



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Farmville, Virginia
January 27, 2019 11:00 a.m.**

Board Members Present:

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman
Chuck Arnason –Director, Nottoway County / Secretary
Dr. Wilkie Chaffin –Director, Prince Edward County / Treasurer
Bill Powers –Director, Prince Edward County
Haley Norton- Appointed Director, VCE Nottoway County
Juan Whittington –Appointed Director, Amelia County
Horace Adams- Associate Director, Prince Edward County
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County

Board Members Absent:

Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County/Vice Chairman
Donna Kerr – Director, Amelia County

Piedmont SWCD Staff Present:

Deanna Fehrer- District Manager
Kevin Dunn – Ag BMP Conservationist
Emily Gibbs- Urban & Program Support
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist

Others Present:

Denney Turner, DCR CDC
Rachel Loveday, NRCS District Conservationist
Derek Hancock, NRCS District Conservationist
Doug Audley, DOF Amelia County

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

A regular meeting of the Piedmont SWCD Board of Directors was held at the Prince Edward Natural Resources and Agriculture Building in Farmville on Tuesday, January 22, 2019. Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order, welcomed directors, staff, and partners and led the group in prayer. A quorum was present.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the November 27, 2018 minutes as presented.

TREASURER’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Chaffin and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the November/December 2018 Treasurer’s Report as presented to be filed for audit.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE**VACS - Agricultural Cost-Share Applications**

On a motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS cover crop application cancellations (with Mr. Moyer absent from the room):

- Cover Crop allocations returned to CB VCAS due to missed planting date or lack of cover mainly due to wet weather conditions.

1. Nicholas Moody	#05-19-0011- SL-8B- 35ac	\$1,400.00
2. Whitaker Farms Inc.	#05-19-0024- WQ-4- 30.1ac	\$903.00
3. Boot Hill Dairy LLC.	#05-19-0012- SL-8H-129.1ac	\$2,582.00
	- SL-8B- 385.2ac	15,404.00
4. Jason Geesaman	#05-19-0023- SL-8H- 6.3ac	\$126.00
	- SL-8B- 48.4ac	\$1,936.00
5. George Toth	#05-19-0013- SL8 H- 48.4ac	\$968.00
	SL-8B- 110.6ac	\$4,424.00
6. Robert Jones	#05-19-0039- SL-8H- 31ac	\$620.00
	SL-8B- 131.3ac	\$5,252.00
7. Jimmy Garnett Jr.	#05-19-0040- SL-8B- 33.2ac	\$1,328.00
8. Charles Glasscock	#05-19-0010 SL-8- 64.8ac	\$1,944.00
9. Don Benson	#05-19-0036- SL-8B- 82.8ac(Late)	\$2,070.00
10. Triple R Dairy	#05-19-0014- SL-8B- 33.1ac	\$1,324.00
11. Oakmulgee Dairy	#05-19-0007- WQ-4-283.7ac	\$8,511.00
12. Blanton Farms Inc.	#05-19-0034- SL-8H-74.4ac	\$1,488.00
	SL-8B-13.1ac	\$536.00
13. Vaughan Cattle Co	#05-19-0041- SL-8B-22.3ac	\$892.00
14. Reamford Farms	#05-19-0021- SL-8H-35.3ac	\$706.00
	SL-8B-70.4ac	\$2,816.00
15. Wilford Poore	#05-19-0028- SL-8B-34.3ac(Late)	\$857.50

Total Amount Returned to CB VACS-\$56,087.50

DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic Cost-Share Approvals

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following DEQ 319(h) Residential Cost-Share applications as presented:

Flat Creek, et al.**Mark Wilhelm RB-4 Conventional Onsite Sewage System Installation/Replacement**

(05-19-0064) Estimated Cost \$ 4,000.00

Nottoway County Estimated Cost-Share \$ 2,000.00 (50% cost-share rate)

Emergency pre-approval due to sewage backing up into house. Drainfield has failed and is not accepting effluent. VDH repair permit is on file.

