

**Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc.**  
**Annual Business Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 9, 2024**

**MINUTES**

***Meeting Called to Order at 9:41 am***

1. Welcome and Introductions ..... Jeff Baker  
President Jeff Baker called the 81<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc., (IASWCD) to order at 9:41 am. He welcomed and introduced the executive officers:  
Jeff Baker, President; Marc Roberts, Vice-President; Sarah Delbecq, Secretary; Mark Kingma, Treasurer. He also introduced Ed Frazier, Parliamentarian.

2. Seating of Delegates / Roll Call.....Jeff Baker  
Jeff reported that there are 67 delegates present and ready to vote, providing a quorum.  
  
Jeff referred to the proposed meeting rules in the front of the 2024 Delegate Notebook. A vote in favor of adopting the Procedures and Rules was taken. More than two thirds were in favor. No one opposed.

3. Minutes of 2023 Annual Business Meeting ..... Jeff Baker  
Jeff stated that the 2023 minutes were approved during the February 10, 2023 IASWCD Board Meeting in accordance to a bylaw amendment made in 2019.

4. Treasurer’s Report ..... Mark Kingma  
Mark gave the treasurer’s report of assets and liabilities.

President Jeff stated that the **Treasurer’s report would be filed.**

5. Audit Committee Report ..... Mark Kingma  
Mark stated, since 2018, the IASWCD has been engaged in third party audits, as is required by the federal government Single Audit, formerly known as Office of Management and Budget Circular A-133. These audits are required for entities that exceed the threshold of \$750,000 in federal dollars expended in a single fiscal year. A third party audit is currently underway, to be completed this

month. As a reminder, due to the timing overlap with the normal IASWCD audit committee review in December, the board has decided that the federally required third party audits will substitute for the traditional internal IASWCD audit committee review. The federally required audits must be completed in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America, and thus are much more rigorous than our internal audits. The audit findings report will be available upon request from the IASWCD Executive Director. IASWCD brings in a lot of federal grant dollars and that is what makes us subject to those audits.

Acceptance of the Audit Committee Report was presented by Jeff Baker. Vote was unanimous in favor of accepting the Audit Committee Report. No one opposed.

#### 6. Budget Committee Report

Jeff Baker

There are two proposed budgets for 2024. Roger Wenning moved for the adoption of Budget A. Opened for discussion. Discussion was held about the need for additional dues for the IASWCD.

- Ray Chattin, Knox Co requested a roll call vote
- Kyle, Fulton Co suggested a 1-2% increase in dues each year
- Pat Bittner, Vanderburgh Co supports budget A but what about those who can't afford that? Doesn't want anyone to get left behind (Marc – county who doesn't pay dues will still be covered under insurance umbrella; call Jeff if county has trouble paying the dues; no dues, no vote, but can be flexible on dues amount as needed)
- Mike, Porter Co no time to digest this as a district; propose budget B for one year then go back to the drawing board
- John, Dearborn Co the board didn't get the info until recently
- Jeff, Ripley Co - the legislative line item didn't print clearly on the handout; can you clarify what that increase will cover? (Liz – contract service for legislative; Cress Hizer lobby fee; for budget A, an additional \$45K to hire someone who is doing what Les Zimmerman is doing – take full charge of our lobbying duties and coordinate with the association)
- Mark Jordan, Jasper Co feels like we knew about this last fall and opportunities were given to discuss this and the board has been transparent; he appreciates the effort and the opportunity to ask questions; in support of budget A growth

- Jeff clarified the policy about districts' ability to vote based on dues payment – exceptions are possible if district isn't able to pay all their dues
- Marc noted that currently there is \$200,000 in reserve – used to be close to \$400K
- Ryan (Brian?) Kosciusko Co asked if the reserve will be grown back to \$400K level. Marc said the reserve policy will be reviewed at a minimum of every 2 years; discussion can be held in the future about whether districts want to build it back up
- Chris, St. Joe Co is emphatically for Budget B; it's already a large increase; the dues structure and how it will be paid is uncomfortable and having this body decide how they will be paid isn't right
- Jeff Baker – wants to make sure this board/body is representing you the best we can; A is 4K and B is 3K; once that is decided, then we will let districts decide if they want it to be level or variable; it's two issues; two votes and they are related
- Ray Chattin – keep in mind the 10K increase in CWI to each district; not telling you how to spend your money but SSCB holds the purse strings; districts have to spend money to make money
- ?????? - 4X increase in legislative budget – how can that be worth it? Us calling legislators is more effective than hiring a whole person
- Liz remarked that a summary of the strategic plan was sent to all districts and is available on the google drive; marketing/comm, staffing, etc committees will be set up for each portion of the plan, financial stability has been the first focus

A stand vote was held. 53 people stood in favor of Budget A; 13 people stood in favor of Budget B. Budget A passes.

