



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Farmville, Virginia
July 26, 2022 11:00 a.m.**

Board Members Present:

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman
Bill Powers –Director, Prince Edward County / Secretary
Charles “Chuck” Arnason –Director, Nottoway County / Treasurer
Allison Crews – Director, Amelia County
Horace Adams- Director, Prince Edward County
Juan Whittington – Appointed Director, Amelia County
Sarah Eck – Associate Director, Nottoway County

Board Members, Staff & Partners Absent:

Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County /Vice Chairman
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County

SWCD Staff Present:

Kevin Dunn – BMP Conservation Specialist
Deanna Fehrer - District Manager
Tyler Smith – BMP Conservation Technician
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist

Partners Present:

Denney Collins, Conservation District Coordinator, Dept. Conservation & Recreation
Jeremy Evans, NRCS District Conservationist, Nottoway/Farmville
Cristy Cook, FSA County Director, Farmville Office

Board Members, Staff and Partners participating remotely:

Kelly Atkinson – PSWCD Education Specialist

Guests Present:

Dr. Kathy Gee, Professor Longwood University
Gregg Zody, Planning and Economic Development Director, Nottoway County

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

A regular meeting of the Piedmont SWCD Board of Directors was held at the Prince Edward County Natural Resources and Agriculture Building in Farmville on Tuesday, July 26, 2022. Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer. A quorum was physically present. Additions to the agenda include dedicated funds and conservation committee minutes from June 21, 2022.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Powers, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the June 21, 2022 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 June 2022 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit. A detailed written report was provided to the Finance Committee.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE – Presented by Mr. Dunn and Mr. Wootton

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the June 21, 2022 Conservation Committee minutes. (attached)

On a motion by Mr. Whittington, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS contract correction: Additional \$4.00 paid in cost share to contract 05-22-0047 NM1 (2 additional acres were written into the nutrient management plan).

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board voted to table action on a contract cancellation of a CREP practice for participant Sandy Lush, 05-16-0002. There was some confusion about the status of the CREP contract with FSA and the District needs confirmation from FSA and Mr. Lush's widow about the contract.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Adams and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the FY23 VACS Cost List as presented (attached). Several component costs were increased, costs for labor types were added and several components were designated with a 'design-based cost' (requires at least 2 bids). Districts can adjust the cost list at least once per year, but it is hopeful that these updates will be sufficient for this program year.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the authority to transfer FY23 VACS funding back to FY22 active contracts for structural practices to reflect estimated costs and cost share utilizing the FY23 VACS cost list. The contracts with associated additional costs will be included on the board agenda for August or September board meeting.

On a motion by Mr. Whittington, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved an agreement between James River Association and the District for compensation of \$2,250 paid to the District upon completion of activities in support of the James River Association Buffer Program (agreement attached). The program is available to landowners in the James River watershed of Amelia, Nottoway and Prince Edward counties. James River Association provides funding, contractors and designs for landowners to install riparian buffers. PSWCD's role will solely be providing outreach for the program and referring potential clients to James River Association.

DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic Contracts

On a motion by Ms. Crews, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following septic applications totaling \$175.00 (Flat Creek #16970 grant) and \$30,802.50 (Spring Creek #16969).

Spring Creek, etc. #16969

Prince Edward

Lisa Justice

05-23-0001 (484467)

RB-5 Alternative Residential Septic System

Estimated Cost	\$	27,425.00	(variance approved by DEQ)
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Estimated Cost Share (90%)	\$	24,682.50
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Catherine Smith

05-23-0002 (484483)

RB-4 Conventional Onsite Septic System Repair/Replace

Estimated Cost	\$	6,800.00
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Estimated Cost Share (90%)	\$	6,120.00
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Flat Creek, etc. #16970

Amelia

Catherine Dail

05-23-0003 (490515)

RB-1 Residential Septic Pump out

Estimated Cost	\$	350.00
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Estimated Cost Share (50%)	\$	175.00
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Conservation Plans

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the following conservation plans (10) signed by staff for FSA:

Southall Fairview Farms, Lanette G. Coleman, Richard & Celia Elzay, William L Hamlett III, Dr. James Gates, Walter B Glascock (2), Wes Reames, Poor House Dairy LLC, Glenn Murphy, Jessica Fariss. All except one (Poor House Dairy – change in ownership) were for re-enrollment in CRP.

Mr. Smith reviewed several new changes to the VACS program including new participant cap, several new practices, cover crop rate increases, buffer rate changes, NM3C & NM5N cost reimbursement changes and consequences if appropriate signatures are omitted from the VACS contract. Ms. Fehrer made some positive comments about Mr. Dunn's performance this past program year and the many fields, tracts, programs, cost rates and dates he has to keep straight to complete and pay a contract.

Ms. Fehrer reported that DCR completed a program review of PSWCD's Resource Management Plan program and found that the program was implemented following all procedures and policies.

Mr. Dunn reported that the owner of Dunn Right, LLC has not signed the letter the Board approved last month regarding the owner's request of increased cost share assistance. The Board again stated he will not be paid the increased cost share outlined in the letter unless he signs the letter. He also did not notify Mr. Kevin Dunn when he started drilling the third well.

