

**Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc.**  
**Annual Business Meeting**  
**Tuesday, January 28, 2025**

**MINUTES**

***Meeting Called to Order at 11:03 am***

1. Welcome and Introductions .....Jeff Baker

President Jeff Baker called the 82<sup>nd</sup> meeting of the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc., (IASWCD) to order at 11:03 am. He welcomed and introduced the executive officers: Jeff Baker, President; Marc Roberts, Vice-President; Sarah Delbecq, Secretary (not present); Mark Kingma, Treasurer. He also introduced Ed Frazier, Parliamentarian.

2. Seating of Delegates / Roll Call.....Jeff Baker

Jeff reported that there are 58 delegates present and ready to vote, providing a quorum.

Jeff referred to the proposed meeting rules in the front of the 2025 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 2024 Annual Business Meeting ..... Jeff Baker

Jeff stated that the 2024 minutes were approved during the February 9, 2024 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

Since 2018, the IASWCD has been engaged in third party audits, as is required by the federal government Uniform Guidance 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 Uniform Guidance Audit will be completed this month and the findings will be reported to the Board of Directors once complete.

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 be substituted 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.

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. Resolutions.....Jeff Baker

Jeff reminded everyone that each person may speak twice to each motion for no more than three minutes each time and may not speak the second time until everyone has had a chance to speak the first time.

- 1) The first resolution is from the Monroe County SWCD entitled “*Future Funding Changes.*”

Be it resolved that the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc. “will provide clear expectations for an increase in membership dues. That it be clearly communicated in writing to the Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts at a minimum of 12 months prior to a vote of the membership.”

No discussion. Vote held. The majority is in the affirmative. The resolution is adopted.

- 2) The second resolution is from the Warrick County SWCD entitled “*Powerline Spraying.*”

Be it resolved that the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc. “approach the power companies throughout the state to seek a change of the regulation to eliminate the practice of using chemicals that create bare earth under right-a-ways. We seek a requirement that only allows the use of

chemicals that target woody stems when applying chemicals for management throughout the state of Indiana.”

Discussion was held as follows:

**David Grow**, Crawford County made a motion to amend the resolution to include re-seeding in particular circumstances as necessary. Vote was held on amending the resolution. The majority is in favor and the resolution is amended.

Ron Wathen Floyd County, noted that this is already taking place in some areas, including Harrison County, by local REMCs.

Vote on the resolution was held. The majority is in the affirmative and the resolution passes.

3) The third resolution is from the Kosciusko County SWCD entitled “*Limiting Terms of District Supervisors.*”

Be it resolved that the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc. “will put into place that District Supervisors may serve up to 4 consecutive terms, totaling 12 years. After completing this maximum period, a one-year leave of absence will be required before becoming eligible to serve another set of 4 consecutive terms, totaling 12 years. Terms will be calculated based on the completion of the current term being served. If a supervisor has 12 years or more by the end of their last term, they must take a minimum of one year off before becoming eligible to begin a new term as a District Supervisor.”

Discussion took place as follows:

John **Fielding**, White County, stated that each district should be allowed to handle the issue of term limits on their own

Ryan Martin, Kosciusko County, noted that sounds good in theory but questioned if it works in practice. He believes the term limit forces districts to be more proactive and have skin in the game to keep things fresh

Paul Lake, Pike County, said his biggest concern is the hardship potentially placed on smaller, struggling counties who could lose their quorum. One size doesn't fit all, he said.

Randy ??, Perry County, questioned whether this proposal would require a change in District law.

Marc Roberts, Montgomery County, suggested an amendment to the resolution to add the words “a policy” after “put into place.”

Mark Jordan, Jasper County, noted that districts operate according to Indiana code and an operation by ISDA. The Association doesn’t have policy telling districts how to operate, he says.

Ryan Martin, Kosciusko County, said that because the State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) approves appointed and elected supervisors, enforcement would come down to their approval or denial of supervisors, suggesting that those who have reached the term limit would not be approved.

Jeff Baker, Warrick County, noted that the IASWCD Board does not have power over the SSCB but can make recommendations to them. He believes the addition of the words “a policy” as suggested by Marc Roberts would be appropriate.

Josh Bishop, Vermillion County, questioned whether the IASWCD board can adopt this resolution without changing code. Marc Roberts believes the answer is yes.

Roger Wenning, Decatur County, doesn’t like the word policy and suggests the word “recommends” instead.

A motion and second were made to amend the resolution to add “a policy” to the resolution. A vote was held with the majority being in the negative. The resolution was not amended.

