



**Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts  
Board of Directors Meeting  
September 18, 2019  
Conference Call**

**CALL TO ORDER**

President Steve Becker called the meeting of the Idaho Association of Soil Conservation Districts Board of Directors to order at 8:00 PM on Wednesday, September 18, 2019. Those present included Steve Becker, Matt Woodard, Richard Kunau, Mike Somerville, Tom Daniel, Kit Tillotson and Benjamin Kelly.

**PRESENT**

**ISWCC FILED  
COMPLAINT LETTER**

Steve Becker thanked the board for participating on short notice and reviewed the complaint filed as plaintiffs by the Idaho Soil and Water Conservation Commission on August 19, 2019. The complaint is filed against Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, the individual Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District board supervisors and the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District manager as defendants.

Steve Becker wanted to have an open discussion amongst the IASCD Board on how to proceed regarding the latest developments and wanted each board members opinion. The board found it very discouraging that the supervisors of the district have been listed individually and in their capacity as private citizens in this complaint. This places improper implications on all local units of government. Idaho is known throughout the nation for its strength in volunteerism and most of our local Districts function in this manner. This places an undue burden on qualified citizens that feel it is their responsibility and duty to serve.

The board understood that there are many proceedings that they have not privy to and extenuating circumstances that may have led the commission to act. There still seems to be actions taken by the commission that not only challenges the integrity of the Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District, but impugns the integrity of the individual supervisors who support conservation in their communities, donate their time, serve without complaint, are not seeking personal gain and do their duty to keep Idaho's agricultural and natural resources viable for generations to come.

It was reiterated that elected officials who receive benefits illegally should always stand accountable. Local units of government that unknowingly or knowingly benefit from the actions of one individual should always atone for mistakes that were made under their supervision. But when Idahoans decide to serve their communities, run for elected office and place their good names in the public sphere, they should not have to fear that their family name, occupation or privately owned business and personal finances are in jeopardy due to circumstances that may be outside of their control and may have been due to a lack of information.

There was unanimous agreement that this litigious approach threatens locally lead, voluntary conservation throughout the state by deterring both future and

current supervisors from wanting to serve. By going after individual civil servants and their personal assets, it jeopardizes all special districts in the state of Idaho and could have a chilling effect on all leaders drawn from our communities that merely want to do their part and continue Idaho's way of life. It also prohibits supervisors from approaching the commission in good faith when questions or circumstances arise.

Board members expressed their understanding that the commission has had to make hard decisions but also believe that the actions taken in this complaint have well exceeded the bounds of the way that Idahoans who serve expect to be addressed. Several questions arose including that if the supervisors have any knowledge that documents were incorrect. Also addressed was the circumstances around ICRMP insurance and that they may be claiming it is invalid.

IASCD will be in close communication with ISWCC after the proceedings have concluded to discuss what went wrong and how to address the problem in the future. Until then, the board needs to write a letter enumerating the difficulties actions like these have on districts and supervisors. The board agreed they need to address the information they do know and approach it from a thirty-thousand-foot level as partners. Kit Tillotson moved a letter be drafted to ISWCC voicing concerns on behalf of districts and supervisors and that the letter be sent to the board for their approval and signature prior to being emailed and sent certified mail to ISWCC. Seconded. Passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Tom Daniel moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded. Passed. The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted  
Benjamin Kelly, Executive Director