



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Farmville, Virginia
November 26, 2019 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
Bill Powers –Director, Prince Edward County
Horace Adams- Associate Director, Prince Edward County
Allison Crews – Director Elect, Amelia County

Board Members Absent:

Juan Whittington –Appointed Director, Amelia County
Haley Norton- Appointed Director, VCE Nottoway County
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County

SWCD Staff Present:

Kelly Atkinson – Education Coordinator
Kevin Dunn – BMP Conservation Specialist
Deanna Fehrer- District Manager
Emily Gibbs – Residential Program Specialist
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist

Partners Present:

Denney Collins – DCR CDC
Derek Hancock – NRCS District Conservationist
Rachel Loveday – NRCS District Conservationist
Doug Audley – Department of Forestry, Amelia County

Guests Present:

Daphne Cole – Nottoway County citizen
Sarah Eck – Nottoway County citizen

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, November 26, 2019. Vice-Chairman Rash called the meeting to order, welcomed directors, staff and partners and offered congratulations to all the re-elected and newly elected directors. A quorum was present. By consensus, the board approved the following additions to the agenda: extension of Flat Creek septic grant, personnel announcement and draft legislative agenda. Ms. Fehrer asked that the committee reports be rearranged to begin with a report from the Personnel Committee.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Chaffin and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the October 22, 2019 minutes as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Personnel Committee chair, Ms. Fehrer announced that Ms. Gibbs has accepted a position at Amelia County as an Environmental Specialist beginning December 31, 2019. Ms. Fehrer along with members of the Board, offered their congratulations and best wishes for continued success with her career. Ms. Fehrer thanked Ms. Gibbs for all her wonderful contributions to the PSWCD and expressed how much she will be missed. Ms. Gibbs thanked everyone for all the support she received during her employment at PSWCD and also how much she will miss everyone. Mr. Rash suggested the Board consider appointing Ms. Gibbs as an associate director at the January meeting.

Ms. Fehrer reported she received an inquiry from Earl Long, a student at Longwood University, regarding an intern position for the 2020 spring semester. Mr. Long is a biology major and has worked on his grandfather's farm in Prince George county. Ms. Fehrer met with Mr. Long and he was eager to learn more about conservation and would be able to assist staff with some of the workload. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Chaffin and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved Ms. Fehrer of employing Mr. Long as an intern for the spring semester to include a stipend of \$500.**

Chairman Moyer arrived and presided over the remainder of the meeting.

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:

Nottoway

Elizabeth Irby

(S.R - OCB

(05-20-0056)

FR-1 Afforestation of Hay, Crop and Pasture Land (8.5 ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 850.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 1,912.50

George Kite III

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0058)

SL-6W Stream Exclusion -Wide Buffer and Grazing Land Mgmt. (2,800')

Estimated Cost \$27,840.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$23,664.00

Estimated Buffer Rent \$ 3,200.00

Estimated Tax Credit \$ 244.00

George Kite Jr.

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0057)

CCI-SL-6W Stream Exclusion -Wide Buffer Maintenance (4,580')

Estimated Cost \$ 7,225.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 7,225.00

DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic Application Cancellations and Approvals

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

Flat Creek, et al.

**William Worsham
(05-18-0080)**

RB-1 Septic Tank Pump Out

Estimated Cost \$ 300.00

Amelia County

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

**No longer plans to participate and asked the District to cancel his application.*

Spring Creek, et al.

**Mathew Watkins
(05-18-0087)**

RB-1 Septic Tank Pump Out

Estimated Cost \$ 300.00

Prince Edward County

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 270.00 (90% cost-share rate)

**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.

**Ethel Hobbs
(05-20-0005)**

RB-3 Conventional Onsite Sewage System Repair

Estimated Cost \$ 4,100.00

Nottoway County

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 3,515.00 (90% cost-share rate)

**The client completed a pump-out (RB-1), and repair needs were found. The \$175.00 cost-share that was received for the RB-1 is subtracted from the total eligible cost-share amount per DEQ program guidelines.*

**Rebecca Lynch
(05-20-0053)**

RB-3 Conventional Onsite Sewage System Repair

Estimated Cost \$ 2,400.00

Amelia County

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 1,200.00 (50% cost-share rate)

Spring Creek, et al.

**James Garnett, Jr.
(05-20-0051)**

RB-4 Conventional Onsite Sewage System Replacement/Installation

Estimated Cost \$ 5,875.00

Prince Edward County

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 2,937.50 (50% cost-share rate)

**Donald Miller, Jr.
(05-20-0054)**

RB-3R Conventional Onsite Sewage System Non-Permitted Repair

Estimated Cost \$ 2,500.00

Prince Edward County

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 1,250.00 (50% cost-share rate)

**James Heinold
(05-20-0055)**

RB-1 Septic Tank Pump Out

Estimated Cost \$ 350.00

Prince Edward County

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 245.00 (70% cost-share rate)

The PSWCD next meeting will be held January 28, 2020 and in the interim there may be septic applications that need approval before the January meeting. **On a motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the staff to approve septic applications and that the Board will retroactively approve at the January Board meeting.**

Equipment Purchase

There is no update on the loan process from DEQ. The loan process for SWCDs continues to be on hold because of the questions about the ability for SWCDs to incur debt. DEQ, Virginia Resource Authority (VRA) and DCR are working with the Attorney General's office to get an opinion and resolution.

