

WAYNE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MEETING

MINUTES – September 8, 2026

The Wayne Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors held their regular monthly board meeting in the Wayne SWCD office located in the lower level of the County Administration Building, 428 W. Liberty St., Wooster, Ohio on September 8, 2026. The following Supervisors attended the meeting: Jeff Gochnauer, Randy Tegtmeier, and Tate Emerson. Also in attendance were John Lorson, DPA; Ruthanne Bandy, Administrative Assistant; Rob Kastner, Water Management Engineer; Ricky Papay, Water Resources Specialist; Kathy Burley, Secretary; Kelly Riley, Education Specialist; Rodney Mackey, Associate Supervisor; Tom Holmes, ODA-DSWC Area 2 Program Specialist; Jordan Miller, NRCS Acting District Conservationist; John Yost, OSU Extension.

The meeting was called to order by Jeff Gochnauer, Chairman, at 8:30 a.m.

MINUTES

After reviewing the minutes for the August 11, 2026, Board Meeting, **Tate Emerson made a motion to accept the minutes. Motion passed 3-0.**

TREASURER'S REPORT (August 1-31, 2026)

The board reviewed the Treasurer's Report. **A motion was made by Randy Tegtmeier to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed 3-0.**

8/1-8/31/2026			
	<u>Special Fund</u>		<u>District Fund</u>
Disbursements:		Disbursements:	
Purchase Orders	\$994.63	Vouchers	\$186.00
Salaries	\$30,725.12	KCWRP - Verdantas	\$2,787.50
Medicare	\$414.66	KCWRP - Verdantas	\$3,616.25
PERS	\$4,301.54	Service Charge/ACH Fees	<u>\$65.07</u>
Insurance	<u>\$9,629.58</u>	Total Disbursements:	\$6,654.82
Total Disbursements:	\$46,065.51	Income:	
Income:		KCWRP - Verdantas	\$2,787.50
State Match FY27 Q1	\$73,600.00	KCWRP - Verdantas	<u>\$3,616.25</u>
Total Income:	\$73,600.00	Total Income:	\$6,403.75

REPORT OF COMMITTEES

-Nomination Committee: Ruthanne Bandy submitted the EL-3 form. The candidates for the 2026 election are Tom White and Clint Carmony. The election period will run October 6 - November 4, 2026.

AGENCIES REPORTS

-ODA: Tom Holmes reported that the new employee training on August 27th had a good turnout. He also reported a good turnout last week for the HR training put on by Work Spring and thanked John and Marissa for attending. He reminded folks to review the monthly ODA updates for SWCD board meetings. There is an opportunity for districts to complete a survey regarding their most recent audit. This information will be compiled and shared with the Auditor of State's office and districts at the ADP training on November 4. There is one final office hour session on September 9th to learn about the state match policy. Each district can submit comments by September 15th.

-**NRCS:** Jordan Miller reviewed his report and reminded the group to look at the quarterly report from Kara McDowell, Area 2 NRCS Assistant State Conservationist.

-**OSU Extension:** John Yost reported that he met with ODNR Division of Wildlife and Forestry staff last week and discussed the idea of developing a monthly landowner meeting in partnership with Wayne SWCD. Topics could include forestry, wildlife, and pond management. He would like to implement more programming for the natural resources side of the department with opportunities at Secrest Arboretum, Wooster Memorial Park, and Killbuck

OLD BUSINESS

-**2026 Conservation Farm Award:** John Lorson reported that Matt Falb had been suggested as a candidate for the Conservation Farm Award. Matt Falb currently practices no-till but is going away from row crops to all grazing, specifically using silvopasture practices which include adding trees and bushes to forage pasture rotation. John also shared Greg Stephen as an option. Greg is a dairy farmer near Kidron who had the first flush system in Wayne County. He is very welcoming to groups to the farm. Tom Holmes recommended using one of these candidates for the Ohio Conservation Farm Family Awards due every year in May. **Randy Tegtmeier made a motion to award Matt Falb with the 2026 Conservation Farm Award. Motion passed 3-0.**

