



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Farmville, Virginia
January 28, 2020 11:00 a.m.**

Board Members Present:

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

Board Members Absent:

Bill Powers –Director, Prince Edward County

SWCD Staff Present:

Kelly Atkinson – Education Coordinator
Kevin Dunn – BMP Conservation Specialist
Deanna Fehrer- District Manager
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist
Earl Long – Intern, Longwood University

Partners Present:

Denney Collins – DCR CDC

Guests Present:

Sarah Eck – Nottoway County citizen
Emily Gibbs – 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 28, 2020. Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order, welcomed directors, staff and partners and led the group in prayer. A quorum was present. Mr. Earl Long, Piedmont SWCD spring intern and Longwood University college student, introduced himself. The following are additions to the agenda: Sponsorship of ‘Buy Fresh Buy Local’ guide and MOUs with watershed dam landowners.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the November 26, 2019 minutes as presented.

TREASURER’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board requested the write-off of an outstanding equipment rental invoice from Sid Ittner, 1312 Namozine Road, Crewe in the amount of \$208.49. Mr. Ittner will no longer be allowed to rent equipment from the Piedmont SWCD.

Ms. Fehrer asked for guidance regarding another outstanding equipment rental invoice from Joe Jenkins of Crewe, VA. Despite numerous attempts to contact Mr. Jenkins, there has been no resolution in the payment of \$846.61 of past due invoices. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Chaffin and carried by unanimous vote, the Board directed Ms. Fehrer to send a certified letter to Mr. Jenkins requesting payment and to include language that the matter will be turned over to the Attorney General's office for collection if payment is not made.**

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the December 2019 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit.

CONSERVATION REPORT

VACS Application Approvals

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS applications, totaling \$36,729.18 in Chesapeake Bay funding:

Amelia

Pamela P. Perdue

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0065)

SL-6W Livestock Exclusion with Wide Buffer (3,520')

Estimated Cost \$ 29,345.53

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 0.00

EQIP Cost-Share \$ 26,391.92

Estimated Tax Credit \$ 738.40 – tax credit only

Easter Design Inc.

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0063)

NM-4 Late Winter Split- Nitrogen on Small Grains (333.8 ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 2,002.80

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 1,502.10

Easter Design Inc.

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0063)

CCI-SL-6W Stream Exclusion -Wide Buffer Maintenance (4,350')

Estimated Cost \$ 6,912.50

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 6,912.50

Redfield Farm Inc.

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0041)

NM-1A Nutrient Management Plan Writing (82.1 ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 328.40

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 328.40

Don B. Benson

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0019)

NM-1A Nutrient Management Plan Writing (402.2 ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 1,169.78

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 1,169.78

Nottoway

Robert W. Norfleet

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0064)

FR-1 Afforestation of Hay, Crop and Pasture Land (2.2 ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 220.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 495.00

George P. Kite III
(C. Bay)
(05-20-0058)

FR-3 Woodland Buffer Filter Area (2 ac)
 Estimated Cost \$ 3,200.00
 Estimated Cost-Share \$ 3,240.00

Prince Edward
Neubauer Farms
(C. Bay)
(05-20-0035)

NM-1A Nutrient Management Plan Writing (123.2 ac)
 Estimated Cost \$ 246.40
 Estimated Cost-Share \$ 246.40

Kent M. McMillian
(C. Bay)
(05-20-0061)

FR-1 Afforestation of Hay, Crop and Pasture Land (10 ac)
 Estimated Cost \$ 1,000.00
 Estimated Cost-Share \$ 2,250.00

Boot Hill Dairy LLC
(C. Bay)
(05-20-0047)

FR-1 Afforestation of Hay, Crop and Pasture Land (70.6 ac)
 Estimated Cost \$ 7,060.00
 Estimated Cost-Share \$ 15,885.00

Sunny Slope Orchard
(C. Bay)
(05-20-0062)

CCI-WP-2W Stream Protection -Wide Buffer Maintenance (4,200')
 Estimated Cost \$ 4,700.00
 Estimated Cost-Share \$ 4,700.00

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the transfer of responsibilities of VACS BMP Contract 05-13-0063 - LE-1T from Joshua A. Whirley, to Charles P. Davis, 2212 Poorhouse Road, Rice, VA 23966.

DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic Application Cancellations and Approvals

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following septic cancellations:

Flat Creek, et al.

Lakeisha Davis
(05-18-0104)

RB-1 Septic Tank Pump Out

Estimated Cost \$ 300.00
 Estimated Cost-Share \$ 150.00 (50% cost-share rate)

Amelia County
 Did not meet project completion deadline.

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following septic applications:

Flat Creek, et al.