Peggy Munden RB-1 Septic Tank Pump Out

(05-19-0065) Estimated Cost \$ 300.00

Amelia County Estimated Cost-Share \$ 150.00 (50% cost-share rate)

Emergency pre-approval due to sewage backing up into house. Tank has not been pumped in many years, and ground has been saturated.

Agricultural Conservation Plans

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the following Agricultural Conservation Plans (2).

Amelia(1)

Beverly Moon

Prince Edward(1)

Richard Hilbers

Agricultural Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Mr. Wootton reported the TAC has completed its work for 2020 program year and submitted quite a few items that will be voted on by the State Soil and Water Board in March. Some of the items include clarification on language in the BMP specifications; increasing the cost share caps on WP4 and WP4B practices. A new sub-committee named the Equine Workgroup has been established led by Kyle Shreve, representing Agribusiness Council. Items that were tabled by the TAC will be put back on the TAC agenda for program year 2021.

FINANCE

On a motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding between Piedmont and Peter Francisco SWCDs (January 2019-December 2019) regarding the contract services of Ms. Gibbs. A copy is on file in the office.

On a motion by Mr. Whittington, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the Memorandum of Understanding between VASWCD and Piedmont SWCD regarding the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program Steering Committee membership and duties for the time period of January 2019 – June 2019. A copy is on file in the office.

Equipment Rental Program

Ms. Fehrer shared information regarding the equipment rental program including drill activity from 2014 until the present. Two drills have high acreage amounts and are experiencing increased maintenance needs. Mr. Whittington expressed concerns about the drill program and offered that the District should review not only the performance of the program but the availability of private businesses providing the service and the number of users who do not have a tractor to use the drill. Several others commented the drill program is very good advertising for District programs, knowledge about no-till practices being implemented is being captured and the no-till practice cost is a component of several of the cost share practices. After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Arnason made a motion to repair the drills to working order, distribute a survey among drill users about the service provided and finally to re-visit the drill program at the end of the drill season (November or December 2019). Ms. Norton seconded the motion and motion passed. Staff will develop a survey that includes how the user will prepare their planting if the no-till drill is not available to rent from the District. Staff will also continue to research other potential equipment rental opportunities for new conservation technologies. Mr. Arnason would also like information from other Districts who have an equipment rental program.

Audit

Ms. Fehrer reported the audit for 2016-2018 was completed in November and the exit interview with the auditor did not identify any areas of concern or issues that needed to be addressed. DCR will have a final audit report later in the year.

PLANNING

On a motion from Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Whittington, and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the annual renewal of Associate Directors, Horace Adams and Gary Dillard.

Ms. Norton reviewed the Annual Plan of Work for January through June 2019 and reminded everyone that it is a working document and changes can be made as needed.

WATERSHED

Mr. Arnason reported the District has not received comments from the Attorney General office regarding the request for clarification on the joint procurement process for engineering services. Ms. Fehrer reported the additional request for small dam repair funding was approved by the State SWCB in the amounts of \$35,000 for Buffalo #2 training berm; \$15,000 for Buffalo #9 repair of drainage swale; and \$45,000 engineering and construction for a wave berm replacement at Bush #5. Funds have also been set aside for the repairs needed from the October Hurricane damage at Bush #2 and Bush #7 (amounts will be determined after cost estimates are received from NRCS). Grant agreements for the funds will be forthcoming. Ms. Fehrer also reported NRCS engineering staff have completed the land surveys at Bush #2 and Bush #7 needed for repairs to the auxiliary spillways and downstream toe.

LEGISLATIVE

Dr. Chaffin reported that during the VASWCD Annual meeting staff Ms. Gibbs and Ms. Fehrer received the Chaffin award for their respective years of employment and that Mr. Wootton received the VACDE Outstanding Employee award. Ms. Gibbs was nominated by Kelly Snoddy at Peter Francisco SWCD and Ms. Fehrer; Mr. Wootton was nominated by DCR employees, Amanda Pennington and Darryl Glover. Ms. Fehrer mentioned that Mr. Dunn received his ten year service award as a District employee.

