

SWCD Foundation Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 10th, 2006

Call to order at 10:10am

Farm Bureau Building -Indianapolis, Indiana

The Indiana SWCD Foundation and Partnership Representatives meeting called to order by: Christa Jones

Meeting called to order at: 10:10am

Meeting Purpose: Roundtable discussion of Indiana SWCD Foundation current and future status and partnership endorsement

Those in attendance: *(italicized names indicated a Foundation Board Member or Advisor)*

Bob Eddleman, State Soil Conservation Board

Jennifer Boyle, IASWCD

Christa Jones, NACD

Jim Williams

Jill Reinhart, NRCS

Geralyn Bradley, Warrick Co SWCD

Cindy Beckner, Hancock Co SWCD

Cris Blasaras,

Susan Schultz

Jarrold Chew, ISDA

Martha Miller, Monroe Co SWCD

- The meeting began with a power point over view of the foundations development, history and goals
- Christa Jones opened the meeting by providing her personal view of the foundations development
- Many of the original endowments began with the Department of Energy Reimbursement
- Current endowment status is that most are low
- A private permanent funding sources would seem to be the key
- District local budget cuts and increasing partnership costs are a big concern
- Funding takes money to get future use
- Districts need to raise money to invest that will give them that ability to work off of the interest earned
- The exact amount needed to invest to gain a reasonable amount of income is variable but around \$10,000. Noting that returns are not as high as in the past 7 years.
- Partnership input is important to the Foundations success
- Local districts are at the fore front of foundation success
- How do we get SWCD's to look at the future and funding or are they?
- Supervisors are the source to reaching local movers and shakers
- If working properly the foundation could take away the fear of future funding for districts
- Bob Eddleman stated that the key is the business partners. People that benefit have the most at stake.
- Woody Warehouse made its first donations in 2001 from district tree sales. That source began through a casual conversation with Mike Warrner. It became a win/win for the districts and Woody. They pay \$1 for every tree sold by district back into that districts endowment.
- The original idea was that districts would take x amount of dollars from their general fund and add it to their endowments until districts learned that they can not add public funds to their endowments. That was the reason for the brain storming that lead to the foundation business partners approach
- Why are districts not contacting local business partners to make endowment donations? Because no one is asking them to do so, or they are uncomfortable doing so.
- This idea could be added to the supervisors training – encouraging them to contact local BP's and ask for donations
- The DSS's could encourage this idea and even provide a tools sheets and talking points
- This would require training for some of the DSS's

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- The Foundation has in the past had some hard times in the sale of this idea
- It would be the goal of the current foundation board to have the support of DSS's to local districts. Encouraging them to look at the foundation as an option for future funding
- It is possible that a local SWCD board that is diversified might be more open to this idea, all the more reason to encourage diversification
- The tools that the foundation can provide need to be updated encouraging diversity
- Boards need to be educated to the value of the foundation
- Supervisors need to be reminded of their financial responsibility for the future of the district

The following question was directed at the partnership representations – How do you see the Indiana SWCD Foundation fitting into the partnership?

NRCS – This is a possible funding source with no strings attached for districts. It seems to be a good fit that could be incorporated into the master strategic plan. It would need to be discussed with others at NRCS.

ISDA – “ditto” from what NRCS stated

IASWCD – Our focus is state wide funding assistance where NRCS's focus is more at the local level

General –

- Sales pitch should include short and long term benefits
- Foundation needs the “stamp of approval” from all the partners
- We need a strong push for a large infusion of cash
- Is the tobacco product tax a possibility? Partnership agencies have looked at this possibility
- How do we incorporate the foundation into the partnership 20/20 plan?
- How can the foundation do things that can't be done now?
- Should we be looking at the community foundations?
- More local fundraising efforts are necessary
- The foundations concept is good but where is it going?
- Every agrees – IT'S A GREAT IDEA ... BUT
- What are the next steps?

NRCS – putting it on the agenda of the next partnership meeting

SSCB – find 2 or 3 counties to be the examples setters

IASWCD – Add foundation presentations to the SSCB agenda. Foundation could be a critical part of Soil Conservations future in the state. 1st step is to get on the SSCB agenda

ISDA – get a dialog going with all partnerships and DSS's. Have a feature spot on the weekly bulletins.

IASWCD needs to be working closely with the foundation

At this time the meetings was adjourned for lunch with the Indiana SWCD Foundation bi-monthly board meeting to follow at 1:30

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The Indiana SWCD Foundation Bi-monthly Board Meeting called to order by: Christa Jones

Called to order at: 1:45

Purpose: Bi-monthly board meeting with an emphasis on the future planning

Those in attendance:

Christa Jones, NACD

Jim Williams

Geralyn Bradley, Warrick Co SWCD

Cindy Beckner, Hancock Co SWCD

Cris Blassaras

Susan Schultz

Martha Miller, Monroe Co SWCD

Motion by Jim Williams to approve April Minutes – 2nd by Cris Blassaras – Motion approved with changes

Susan Schultz motioned to accept Cindy Beckner, Geralyn Bradley and Julie Alexander as Indiana SWCD Foundation advisors – 2nd by Cris Blassaras – Motion Passed.

Introduction of Julie Alexander who is volunteering her time for ISWCDF legal counsel.

Martha Miller stated that the marketing letter did not get sent do to the need for learning the outcome of the morning meeting. She stated that if the partnership is not in support of the foundation there is really no need to begin an aggressive marketing campaign.

After discussion is was agreed upon by the board that we should begin to work on a marketing campaign that we would kickoff at annual conference with a full blown display.

Judy Brown is withdrawing from active participation on the marketing committee so she can focus her energy to the funds generation committee. She will however be able for advice as needed to the marketing committee.

The Indiana SWCD Foundation Marketing Committee consists of: Martha Miller and Susan Schultz as co-chairs, Cathy Paradise and Cindy Beckner. The committee will meet in a sub session to address the kickoff campaign.

Questions and comments raised:

Do we need a booth? Where can we incorporate our message into the programming. Susan is doing a session at conference and could focus on the foundation.

Districts and Supervisors need to know what we are about

On the issue of partnership contacts do we have any volunteers from the board to work with specific partnership on follow up?

Martha Miller agreed to contact Jarred Chew, ISDA

We need to improve on the business partnership program. Jim Williams stressed the need to also step up individual donations. Annual meetings are a good place to ask individuals for support. Districts can also place an insert in newsletters.

Cris Blassaras has contacted our current business partners.

Do our BP's have a sign for their establishments that indicated they support the ISWCDF? This will be considered by the marketing committee.

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Do we have written agreements with any of our BP's? We do not have anything in writing to the board knowledge.

It is agreed that we should have a written agreement such as a MOA or MOU with all BP's if possible. Julie Alexander agreed to draft.

What if we provided each local district with a local campaign that they could personalize and send locally for support?

The immediate need is for future funding and foundation visibility

Cindy Beckner volunteered to sit on the marketing committee

Geralyn Bradley volunteered to sit on the funds generations committee

Next meeting will be October 10, 2006 at 11:00 – Indiana Farm Bureau Building, Indianapolis, IN

Meeting adjourned 2:30