-**H2Ohio Signatory:** John Lorson shared that we need a signatory within the My Farms program for H2Ohio producer contracts. Jeff Gochnauer asked if we could have two designated signatories, which John believes to be possible. **Randy Tegtmeier made a motion to designate Becca Schuch and Zoey Dudte as signatories for H2Ohio producer contracts in My Farms. Motion passed 3-0.**

-**Riggenbach APAP update:** John Lorson provided an update on the APAP case for Riggenbach farm. ODA delivered a Notice of Deficiency letter with required corrective actions and recommended corrective actions. The hope is that these measures will be implemented to prevent any further issues.

-**State Match Policy:** John Lorson shared his thoughts on the State Match Policy changes. The policy remains largely the same, with more clarity on certain items, while removing a lot of unnecessary and historic language. If there is a 5% or more increase in county funds, an explanation is required to be eligible for matching. Any funds that are received past the deadline will be subject to a 10% reduction in matchability, and each week follows an additional 10% reduction. No more than \$8,000 in capital improvements can be matched. Cost share programs are not eligible for matches, so if we received H2Ohio money to put in a grass water way, that's not matchable. It is a requirement to have an annual plan of work. If a district's SWCD balance exceeds 200% of previous year's budget an explanation must be provided. Overall, John believes the changes to be reasonable and does not believe our office will be negatively impacted by the changes. He shared his drafted responses to the questionnaire being collected by ODA by September 15. **Tate Emerson made a motion to approve survey responses. Motion passed 3-0.** Tate inquired if we could/should advocate for the larger districts that will be most impacted by the policy changes. John Lorson agreed that it would be beneficial to offer support and plans to reach out to Cuyahoga's Executive Director to see if they would like a letter of support. Tom Holmes provided clarification that the Ohio Soil and Water Commission has the vote on this policy, and a committee provided input on these changes, but there were no representatives from larger soil and water districts. Many of the policies are already written in the Ohio revised code, but some areas have never been enforced, so the commission is looking to clean things up and make sure funds are properly spent.

-Local Working Group Recap: John Lorson shared the findings from our Local Working Group meeting. The turnout was great and the format worked well. Tate asked about the work of creating a tool and/or providing information to townships about where prime soil is located within the township, which he initially suggested during the Annual Plan of Work meeting in March. John agrees there are many opportunities to provide more education on soil, particularly with the Multi-County Soil Health Group.

NEW BUSINESS

-Progress Report: Randy Tegtmeier made a motion to accept the progress report. Motion passed 3-0.

-Board Meeting Date: Tate Emerson made a motion to approve the change of the November board meeting to Wednesday, November 4, at 10:30 am at Sonnenberg Village following the Annual Meeting. Motion passed 3-0.

-Snapshot Dairy APAP involvement: John Lorson reviewed the report he created after a site visit to Snapshot Dairy on August 26, 2026. A pollution complaint was first received in November of 2025. It was determined to be under the EPA's jurisdiction, as the issues were caused by a lack of site stabilization during and after construction. During this site visit it was determined that the sediment basin was contaminated and discharging into a stream bed on a neighbor's property. Manure storage structures are in place, but surface mismanagement is causing runoff to become contaminated. John reviewed his recommendations for mitigation. Ultimately EPA is responsible for site stabilization. ODA and Wayne SWCD can provide education and information but cannot do any enforcement. John will be drafting a letter to send to Snapshot Dairy.

-2027 Grazing Conference: John Lorson shared that the grazing conference will take place in January and does not conflict with our annual partnership meeting in Columbus. Joe Christner from Holmes SWCD and Becca will be presenting the economic value of manure. Tom Holmes suggested reaching out to Glen Arnold for additional resources.