Other Conservation Items

Last month Mr. Whittington voiced concerns over the cost share rate for FR-1 practices (new rates this program year). The staff have prepared a letter addressed to the VACS program TAC (technical advisory committee). TAC committee members, Mr. Dunn and Mr. Wootton, suggested to wait until 2020 to submit the letter because the TAC will not be addressing any new comments or concerns until early 2020.

FINANCE

The PSWCD will not need a group health insurance policy as of January 1, 2020, so Ms. Fehrer reported she will withdrawal the group application.

Ms. Fehrer reported that the PSWCD has two dam repair projects out for bid (Buffalo #2 – training dike and outfall pool repair and Buffalo #9 – repair of eroded channel) and that a contract for construction will be awarded at the January Board meeting. These projects were designed by NRCS and funding has been approved for construction. During the construction of the projects, it will be necessary for an inspector to be present to verify the contractor is following the design plans and to document the work so that the 'as built' plans can be finalized. Staff are not qualified to oversee the repairs and contractors and both NRCS and DCR do not have the staff capacity to supervise the projects. Mr. Barry Mason is a retired USDA-NRCS employee who served as their dam construction inspector. Mr. Mason lives locally and is willing to serve as the inspector. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Chaffin and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved a contract with Mr. Mason to provide the construction inspector services at a rate of \$45/hour, not to exceed 300 hours annually.** Mr. Arnason commented that the hourly rate is more economical than hiring an engineering firm. A copy of the contract is on file at the office.

On a motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved an extension to the Flat Creek 319 Residential Septic grant #16143 to March 31, 2020 that also includes a reduction in the amount of bmp funding by \$35,000. Ms. Fehrer explained that DEQ is working to extend the grant further to September 30, 2020, but has not received approval from EPA. After the reduction in funding, there is \$36,144.75 bmp funds available to allocate to eligible applicants.

Mr. Rash reported he has been asked by VASWCD to represent Virginia SWCDs at the NACD annual meeting that is being held in February 2020 in Las Vegas, NV and asked if PSWCD could cover some of the cost. He will inquire with the VASWCD to see how much of the expense they can cover and PSWCD will revisit in January.

PLANNING

Mr. Moyer asked for nominations of PSWCD Board officers whose terms begin in January. **On a motion by Mr. Powers, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the current officers to serve as officers in 2020.**

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved Ms. Fehrer to continue to serve as the FOIA and Record Retention Officer for 2020.

WATERSHED

Mr. Arnason reported the interviews for the RFP Small Dam Repair Term Contract were conducted by representatives from DCR, NRCS and several SWCDs. The firms interviewed were Schnabel, AMT, OBG and Hurt & Proffitt. All the firms were qualified and had good presentations. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the interview committee's recommendation for Piedmont SWCD to begin contract negotiations with A. Morton Thomas & Associates (AMT, Inc.).**

Mr. Arnason also updated the board on several other items including the following: PSWCD received a letter from DCR soil and water district dam engineer, Charles Wilson, documenting the damage by the landowner to the emergency spillway on Bush #6. DCR is requiring the PSWCD to repair the damage and that an alteration permit will not be needed. Staff will work with the landowner to complete the repairs.

An Operation and Maintenance application has been submitted to Dam Safety to renew the conditional operation certificate. Several other updates were reported on the document Ms. Fehrer sent to the entire board earlier in the month. (See attached).

LEGISLATIVE

Dr. Chaffin reported that during the VASWCD annual meeting in December, the director members will approve a 2020 legislative agenda (draft attached). The agenda includes many of the same requests for funding as last year.

Mr. Rash reported that the Governor's office is reviewing a possible mandatory livestock stream exclusion requirement for Virginia farmers who own livestock.

Mr. Dunn reported that in order for the approved TAC recommendations to VACS program specifications and policy to be implemented, DCR needs additional funding for the technology required to update the DCR BMP tracking program. The Board agreed to support Mr. Dunn's request for additional DCR technology program funding, to be added to the VASWCD legislative agenda.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION

Ms. Atkinson reported the PSWCD has two official Envirothon teams from Amelia High School and Fuqua School and that she is coordinating a speaker/training series that will begin in January for the teams. Ms. Atkinson also reported she had a successful meeting with a Longwood

University professor about the natural resource trainings that PSWCD can provide to student teachers.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT *(See attached report)*

Ms. Fehrer referenced her report and highlighted staff's workload accomplishments this month. She thanked Ms. Atkinson for creating the '80 Years of PSWCD' exhibit that will be taken to the VASWCD annual meeting. Information about Virginia Forage and Grasslands Council's winter conference was passed around.

PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:

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

Ms. Collins reviewed her report. She announced the training for newly elected directors will be scheduled in early 2020. Ms. Collins also reviewed the meeting and other expectations for directors and provided guidance on representing SWCDs during public meetings, dealing with media and other 'code of conduct' suggestions.

USDA-NRCS *(See attached report)*

Ms. Loveday reviewed her report. She announced she will be serving as Acting Resource Conservationist at the Area office and that there are no updates from Washington, DC on National Policy. Ms. Loveday announced the upcoming retirement of Joan Poore, FSA Amelia County Executive Director. Mr. Hancock reported Rita McFalls, FSA Acting County Executive Director for Nottoway and Prince Edward counties is also retiring and a farewell drop-in will be held December 19, 2019 in the Farmville office.

Department of Forestry

Doug Audley reported that 2020 will be the 100th anniversary of the Virginia State Forest program and highlights of many of the state managed forests can be seen on the 2020 DOF calendar.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

ATTACHED REPORTS:

Conservation report; Dam updates; Legislative agenda, DCR CDC report; Staff report; NRCS report.

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

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