



Meeting Minutes
Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors
Farmville, Virginia
November 24, 2009

Board Members Present:

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman
Wilkie Chaffin –Director, Prince Edward County / Treasurer
Chad Gunn - Director, Nottoway County / Secretary
Don Gantt, Jr. –Director, Prince Edward County / Vice-Chair
Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County
Juan Whittington – Appointed Director, Amelia County
Donna Kerr – Director, Amelia County
Chuck Arnason – Associate Director, Nottoway County
Don Maxey – Associate Director, Prince Edward County
Bill Powers – Associate Director, Prince Edward County

Board members absent:

Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County
Charles Dodson –Associate Director, Amelia County

Piedmont SWCD Staff Present

Deanna Fehrer – District Manager
Robin Buckalew – Administrative and Public Information Specialist
Kevin Dunn – BMP Conservation Technician
Charlie Wootton –TMDL Conservation Specialist

Others Present:

Dennis Jones –NRCS District Conservationist for Prince Ed. and Nottoway Counties
Brian Loadholt–NRCS Conservation Specialist Amelia, Goochland & Powhatan Counties
Sam Coleman, Jr., Charlie Hicks, & Charles Weaver -Sandy River Reservoir Overlay Protection District Committee members

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting of the Piedmont SWCD was held in the conference room of the Prince Edward County Natural Resources and Agricultural building November 24, 2009. Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. A quorum was present.

WELCOME:

Chairman Moyer welcomed directors, staff, and guests and led the group in prayer.

PRESENTATION OF COMMENDATION: Don Gantt presiding

Mr. Coleman, Mr. Hicks, and Mr. Weaver of the Sandy River Reservoir Overlay Protection Committee were on hand to accept a copy of the resolution passed at the October board meeting, commending them for their “willingness to serve and courage to lead.” Mr. Coleman thanked the Piedmont SWCD for their assistance during the committee’s planning sessions.

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS COMMITTEE: Mr. Rash reported (*Please see attached report*)

Funding Returns, New Funding & Practice Transfers

- Return Funding to Bay Priority - Cover Crop Cost-Share planting dates missed: Ameva Farm, Hill Top Farm, Fraher, Jibben, Whitaker Farms, Hoot Owl Farm, Reamford Farm, Toth, Poore, Lewis.
- Returned Funding to Bay Priority for SL-1 (Converting Cropland to Pasture or Hay)-Cost-Share Payments were less than estimated: Glenn, Fowlkes, Morris Brothers, Whitaker Farms.
- New Funding – Bay Priority Funding allocated to District Nov 2009 by DCR - \$72,759.00
- Practice Transfers- 3 Practices that were originally approved with Bay Base cost-share will now be transferred to and paid with Bay Priority cost-share: Emert Enterprises- SL-6, Hard Acres Farm- SL-8, Shannon Smith - SL-8.

On motion by Mr. Rash and carried by vote of 7-0, the board accepted the Conservation Committee's recommendation to approve the return funding, new funding, and practice transfers as presented.

Cost Share and Tax Credits

- Emert Enterprises, SL-6 Grazing-land Protection (300 ft Stream Exc.)P.E.(Bay-Priority)
- Stuart A. Rosenberg, LE-1T Livestock Exclusion with Riparian Buffers (900 ft Stream Excl.) Nottoway (TMDL)
- Mike Clark, LE-1T Livestock Exclusion with Riparian Buffers (200 ft Excl. Fence) P.E. (TMDL)
- Minnie Statom, FR-1 – Reforestation of Erodible Crop and Pasture Land (29.4 ac-15 years) Nottoway (Bay-Base)
- Cynthia Emert, FR-1 Reforestation of Erodible Crop and Pasture Land (13.6 ac-15 years) P.E. (Bay-Base)

On motion by Mr. Rash and carried by vote of 7-0, the board accepted the Conservation Committee's recommendation to approve the Cost Share and Tax Credits as presented.

Conservation Plans

Amelia:(1) Nottoway:(6) Prince Edward: (11)

On motion by Mr. Rash and carried by vote of 7-0, the board accepted the Conservation Committee's recommendation to approve the Conservation Plans as presented.

Nottoway County WQIF Septic Grant: Ms. Fehrer reported

Nottoway County Community Development Block Grant written by Nottoway County Planning Department is cost-sharing with Piedmont SWCD's WQIF Grant to pay for work on six septic systems for homeowners residing in TMDL impaired areas who meet low income eligibility.

On motion by Mr. Whittington, seconded by Mr. Gunn and carried 7-0, the board approved signing an MOU between Piedmont SWCD and Nottoway County Health Department outlining partner responsibilities for Septic System repair grant fund: #2007 – WQIF-18.

On Motion by Mr. Rash and carried by vote of 7-0, the board approved six Septic System Repair grant applications. (See Attached Conservation Report)

Combine Seed Concerns: Mr. Rash reported

Director concern that using combine (homegrown) seed in the cover crop program has the potential to spread prohibited weeds will be brought up at the State Agricultural Technical Committee meeting in January.