David D. Benson
(05-20-0060)

RB-1 Septic Tank Pump Out

Estimated Cost \$ 350.00
 Estimated Cost-Share \$ 228.00 (65% cost-share rate)

Amelia County

Pam Perdue
(05-20-0065)

RB-1 Septic Tank Pump Out

Estimated Cost \$ 350.00
 Estimated Cost-Share \$ 175.00 (50% cost-share rate)

Amelia County

Agriculture Conservation Plans

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved a conservation plan from Joseph W. Gills in Amelia as a requirement for the VACS program.

Mr. Dunn reported that approximately \$617,000 of VACS (both Chesapeake Bay and Outside Chesapeake Bay) funding has been allocated, which equates to about 60% of the District's total program year 2020 allocation.

Equipment Program

Ms. Fehrer provided the following updates on the drill program:

- Total drill acreage for calendar year 2019 totaled 1,329 acres. In 2018 1,504 acres were sowed with the drill. It was noted that the 2019 summer and fall seasons experienced extremely dry weather.
- Equipment loan with DEQ: In October Piedmont SWCD submitted a loan application to purchase a no-till drill through DEQ's loan program with a 50% loan forgiveness. In November, Ms. Fehrer was notified there were questions and concerns from the Virginia Resource Authority, who was approving the loans, that SWCDs may not be able to legally incur debt. DEQ received an opinion from their legal counsel confirming that according to the VA Code, SWCDs could not incur debt. According to Lars Bolton, DEQ Loan Program Manager, the loan program staff are preparing recommendations for changes to the loan program that will allow SWCDs to get financial assistance for the purchase of conservation equipment, however, those recommendations will need to be approved by DEQ senior management and the State Water Control Board and would not become effective until July 1, 2020.
- Ms. Fehrer updated the Board on additional employment taken by Mr. Stephen Reames and the possible impact to the scheduling of the drills.
- Ms. Eck suggested a checklist be utilized after the rental of the drill where the renter would sign and notify Piedmont SWCD of any problems or items that need to be repaired.

On a motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved to delay the purchase of the no-till seeder until further details and information about the loan application are available.

De-listing of segment of Deep Creek Watershed

Ms. Fehrer received notification from DEQ about an 11.55mile-long segment of Deep Creek in Amelia County that has been de-listed from the Virginia's Impaired Waters List. The attached draft article documents the water quality monitoring data, the agriculture best management practices that have been implemented and partners in the projects. Most of the agricultural BMPs implemented were funded through the VACS program, USDA-NRCS and FSA program funds.

FINANCE

On a motion by Mr. Whittington, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the addition of Charles Wootton as a signature to the District's two checking accounts (general operations and cost share).

Ms. Fehrer reported she has not received notification from DEQ regarding the two septic grant proposals submitted to DEQ in November 2019. DEQ did indicate they were completing the paperwork to extend the current septic grants to September 30, 2020.

Ms. Crews reported she works part-time for the Prince Edward Virginia Cooperative Extension office as the Local Foods Program Assistant and part of her workload is to update the 2020 Heart of Virginia Buy Fresh Buy Local guide. The guide covers Amelia, Appomattox, Brunswick, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties and provides to consumers information regarding local agriculture producers, their products and local businesses that support agriculture. The goal is to print 5,000 copies which are free to the public. The cost to print is approximately \$3,000. **On a motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved a \$250 contribution for sponsorship of the guide.** Sponsors will be given recognition on the guide and directors will encourage SWCDs located in the guide's distribution area to make a contribution.

PLANNING

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board renewed annual Associate Director terms for Horace Adams, Prince Edward County and Gary Dillard, Amelia County and appointed two new Associate Directors, Sarah Eck, Nottoway County and Emily Gibbs representing Amelia County.

Ms. Norton reviewed the January – June 2020 District's Annual Plan of Work and reminded everyone it is a working document that serves to remind staff and directors of workload, deadlines and upcoming events.

Ms. Fehrer distributed the 2020 Piedmont SWCD Committee list and asked that board members review and indicate if they would like to serve on different committees. Ms. Fehrer provided updated FOIA guidelines (attached).

WATERSHED

Mr. Arnason reported negotiations with A. Morton Thomas & Associates (AMT, Inc.) resulted in a term contract and MOU for engineering services for districts participating in the small dam repair engineering RFP. The documents were reviewed by Attorney General representative, Grant Kronenberg. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the Term Contract and MOU for engineering services with A. Morton Thomas & Associates (AMT, Inc.) procured under RFP#2019-Term-SDR.** Participating districts will formally agree to the contracts per the MOU for joint procurement that was approved by all the participating districts earlier in 2019. (Documents on file).

The Piedmont SWCD posted a request for bid for the repair of two watershed projects that been allocated funding by DCR. There were three responsive bidders for the following projects: training dike and outfall pool repairs on Buffalo #2 dam, and rip rap lined channel repair on Buffalo #9 dam. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved two contracts to the lowest responsive bidder, Handley Excavating & Development LLC of Ivy, VA, in the amount of \$19,770 for Buffalo #2 training dike/outfall pool projects and \$19,525 for Buffalo #9 rip rap lined channel repair on Buffalo #9 dam.** (Documents on file).

