipating more. The district received the updated 2023 cooperative agreement with no significant changes. Brice Acton moved to approve the LAEPP Cooperative Agreement with ODA for 2023 and direct the administrator to sign and return the document. Pam Snyder seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

OUTREACH

The administrator requested board authorization for several projects discussed earlier in the meeting. Brice Acton moved to approve outreach events including:

- Authorize approximately \$800 for spring newsletter to publicize fish sale
- Partner with Midwest Aerial to hold an ag tech workshop featuring drone sprayers
- Partner with Ross county garden clubs to display at Pump House Earth Day festival, authorize \$25 registration and approximately \$650 in spending for promotional items
- Partner with OSU Extension to participate in an owner woodlands workshop in 2023
- Purchase the silver level Pheasants Forever banquet package in the amount of \$150
- Partner with Farm Bureau to co-sponsor FFA Career Day and authorize a logo contest
- Authorize Greg Rouse to serve on EMS committee writing a request for proposals

Nancy Ames second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW HIRE EVALUATION

The administrator reported conducting Tabby’s 6-month evaluation according to policy on January 6th. Philip Gray moved to approve the 6-month evaluation for Tabitha L. Sharp. Brice Acton seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

OASWCDE

The administrator presented the annual appeal for membership from the Ohio Association of Soil and Water Conservation District Employees (OASWCDE). Brice Acton moved to authorize membership for any district staff or supervisors interested in joining the OASWCDE. Nancy Ames seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CASH BASIS

The administrator presented preliminary figures for the cash basis report due on March 1st.

TIMBER HARVEST PLANS

Brice Acton moved to accept the staff recommendation to approve the ODNR Division of Forestry Timber Harvest Plan in Harrison Township. Philip Gray seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE

Supervisors reviewed an EPA public notice concerning Piketon before reviewing announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS • CALENDAR

- 2/14 Tree Sale Order Deadline
- 2/20 Office Closed - President’s Day
- 2/20 OFSWCD Partners Conference Director’s Meeting
- 2/21 OFSWCD Partners Conference
- 2/22 OFSWCD Partners Conference (Legislative Breakfast/Delegate Session)
- 3/4 Pheasants Forever Banquet
- 3/8 March Board Meeting
- 3/9 FFA Advisory Committee

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Brice Acton moved to enter executive session to discuss CRP procedures that will include matters required to be kept confidential under federal rules. Nancy Ames seconded. Roll call vote: Acton, yes; Ames, yes; Gray, yes; Snyder, yes. The motion passed unanimously. Supervisors entered executive session at 7:08 p.m. Supervisors returned from executive session at 7:51 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

At the conclusion of business, Nancy Ames moved to adjourn. Brice Acton seconded. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Pam Snyder, Acting Secretary

Brice Acton, Chair

Robert Neal, Administrator

Date