Cost-Share Completions: Ms. Fehrer reported

A report recently released by DCR ranks the Piedmont SWCD at the top of SWCD's in Virginia when computing miles of stream exclusion practices installed in TMDL areas. Comment cards continue to be given out to program participants and returned with very positive comments about the BMP and TMDL programs.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

On motion by Mr. Gunn, seconded by Mr. Gantt and carried 7-0, the board approved the October 2009 minutes as mailed/mailed.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

On motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Gantt and carried by a vote of 7-0, the Board accepted the October 2009 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: No report

FINANCIAL COMMITTEE: Dr. Chaffin reported

IRA Bonus

IRA bonuses for fulltime employees were approved at an earlier date, but were not instituted due to budget cuts for operating funds, with further reductions anticipated. **On motion by Mr. Gantt, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried 7-0 the board approved instituting the approved IRA bonus' for full-time staff.**

Computer Cuts

In an effort to cut costs nationwide, NRCS is reducing the number of computers it supports. We currently have four computers online with NRCS, including one in the Amelia office. VASWCD and NRCS are working hard to try to keep as many computers available to the District as possible, but, as one of the staff pointed out, a reduction would not keep the district from doing their job.

Use of NRCS Vehicles

On motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Mr. Gunn and carried 7-0, the Board approved signing a MOU between Piedmont SWCD and NRCS that formalizes NRCS vehicle use by Piedmont SWCD staff, including the insertion of "Federal Government" on line three, page one, for clarification.

Check Signature: Mr. Moyer reported

A board member, preferably one that resides or works in Prince Edward County, is needed to perform bi-weekly check review.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE: Dr. Chaffin reported

Directors were encouraged to contact their local legislators in support of the top three legislative concerns voted on by the VASWCD Legislative Committee.

The VASWCD effort to address the agricultural exemption "loop hole" that exists was discussed, with agreement that the problem can be serious, and that a lack of enforcement was a major part of the problem.

PLANNING COMMITTEE: Mr. Gunn reportedDirector resignation and replacement

Mr. Moyer circulated a letter Mr. Gantt submitted announcing his desire to resign his position on the board, indicating that his election to the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors precludes him finishing his term as director. Mr. Gantt expressed his appreciation to the board and staff, and stated his conviction that the District is worthy of ongoing, steady core support from the counties that it serves.

Dr. Chaffin led a discussion on DCR's updated procedure for director resignation and replacement when fulfilling the unexpired term of an elected director. **On motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Ms. Kerr and carried 7-0, the board authorized Mr. Moyer to sign the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board (VSWCB) paperwork necessary to nominate Associate Director Don Maxey to serve out the unexpired term of Mr. Gantt if there are no recommendations for replacements from the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors, or applications submitted by the public. If such recommendations are forthcoming, the board will conduct interviews and vote on a nominee to put before the VSWCB.**

On motion by Mr. Gunn, seconded by Mr. Gantt and carried 7-0, the board accepted the resignation of Mr. Gantt.

Officer elections

Board officers including Chairman, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary will be voted on during the January Board meeting. Mr. Rash indicated his willingness to serve as Vice-Chair.

WATERSHED COMMITTEE: Mr. Gantt and Ms. Fehrer reported

Flood Inundation Studies continue, with the Piedmont SWCD receiving four studies thus far: Buffalo #1 & #2 and Bush #2 & #7. Per the November 9 reports, Buffalo dams #1 and #2 are changing from low hazard to significant hazard; Bush #2 is moving from a significant hazard to a high hazard, and Bush #7 is moving from a low hazard to a high hazard. Hazard classification changes are due to the possibility of downstream flooding of roadways and bridges based on computer modeling of 4 dam-break scenarios.

Dams in the District affected by changes in hazard classification regulations will require increased inspections by professional engineers, annual tabletop drills with emergency personnel, an expanded emergency action plan (EAP), and possible spillway upgrades. Ken Turner will prepare the updated EAP, but cannot do so until Dam Safety determines the format.

Piedmont SWCD board members on the Watershed committee have studied the reports, offered edits, and will forward them to the Prince Edward County Planning Department and Emergency Services for their input. Final approval of the hazard classifications will ultimately come from the Soil and Water Board.

Mr. Rash mentioned a landowner who has concerns about the expense of upgrading his private dam to meet the new Flood Inundation Study requirements. Mr. Jones agreed that some private landowners would have to make significant investments in their dam to comply.

District Manager Report: Ms. Fehrer reported (Please see attached report)

AGENCY REPORTS:

Department of Conservation and Recreation: *(Please see attached report)*

Natural Resources Conservation Services: *(Please see attached reports)*

Mr. Loadholt emphasized that the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Initiative will probably experience an increase in funding, making it possible for people to sign up for EQIP who in the past were not eligible. Mr. Loadholt would like to have a list of need ready to show when funds are being allocated.

Roundtable

Ms. Fehrer requested that board members save December 17, 2009 as a possible board meeting time due to anticipated cost-share to approve.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned 1:00 p.m.

Attached Reports:

- District Manager Staff Report
- DCR CDC Report
- NRCS Reports
- Conservation Committee Report

Reports on File: Conservation Committee Report including tract numbers

Submitted By: _____ *Date:* 11-30-2009

Robin Buckalew, Administrative Secretary

Approved By: _____ *Date:* _____

Chad Gunn, Director / Secretary