

**Minutes of the Wayne County Soil & Water  
Conservation District Board of Directors—Executive Board**

**Special Meeting – April 1, 2020, 9:00 a.m.**

**Via “Zoom” conference call**

**Directors:**

Lynn Chatfield  
Mark Humbert  
Steve Olson  
Pat VanLare

**Staff:**

Bethany Comella  
Lindsey Gerstenslager  
Ian Priestley  
Drew Starkey  
Ron Thorn

**Special Meeting**

- I. Call to order at 9:08 a.m. A quorum was established, followed by a roll call of directors. L. Gerstenslager also shared the names of staff joining the meeting.
- II. Approval of the Agenda
  - A. S. Olson shared that he would like a brief discussion on what type of equipment could be purchased for the staff to give them the ability to work from home in situations like the current pandemic. Lindsey stated that it would be discussed later on in the meeting.
  - B. **A MOTION** was made by P. VanLare to approve the agenda; seconded by L. Chatfield; motion carried.
  - C. **A MOTION** was made by P. VanLare to suspend the orders of the day; seconded by L. Chatfield; motion carried.
  - D. L. Gerstenslager shared that the recording of the Zoom meeting would be posted on our website, along with the transcription, in compliance with the newest laws concerning open meetings. This will be in addition to the minutes.
- III. New Business
  - A. Plan of Continuity regarding CoVid-19: The district is still closed to the public, and has been since March 16. The staff was given a week off under Stage 3 of the Plan of Continuity, but felt comfortable getting back to work, and Stage 2 was implemented on March 30. Governor Cuomo’s Executive Order 202.4 requires the district to reduce to 50% operations; the office has reduced to 80%, with Bethany and Ron remaining in the office. The staff is continuing to perform regular services, and the Spring Tree Sale is still moving forward.
  - B. Lindsey shared the existence of IT service tools that are available to keep the district fully-functioning with most of the staff working from home. Wayne County IT can provide a mirror for the desktop PCs that allows staff to access their work computers from home. The plan is to have everyone by able to remote in by Monday, April 6. This is a more economically-feasible option, and addresses S. Olson’s concerns from the beginning of the meeting.

- C. Lindsey shared that everything else in the Plan of Continuity is standard and has remained the same. She noted the shift from “time-dependent” to “delivery-dependent” for the staff’s workload.
  - D. Both P. VanLare and S. Olson voiced their support. L. Gerstenslager shared that, following the pandemic, the board would need to re-evaluate whether the district would like to remain on the County IT server.
  - E. Lindsey acknowledged that the continuity plan is not perfect, but “it’s what we’re doing for now.” According to the continuity plan, the next special meeting following the regularly-scheduled board meeting will be on April 29<sup>th</sup>; the goal at that time will be to return to Stage 1 operations if able. This goal is, of course, subject to both federal and state executive orders.
  - F. **A MOTION** was made by L. Chatfield to approve the continuity plan as of April 1, 2020; seconded by P. VanLare; motion carried.
  - G. Following input from D. Starkey and I. Priestley, **A MOTION** was made by S. Olson to postpone the annual fish sale to the Fall of 2020; seconded by P. VanLare; motion carried.
  - H. Construction requests regarding Executive Order 202.6
    - i. Lindsey shared that agricultural construction can move ahead, but non-essential construction has limitations. At least until the end of EO 202.6, there will be a pause on some construction; on the positive side, that will allow the technical staff time to get ahead on other work, such as planning.
    - ii. While the current situation is affecting some contracts, the district has enough contract work that will allow it to finish out work through the end of the year as planned, and put some money in the bank as district income.
    - iii. State funds for 2021 may be reduced, and more competitive, but nothing has been stated for certain yet. The district had also planned on hiring another staff person to help with the REDI program; this work will be shared amongst the staff.
    - iv. L. Chatfield questioned as to whether Decker Excavating would be able to open up the Port Bay outlet before April 27<sup>th</sup>; Lindsey shared that at this time, Jeff Decker is not comfortable doing non-agricultural work.
    - v. **A MOTION** to postpone non-essential construction until April 27<sup>th</sup>, pending both state and federal executive orders, was made by P. VanLare; seconded by S. Olson; motion carried.
- IV. **A MOTION** to adjourn was made at 9:42 a.m. by L. Chatfield; seconded by P. VanLare; motion carried.

**NEXT MEETING:** Regular Meeting, Wednesday, April 15th @ 9:00 a.m., via Zoom conference call.