

BUREAU COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

July 1, 2025

(amended August 5, 2025)

DIRECTORS PRESENT: Mike Thacker, Todd Sears, Bill Gebeck, Rod Grunloh, Jim May

DIRECTORS ABSENT: None

DISTRICT STAFF PRESENT: Becca Taylor - RC, Ashley Wallace - AC

NRCS PERSONNEL PRESENT: Erika Luft – DC, Richard Rappley – NRS, Morgan Smith – Soil Con

Call to Order: Mike Thacker called the meeting to order at 8:23a.m.

Guests: None

Approval of Minutes: Todd made a motion to approve the June minutes. Mike seconded; motion carried.

Approval of Bills: Todd made a motion to approve the open bills. Rod seconded; motion carried.

Approval of Timesheets: Rod made a motion to approve the June timesheets. Jim seconded; motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Budget & Finance: The district received the FY24 property tax bill for Whitver. The amount is \$8,257.34 for both installments. Ashley will pay it in full. The Central Bank Whitver CD was renewed with an interest rate of 4%, up from 3.25%. The health insurance rate decreased substantially, down from \$519 to \$285. The district received an IDOA payment in the amount of \$2,659.13 for doing cover crop spot checks. After some discussion, it was decided that Ashley will ask for a higher interest rate on the Spring Valley City Bank CD when it comes due.

Education & Outreach: Becca and Ashley attended an Ameren forum on June 24th for the new transmission line being constructed. The forum was held to discuss areas to avoid such as natural areas, cemeteries, and conservation-focused spots. Ashley will be judging natural resources at the 4-H Fair on July 10. Staff will be attending Summer Conference July 21-22.

Natural Areas: Becca put up a sign at Witness Tree Grove explaining that she is limiting mowing so that oak saplings can get established. She is considering burning the area to encourage oak growth. And will plant pollinator seed around the edge of the site to enhance native habitat.

Personnel: Hope Wollerman job shadowing once a week.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

BUSINESS

PFC: Working on Thacker strip-till contract. Received news on what FY25 fund amount will be.

SSRP: No updates.

CRP: Maintenance reviews being completed.

CREP: In the survey process.

Seeding Service: All contracts complete. Fall signup list has started.

Vegetative Filter Strips: No updates.

Zonings: 2 requests; see report.

Equipment Purchase: Potential air seeder and light bar for Ranger; Becca will get price quotes and more information on both. The board recommended fixing up the Gator so staff can take bids to get it sold. They suggested Midwest Truck Repair for getting new trailer lights.

Whitver Farm: No updates.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mike Thacker made a motion to go into executive session at 9:02. Rod seconded; motion carried. Rod made a motion to enter open session at 9:35; Mike seconded; motion carried. Out of executive session, Mike made a motion to give Becca and Ashley a 4% raise, Rod seconded; motion carried. Discussion was had in E.S. about district funds and how to disperse them more evenly and reduce financial risk. Mike made a motion to take \$250,000 out of Whitver savings at Central Bank (account 2112241), opening an account at First State Bank and put it into a CD for 18 months at 4.25%, and nicknaming the account "Whitver CD 3." Also, to have Authorized signers include Ashley Wallace, Rebecca Taylor, and Todd Sears. Jim seconded the motion; motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

Prairie Chickens: Pheasants have been spotted at Whitver.

Agenda items for next meeting: Air seeder quotes and information.

Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held at Bonucci Farms on August 5th at 8:15a.m.

Adjournment: Mike Thacker adjourned the meeting at 10:18a.m.