The training dike project at Buffalo #2 will require removal of soil adjacent to the auxiliary spillway on property owned by Countryside Service Company, LLC and removal of vegetation on property owned by Peter and Christine Del Collo. Per advisement from DCR Soil and Water dam engineer, Charles Wilson, a MOU with each landowner was prepared. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved MOUs with each landowner. (Documents on file).**

Mr. Arnason reported that the annual dam inspections will be conducted March 11-12, 2020.

LEGISLATIVE

Dr. Chaffin reported that he was unable to attend Legislative Days but there was a good attendance of SWCD directors and staff that resulted in productive meetings with legislators. Mr. Rash is now the co-chair of the VASWCD Legislative Committee and has been working with Dr. Tyree, VASWCD Executive Director, to monitor legislative activity. A weekly report from Don Wells, VASWCD past legislative chair, is emailed to the "All District" list serve. Please review to keep updated on legislative activity related to SWCDs and natural resources. Dr. Chaffin also reminded everyone of the upcoming Area V Spring meeting and passed around a sign-up form.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION

Ms. Atkinson reported information about Scholarships, Youth Conservation Camp and Poster Contest has been distributed to local schools, Envirothon coaches, partners and also posted on the District's website and Facebook page. Ms. Atkinson has organized a 'Speaker Series' for the Envirothon program which brings resource specialists to Envirothon teams and coaches. NRCS Soils Specialist, Louise Jacques, assisted at the first speaker series and the participants were very positive about the training. The Piedmont SWCD is also hosting a local competition/Area V workshop on April 2 at the Longwood University Environmental Education Center. Currently there are two Envirothon teams from Amelia County High School and one from Fuqua School. Ms. Atkinson reported she is working on updating the District's website and asked for feedback, especially if links are not working properly.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT *(See attached report)*

Ms. Fehrer reported that the District received the Outstanding Exhibit award at the VASWCD Annual meeting recently held in Norfolk. She thanked the staff for their contributions in making an award-winning exhibit which highlighted 80 years in the Piedmont SWCD, honoring the 80th year anniversary.

PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:

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

Ms. Collins reported that quarterly reports were submitted on time with no errors and that third quarter disbursements will be going out the week of February 6, 2020. The IRS mileage rate for 2020 is .575/mile. There are new rules regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act in regards to overtime and asked the District to review and take any necessary action. Ms. Collins will be providing a new Director Phase I training to new directors and associate directors and a Phase II training is scheduled for April 6, 2020 in the Farmville conference room. Ms. Collins announced that Roland Owens, the DCR Tracking Program guru, will be taking a job with DEQ and his last day at DCR is February 7, 2020. A replacement has not been named. The Governor's budget was released that includes \$47M in WQIF funds for SWCDs, including \$24.6M Chesapeake Bay

VACS funds, \$10.5M Outside CB VACS funds, \$4.6M technical assistance, \$4.9 in reserves. There are no additional operational funds. Two staff positions, one for the Resource Management Program and one for the Nutrient Management Program are included in the DCR budget, and \$250,000 for updates to the BMP tracking program. Lastly the State Soil and Water Board approved a change to the policy regarding technical assistance which is effective January 1, 2020. The change states if a SWCD does not meet the 90% obligation of their allocated VACS funding, then they can only keep their base technical assistance (those bases have been updated and will apply effective January 1, 2020. The bases will be reviewed every two years for possible adjustments.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Ms. Norton reported VCE is sponsoring a Hemp Production Meeting on February 25, 2020 at the SPAREC facility. She reported a couple of staff changes – Ms. Laura Siegle, former Amelia VCE agent, has taken a job with the Chesterfield County Fire Department and Ms. Katy Overby will be leaving her agent position at the Prince Edward office to take a position with the State Military Affairs at Fort Pickett. Ms. Norton will be providing assistance to those two offices until the positions are filled.

USDA-NRCS

Mr. Hancock reported that in late February, NRCS will begin batching funding applications. Funding levels of \$25M has been allocated to EQIP and \$6M to CSP. NRCS is beginning to implement new conservation software and employees are being trained. Mr. Hancock will be undergoing a National Security and Civil Rights review this week and as part of that review he has organized an ‘active shooter’ training for this building on February 12, 2020.

ROUNDTABLE

Ms. Crews announced she attended a session at the VASWCD Annual meeting that featured the author of “Nature Play”, a book addressing the need for children to get outside to play and learn. The author is promoting a “Children’s Outdoor Bill of Rights” that she hopes will be adopted by all states. Ms. Crews will be providing more information about the bill of rights, and hopes to help raise awareness of this important need.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

ATTACHED REPORTS:

Conservation report; FOIA updates; DCR CDC report; Staff report.

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

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