Discussion was held on the issue of a flat dues structure or variable structure. Flat dues structure will be \$4,000 per year per county; variable structure is represented on a handout you have in front of you.

- Jamie Scott, Kosciusko Co wants a flat rate across the board; can work with those who cannot pay it; he is against the formula that was used to determine the variable rate
- Roger Wenning, Decatur Co explained a little more about other states who use the variable formula; some districts are very small and really struggling; this is designed to allow larger ones to help make up for some of those

- David Taylor, Warren Co likes the variable rate; he is from one of the smallest counties, 8K in the whole county; how can I compete against Marion Co?

A stand vote was held. 16 people stood in favor of a flat dues structure. Variable rate structure passes by a large majority.

Jeff Baker encouraged everyone to continue to give input and speak up even if the votes didn't go your way.

7. Resolutions.....Jeff Baker  
None submitted.

President Jeff asked if there were any resolutions from the floor. There were none.

8. Nominating Committee Report Roger Wenning  
Roger Wenning reiterated the nominees and Jeff Baker asked for nominations from the floor. No additional nominations were presented and nominations were closed.

**Slate of Officers was as follows:**

- **For President: Jeff Baker, Warrick County**
- **For Vice President: Marc Roberts, Montgomery County**
- **For Secretary: Sarah Delbecq, DeKalb County**
- **For Treasurer: Mark Kingma, Jasper County**

Each candidate briefly addressed the delegates:

Jeff Baker, a Supervisor from Warrick County, is excited about the opportunity to represent the districts and looks forward to continuing to work with the great districts and excited for the chance to do a better job, especially with communicating.

Marc Roberts – lives in Montgomery County and looks forward to working with Jeff and the rest of the Board. He is looking forward to bringing IRA dollars to conservation in Indiana. He intends to go through and review the bylaws in great detail this year.

Sarah Delbecq, Supervisor from DeKalb County for nearly 9 years, stated that she is happy to continue to be a part of the IASWCD Board and serve as the delegates see fit. She hopes to bridge work being done across the state with individual districts and noted that the state association has a role to play with each district. Sarah is pleased to see everyone at conference and all the enthusiasm from the group and hopes we can take it back to our districts, to the statehouse and everywhere to demonstrate the importance of conservation. All the districts are so very different, but there needs to be more appreciation by the state association to recognize the differences and help all districts advance. Need to find equilibrium and balance.

Mark Kingma, Supervisor from Jasper County, is the NNW region director. He has a very strong conservation ethic and works well with the board. He is looking forward to serving in this capacity. Mark was unable to attend conference last year and is happy to be here this year. He is pleased to serve in this capacity and proud to do so. The executive committee could have made these decisions themselves per the bylaws but chose to bring it to the full group because it felt right.

9. New Business Election Report Jeff Baker

Jeff Baker announced the slate of officers.

- **For President: Jeff Baker, Warrick County**
- **For Vice President: Marc Roberts, Montgomery County**
- **For Secretary: Sarah Delbecq, DeKalb County**
- **For Treasurer: Mark Kingma, Jasper County (not present)**

On a motion by Roger Wenning, Second by Jeff Meiners, the slate of officers put forth by the nominating committee was voted upon and accepted.

10. Other business.....Jeff Baker

- Jeff asked for any additional business from the assembly. There was none.

11. Oath of Office Ray Chattin, SSCB

Ray Chattin, Indiana State Soil Conservation Board, performed the oath of office with the newly elected officers.

They were asked if they agreed to fulfill the duties of their respective offices as stated in the IASWCD bylaws to the best of their ability. They agreed. Ray declared them duly installed as the 2024 Executive Officers of the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

12. Adjournment.....Jeff Baker

Jeff asked for any further business that needed to come before the assembly.  
There was none.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.