

**Legislative Focus Area Committee
Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2016 at 3:00 pm
Northfield Inn, Springfield, IL**

Present:

Members

Tom Beyers
Terry Bogner
Glen Bowers
Terry Davis
Ken Kesler
Steve Stierwalt

Guests/Advisors

Spring Duffey
Tessa Chadwick (NRCS)
Mike Hoffman (AISWCD Lobbyist)
Kelly Thompson (Exec. Director)

Absent:

Jason Anderson
Steve Chard (IDOA)
Sue Davis
Steve Fulling
Joe Rothermel
Dale Shumaker

Motion to approve agenda: 1st = Glen Bowers 2nd = Ken Kesler

Motion to approve March minutes: 1st = Terry Bogner 2nd = Terry Davis

Legislative Update

Mike Hoffmann discussed SB2046 and how it has full funding for SWCDs at \$7.5 million. This bill sits on the Governor's desk and he has until June 15th to act on this bill. Another bill, SB2048, was introduced to assist grants and others that are not receiving funding due to court orders. This bill only had \$5 million for SWCDs but did not pass the Senate on May 31. The "stopgap" budget appropriations bill, HB6585, was introduced on May 31. This bill would fund SWCDs at \$0 for FY16 and \$4 million for FY17. This bill is in line with the Governor's budget for FY17 even though IDOA requested \$5 million for SWCDs.

Budget working groups continue to meet. The House will be in session on Wednesday, however session was cancelled for Wednesday, June 8.

Mike mentioned that SWCD funds are still under suspension. Should the Governor sign or let SB2046 go in to affect, the SWCD funds will still be suspended.

Other bills that Mike is watching are SB2160 which amends the property tax code to allow vegetative filter strips until December 31, 2026 (instead of December 31, 2016). Mike suggests we construct a thank you letter to send to the members which supported this bill. Also, letting the members know where this bill originated from, SWCDs and NRCS many years ago. HB6020 is regarding the Freedom of Information Act and how it pertains to public bodies and member-based organizations that lobby for these public bodies. This bill is dead until next year.

Steve Stierwalt asked Mike about his opinion on trying to gain support and introducing a dedicated funding bill for SWCDs. Steve also wanted Mike's opinion on how to prevent the dedicated funding from being swept. Mike said the only way is to introduce a Constitutional Amendment. If AISWCD goes down this road for dedicated funding they need to be sure to have all environmental and ag groups on board, was Mike's suggestion. Get as many partners as possible.

Partner Reports

Tessa Chadwick from NRCS gave her report. In addition to Ivan Dozier's written report in the Board packet, she shared a press release regarding the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Project. The two cutoff dates for this program are June 17 and July 15, 2016.

Spring Duffey from ISWCDEA gave her report. The ISWCDEA report was printed and available in the Board packet.

Old Business

Governor's Farm Family Award was discussed. Kelly sent a letter to the Governor's office asking for a Proclamation to add "Governor" to the Award for 2016, 2017 and 2018. She had not heard back. Mike Hoffmann was going to give the office a call to see what information is needed to move forward.

New Business

Tom Beyers reviewed all Resolutions that were received by the deadline and the two bylaw amendments. Discussion took place.

Tom discussed the location for the 2017 Legislative Day Event and Reception. It was decided to keep the same location as 2016, Boone's Saloon for the reception. No dates were decided as it is too early to determine dates. Mike will work on suggesting dates towards the end of 2016.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: 1st Terry Davis 2nd Glen Bowers

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes By: Kelly Thompson, AISWCD Executive Director