Ray Chattin, Knox County, stated he is in favor of the resolution. He acknowledged that supervisor recruitment is a hard job but stated it’s also very difficult to get rid of supervisors who aren’t doing a good job. He suggested those who’ve reached the term limit spend a year as an associate and then can return to being supervisors.

Roger Wenning, Decatur, argued that IASWCD is not a policing agency. He motions to change “put into place” to “recommend.” The motion was seconded by the delegate from Vanderburgh County.

John Kruze, Dearborn County, spoke in favor of the amendment.

A vote was held on amending the resolution. The majority is in the affirmative and the amendment passes.

A vote was held on the resolution, as amended. The majority is in the affirmative and the resolution passes.

- 4) The fourth resolution is from the IASWCD Legislative and Natural Resource Policy Committee entitled "*Inclusion of Invasive Species Language in Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Statute IC 14-32-8.*"

Be it resolved that the Indiana Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts, Inc. "officially pursue legislative change to CWI statute to include invasive plant management as an accepted use of CWI funds."

Ray Chattin, Knox County, stated that he is also on the SICIM Board of Directors, and spent 8.5 years on the SSCB Board. He noted that invasive species are an enormous problem in the state and districts have a role to play addressing the issue,

Ryan Martin, Kosciusko County, asked if we really want to open code on this issue. He said that a bill addressing the issue has already been introduced in the state legislature and passed the Senate. Invasives are a problem no doubt, but SICIM can lobby for this themselves.

John Kruze, Dearborn County, stated that funding is needed to address this issue and it does address water quality

Ray XX, Dearborn County, noted that SICIM is overwhelmed with need for services and lack of funds, adding that CWI is all that's available for private land owners.

Brad Ponsler, Jennings County, spoke in favor of this resolution.

Vote was held. The majority is in the affirmative and the resolution passes.

- 5) The next item of business pertains to the proposed changes to the IASWCD Bylaws. The changes:

Clearly define "board of directors" terminology;  
Clarifies the duties of Treasurer;

and

Changes the due date for resolutions to September 30.

Vote was held on the proposed changes to the Bylaws. The majority is in the affirmative and the changes will be made.

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

7. Nominating Committee Report

Jeff Baker

Jeff Baker reiterated the nominees for each office and asked if there were additional nominations from the floor. No additional nominations were presented and nominations were closed.

**Slate of Officers is as follows:**

- **For President: Marc Roberts, Montgomery County**
- **For Vice President: Sarah Delbecq, DeKalb County**
- **For Secretary: Mark Kingma, Jasper County**
- **For Treasurer: Ethan Truax, Hendricks County**

Each candidate briefly addressed the delegates:

Marc Roberts, Montgomery County, said he wants to make his district better and the state association as well. He has enjoyed working with a great team and he thanks Jeff for his recent work, as well as Mark, Sarah and Ethan. He is looking forward to the next couple of years.

Mark Kingma, Jasper County, is looking forward to serving in this capacity and enjoys serving on the Executive Board.

Ethan Truax, Hendricks County, is honored to serve on the state board. He noted that he is fairly new and is excited to help guide the board into the future.

Roger Wenning moved to accept the slate of officers. John Kruze seconded. A vote was held with the majority being in the affirmative. Delegates then marked their paper ballots.

8. Executive Director Update.....Liz Rice

Liz Rice provided update. She shared her driving philosophy: "Conservation work requires consistent effort for the sake of something good." Liz emphasized the importance of networks and partnerships and the drew comparisons

between humans and soil as biological, chemical and physical entities. Liz shared that annual conference as we currently know it will be held in odd years, aligning with budget years at the State House, with 2027 taking place at the Westin in Indianapolis January 25-27. In 2026, a lower cost event, perhaps just one day and possibly including a field tour is being planned with date and location TBD. Liz provided contact information and encouraged supervisors to reach out with questions or concerns or invitations to local events.

9. New Business Election Report Jeff Baker

Jeff Baker announced the 2025 officers following the vote.

- **For President: Marc Roberts, Montgomery County**
- **For Vice President: Sarah Delbecq, DeKalb County (not present)**
- **For Secretary: Mark Kingma, Jasper County**
- **For Treasurer: Ethan Truax, Hendricks County**

10. Other business.....Jeff Baker

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

11. Oath of Office Gene Schmidt, SSCB

Gene Schmidt, Indiana State Soil Conservation Board, performed the oath of office with the newly elected officers who were present. Sarah Delbecq will be sworn in at a later date.

Candidates 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. Gene declared them duly installed as the 2025 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 12:01 pm.