

Vermillion County Soil & Water Conservation District Meeting Minutes

August 12th, 2025

The Vermillion County SWCD Board of Supervisors met on August 12th 2025 at the Vermillion County SWCD Board Room. The following supervisors were present: Josh Bishop, Connie Warner, David Bishop

Associate Supervisors: Les Zimmerman

Absent: Darrell Morgan, Lee Ann Larrance

Staff members present: Eric Shideler, Andrew Brown, Chris Booe, Steven McGhee

Guests: Shannon Cottrell; FSA, Patrick Scott; Elanco, Phil Cox; Purdue Extension, Hanna Garriott; RITA, Nathan Stoelting; ISDA

Call to order

Connie Warner, chair, called the meeting to order at 6:25 pm.

Minutes

Minutes of the July meeting were reviewed. Josh moved to approve the minutes as submitted. David seconded. motion passed.

Accounts Payable Register and Treasurer's Report

A printed financial report was provided by Eric. Josh moved to accept the financial report and all outstanding claims subject to audit. David seconded. motion passed.

A claims report was provided to the Board. David moved to accept the claims report. Josh seconded. motion passed.

Staff Reports

NRCS- Andrew

Andrew shared that Don Donovan's official retirement date is September 30th, 2025. An open house in his honor will be held on August 23rd at Friendly Grove Baptist Church in Rosedale. The RSVP deadline has been extended beyond August 1st to allow additional responses.

Andrew also announced that Rachel Farrow will be transferring from the Putnam County Office to the Parke County Office as the new District Conservationist, effective date August 25th, 2025. Once she begins, Andrew will return working in the Vermillion County office full time.

Andrew shared that on the national level, USDA is working to relocate staff out of the Washington D.C. area. Five regional hubs have been identified: Raleigh, North Carolina; Kansas City, Kansas; Fort Collins, Colorado; Salt Lake City, Utah; and Indianapolis, Indiana.

Andrew informed the board that the funding for the Wabash River RCPP project has been withdrawn because the supplemental agreement was not fully finalized.

Eric reported that he has been in contact with Seth Harden, the Upper Wabash representative for The Nature Conservancy, who was leading the RCPP project. At this time, the project is in a holding pattern. Although there was an opportunity to appeal the funding decision, The Nature Conservancy has decided not to appeal and will instead revisit the matter in a year or so. Vermillion County remains in communication with Seth and The Nature Conservancy, and the county is still considered part of the project should opportunities arise in the future.

Eric explained that this particular RCPP project was intended to supplement the 319 grants, for which notification is expected within the next month. Funding from the 319 program is anticipated to begin in

2026 and will cover implementation dollars for the Mill Creek Watershed. While the RCPP would have provided additional support for Mill Creek and other watersheds, Vermillion County will proceed with the 319 funding, and Mill Creek is expected to be funded soon.

Andrew informed the board that this year the State Office Soil Staff will be available to assist with the high school judging contest.

Andrew also informed the board that Bryon Seeds Field Day will be held on August 15th. He noted that it is an agricultural event and encouraged attendance, commenting that “if you have never been, it is worth going.”

Andrew expressed his appreciation to everyone who participated in the Local Lead discussion held prior to the board meeting, noting that it was an excellent and valuable conversation.

Andrew noted that since his arrival, he has observed how diverse Vermillion County is.

FSA- Shannon Cottrell

Shannon informed the board that there is not much new to report. The team is currently working on finalizing some CRP contracts and handling new sign-ups. She noted that they are anticipating potential changes related to the Big Beautiful Bill. While detailed information has not yet been released, she expects it to be forthcoming soon.

ISDA- Nathan Stoelting

Nathan informed the board that, beginning in July, a House Bill requires all board meetings to be live-streamed. This requirement does not currently apply to special districts, such as Soil & Water. However, if a meeting is held in a location where a streaming system is already in place, the established streaming protocol must be followed. What he has observed that at some point in the future, live streaming of meetings is likely to be adopted.

Nathan also informed the board that there are several Region Meetings coming out and he has sent out invitations for all three that he is going to be helping with in some capacity or another. You can attend any of the meetings.

Nathan touched based on the state board of accounts audit the State has put several counties invoices in comparison regarding the charges. Vermillion County is right in line with other counties in the range of \$3300- \$3600 charges. Districts are allowed a special rate with SBOA make sure we are looking at the invoice to see if that is what we are being charged at.

Elections are coming up. November 1st is the deadline for all documents to be turned in. Election Committee has to have 1- Supervisor to chair the committee the other two are interested citizens

CWI applications are due September 4th. We are allowed by law to hold an executive session to discussed contracts. Just need to be posted with are monthly meeting we must follow the rules on Executive Board Meeting Sessions. You can make a generic motion when it comes time without listing private information that does not need to be exposed.

Purdue- Phil Cox

- September 12 – Vermillion County Conservation Day. Phil acknowledged and commended Steven and Hanna for their participation.
- September 16 – Parke/Vermillion Master Gardener Association will host a Tree Identification Walk at Cayuga Park, with Phil serving as the leader.
- September 22–23 – Annual Wonders of the Wetlands event for Parke and Vermillion County 7th and 8th graders, led by Morgan Lutz, 4-H educator.

- September 27 – “Over the Woods and Through the Woods” 5K marathon, organized by Les Zimmerman in collaboration with the Vermillion Trails Alliance, starting at 9:00 a.m.

IASWCD- Hanna Garriott

The board was informed that five new technicians have been hired, with an estimated start date in early October. There are still two positions open at the North Central and East Central locations, with applications due by August 22nd.

Hanna informed the board that she needs to complete a ride-along during the harvest season. Josh Bishop has offered to accommodate this.

CRT-

Submitted written report.

Director-

Submitted written report

Old Business-

None

New business-

The board was informed that the 2025 IDEA Conference is scheduled for October; however, Eric and his staff will not be attending this year.

The board was reminded that Resolutions are due by September 8th. Regarding the Local Lead meeting held prior to the board meeting, the board considered whether any additional items need to be discussed. Les Zimmerman asked the board for permission to review and explore the Resolutions.

Eric will contact Liz Rice to inquire whether an extension can be granted for the September 8th Resolutions deadline. as the next board meeting will not be held until after that date.

Elections are scheduled for this year. Darrell is up for election, and the director will contact him to confirm whether he wishes to continue serving on the board. Additionally, Connie is up for reappointment by the State Soil Conservation Board. If she chooses to continue, the process is simpler than an election, requiring only the submission of her name for appointment.

An election committee needs to be appointed. One board member is required, and Josh Bishop was elected to serve in this role. Two citizen members are also needed. The director asked the board to provide suggestions for the two citizens by the next board meeting for discussion. The deadline to submit names is November 1st.

Public Comment- None

Josh moved to adjourn. David seconded. motion passed

With no additions or corrections, the minutes were approved on the 9th day of September 2025.

Darrell Morgan	_____
Josh Bishop	_____
LeeAnn Larrance	_____
David Bishop	_____
Connie Warner	_____