Dr. Chaffin and Mr. Rash participated in VASWCD Legislative day and garnered the support of Delegate Edmunds and Senator Ruff for the funding request for remote monitoring technology at District dams. The VASWCD is also supporting the request from DCR for an additional technical position to oversee equine and large turf programs. Mr. Rash is serving as co-chair on the VASWCD Legislative Committee.

PERSONNEL

Mr. Dillard reported no action has been taken regarding the Education Coordinator vacancy. He and Ms. Fehrer will be setting up interviews soon. Ms. Gibbs requested permission to serve as a counselor at Youth Conservation Camp. The Board unanimously agreed.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION

Mr. Powers reminded everyone of the upcoming dates of the scholarship, YCC, Poster Contest and Envirothon programs.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT *(See attached report)*

Ms. Fehrer reported the staff have been busy with quarterly and year end reporting, several education/outreach events and regular programming. Mr. Wootton reported the Landowner Breakfast meeting last week had good attendance and the speaker, Mr. Jack Boswell, did an outstanding job of communicating the legal concerns landowners have about allowing others to access their property (agri-tourism, hunting, events, etc.). The next meeting will focus on the permitting and other requirements about building a pond and speakers will include representatives from the Corp of Engineers, DEQ, DCR Dam Safety, VA Marine Resources and NRCS. Mr. Wootton thanked VCE and NRCS partners for their support and assistance in delivering the programs. Mr. Dunn reported the Winter Forage Council Conference that was held last week in Blackstone provided an opportunity for the District to staff a district exhibit and speak with many farmers in attendance. The District provided monetary support for the conference.

PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:**Department of Conservation and Recreation:** *(See attached report)*

Ms. Turner reviewed her report and mentioned the new DCR employee, David Bryan, who has replaced Gary Moore as the Agricultural Incentives Program Manager. Mr. Bryan will be attending all Spring Area meetings to meet SWCD directors and employees.

Virginia Cooperative Extension:

Ms. Norton passed out several flyers of upcoming events. The National Agricultural Agents Conference will be held in 2020 in Virginia Beach and Ms. Norton and Ms. Overby are heading up the Ag theme inspired decorations for the event.

Natural Resources Conservation Service: *(See attached report from Derek Hancock and Rachel Loveday)*

Mr. Hancock reviewed his report with the Board and will be providing a quarterly performance report including program workload. He mentioned that work is continuing despite the Federal Government shutdown and NRCS continues to operate. Limited assistance has been available when required information from FSA is necessary to administer a program. (FSA has been on furlough, although this week several employees have been called back to work, but without pay).

Ms. Loveday reviewed her report with the Board and pointed out several programs she has attended.

Virginia Department of Forestry:

Mr. Audley reported that Smokey Bear will be 75 years old in August 2019 and the 2019 calendar is a tribute to this much loved face of forestry. The annual Holiday Lake Forestry Camp has been renamed "Camp Woods & Wildlife", with hopes to attract more participants. The camp will be held in June at the Holiday Lake 4H Center and is open to middle school students. More information can be found on the Department of Forestry website. The District provides scholarship support to the camp.

Mr. Audley also reported a grant opportunity between the VA DOF and James River Association is available to landowners in the Middle James River Watershed to install riparian buffers with a goal of installing 700 acres of buffer. The program will cover 100% of the owner costs and the

program will be administered by DOF field staff. The \$750,000 grant is from a Dominion Energy settlement and will be available until December 31, 2021. Lastly Mr. Audley reported his Department received notification that a logging operation in Southeast Virginia had been targeted with vandalism and threats from an identified group. Landowners, loggers and forestry personnel were asked to be aware of possible continued threats.

Roundtable:

Mr. Wootton had samples of shirts that can be ordered with the updated Piedmont logo. Anyone wanting a shirt can select one from the local embroidery store or provide their own to be embroidered.

Ms. Fehrer will provide the FOIA presentation at the March meeting.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m.

ATTACHED REPORTS:

Conservation Report; DCR CDC Report; Staff report; NRCS Farmville and Amelia Service Center Report.

Submitted By _____ Date: _____
Deanna Fehrer, Piedmont SWCD Staff

Approved By: _____ Date: _____
Charles Arnason, Director / Secretary