Staff Updates

-Rob Kastner is reviewing the plat for Whispering Woods subdivision and making sure that required language is included. He provided an update on the proposed Grace Meadow development in Canaan Township, which is currently facing an issue of how to deal with disposing of the wastewater. The site is too far from any existing sewage system, and the quantity of wastewater anticipated is too much for on-site treatment. The developers are pursuing an option to do deep well injection of wastewater. This issue is handled by the 201 Committee, which includes the Health Department, Environmental Services, the Planning Department, the Commissioners, and Rob. They review the 201 maps which show areas of the county that are sewered or plan to be sewered in the next 20 years. The 201 committee votes on changes and Environmental Services then implements them. The location of the Grace Meadow project is within a conservation area connected to headwaters that lead to Killbuck Creek so the options for wastewater are limited. Discussion ensued regarding different discharge points on the Killbuck should a discharging system be allowed, the developer reducing the scope of the project, or on-site treatment and then spray irrigation. The 201 Committee will be meeting again to further discuss the options. They are also consulting with Stark and Summit County on discharge package plants. A discharge system of the size proposed for this project is ultimately approved by the Ohio EPA.

-Zoey Dudte shared that Becca has all the new H2Ohio contracts updated. Zoey completed 26 verifications. She is now working on ideas to reach out to producers on getting nutrient management plans and reaching out to those who have plans.

-Ricky Papay reported that he is following up on seeding deadlines and getting out to sites. He has sent out a couple of NOV's. He is also working on materials for the stabilization theme for the fair.

-Kelly Riley shared a handout on recycling news with the board. All the sponsors who give \$25 to support recycling efforts at the Wayne County fair will receive a tote bag. Kelly is preparing for the fair with the "cover your assets" theme, sharing information about grass seeding, cover crops, and the importance of protecting soil. We will be hosting another visit to Barnes Preserve on October 7th. Kelly will be attending the Educators Workshop Oct 21 and 22 at Salt Fork Lodge. Kelly is continuing to schedule school programs and will be spending all day Thursday at Triway for programming.

-Kathy Burley has been working on CAP forms and preparing materials for the fair barn.

-Ruthanne Bandy reported that the Fall 2026 newsletter is now available. She also reported that she will be contacting Huntington to resolve an ongoing issue with the credit card statements that started after a payment was lost.

-John Lorson reported that he and Tate hosted a stop for the Environmental Professional Network that went very well. John will be taking the Commissioners to visit the site for the Killbuck Creek Wetland Reconnection Project on Friday.

John Lorson requested to hold an executive session to discuss compensation for public employees.

Randy Tegtmeier made a motion to enter executive session to discuss compensation for public employees. Tate Emerson – yes. Jeff Gochnauer – yes. Randy Tegtmeier – yes. Motion passed 3-0.

Meeting returned to open session at 10:42 a.m.

Tate Emerson moved to increase hourly pay for six staff members as proposed by John. The increases, based upon positive reviews, total \$3.30 per hour in the aggregate from SWCD operating funds, and \$1.00 per hour from grant funding. Motion passed 3-0.

Tate Emerson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. Motion passed 3-0.

Meeting adjourned.

The next board meeting will be on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Leave Records

7/26/26-8/22/26	Annual Leave		Sick Leave		Comp Time	
Employee	Available	Used	Available	Used	Available	Used
John L.	354.00	7.75	2271.00	0.00	13.00	0.00
Kelly R.	204.33	28.25	557.07	29.00	0.38	0.00
Kathy B.	222.92	0.00	268.00	0.00	15.50	0.00
Becca S.	5.79	15.50	31.60	0.00	4.50	0.00
Ricky P.	131.84	0.00	411.98	0.00	2.51	0.00
Robert K.	112.45	12.50	1002.41	5.75	9.88	2.00
Ruthanne B.	15.71	0.25	50.74	3.00	0.13	1.75
Zoey D.	3.10	0.00	43.27	0.00	0.00	0.00

Jeff Gochnauer, Chairman

Marissa Dillon, Secretary**Ruthanne Bandy, Administrative Assistant**, Submitted September 8, 2026, minutes. _____