FINANCE COMMITTEE - The Finance Committee met at 9:30am prior to the Board meeting

On a motion from the Finance Committee and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following two grant agreements:

DCR Operational Grant Agreement #503OPS-23-34-GF in the amounts of \$216,888 for administration and operations and \$63,000 for dam maintenance. Mr. Arnason reported there are two new grant deliverables #1) The District must host one agricultural community outreach event during the year and #2) The District must notify Virginia State University Small Farm Outreach program of every outreach event conducted by the District.

DCR VACS Cost-share and Technical Assistance Grant Agreement #503CSTA-23-34-GF in the amounts of \$2,506,750 of CB VACS, \$83,342 in OCB VACS and \$315,895 in technical assistance funding. There were no changes to grant deliverables.

On a motion from the Finance Committee and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the FY23 Operational budget (including VACS cost share) of \$3,105,796 (attached). In addition to the funding amounts from the DCR grant agreements for operations, dam maintenance and VACS funding, the budget also included level funding from the three localities, 319 septic grants administrative funding and estimated income from the equipment rental program. Funding includes the following changes for staff compensation (5% cost of living increase across the board, 3% merit increase and retention of IRA bonus for most employees – budget workpapers detail the amounts). In addition to regular operation expenses, the budget includes a line item for funds set aside to purchase a new vehicle to replace the Explorer vehicle.

On a motion from the Finance Committee and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the FY22 funding carryovers in the amount of \$1,546,654.90. The carryovers include obligated VACS and septic contracts, operation and technical assistance reserve, employee leave payouts, IT equipment purchases, digitization of historic records, increase in rent, vehicle replacement, and dam maintenance not covered under the SDR fund. A detailed line-item report is on file in the office.

Ms. Fehrer reported the IRS increased the reimbursable mileage rate to 62.5 cents/mile starting July 1, 2022.

PLANNING

Ms. Fehrer reviewed the FY22 summary of accomplishments of the District and expressed thanks to the staff for all the goals they accomplished this past year (attached). This information will be put into the District's annual report that will be shared with our mailing list, localities and partners. She reminded directors of the FOIA training requirement due by December 31, 2022 for all elected directors. Three webinars are scheduled (August 9, September 13 and October 12).

On a motion by Ms. Crews, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote (with Mr. Whittington abstaining), the Board approved the nomination of Juan Whittington for reappointment of the 'At-Large Board Appointed Director' position with the term beginning January 1, 2023. Mr. Whittington's name will be forwarded to the Virginia State Soil and Water Board for formal approval.

WATERSHED

Mr. Arnason reported the District office received one bid for the Bush #7 storm damage repair. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved a contract for Bush #7 storm damage repair with B&B Services, LLC in the amount of \$32, 500 which includes the bid price and extra funding to cover several items added to the contract scope of work.** The bid was significantly lower than the estimated repair costs calculated by AMT Engineering.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE – no report**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

On a motion by Mr. Whittington, seconded by Mr. Adams and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved updates to the Personnel Policy as outlined in the draft policy emailed to board members. A summary of changes is attached.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION

Ms. Atkinson reported she is working on the layout of the annual report. Several upcoming local events will feature a PSWCD exhibit include the Amelia County Fair (August 5-7) and Family Farm Day (September 10). Ms. Atkinson has also organized a Project Learning Tree educator training for September 15.

DISTRICT MANAGER AND PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS**Staff reports (Attached)**

Ms. Fehrer reported that the program year end reports and quarterly tax reports were completed. She gave several Dam Program updates (RFB for Remote Monitoring Systems, upcoming landowner meeting) and that staff are preparing for the new program year.

Department of Conservation and Recreation (Attached).

Ms. Collins highlighted some important dates and other information from her attached report.

USDA-NRCS – Farmville & Amelia (Attached)

Mr. Evans is currently acting District Conservation for the Amelia office. He highlighted several deadlines and gave status updates on program applications/approvals. Position vacancies include Private Lands Biologist and Amelia District Conservationist. Mr. Evans requested the assistance of District staff to assist with field verifications of GCI contracts.

USDA-Farm Service Agency – Farmville

Ms. Cook reported on several program updates. The acreage reporting has been completed and the office is preparing information to request a drought declaration status for Nottoway County and eastern Prince Edward County. CREP program re-enrollment includes 6 participants from Prince Edward County and 1 participant from Nottoway.

Roundtable:

Ms. Crews announced Amelia County approved a 650-acre solar project which will be located near the Amelia County landfill. Several solar projects have been approved in Amelia County, but currently there are no projects under production. Mr. Moyer reported that Amelia County is working on a solar land use ordinance and a public hearing will be scheduled in the near future. Mr. Zody was asked about any solar land use ordinances in Nottoway County and he reported the County is in the process of updating their comprehensive plan to include that land use and will work on ordinance language after the approval of the comprehensive plan.

Mr. Dunn reported he responded to a request for soils maps from an Amelia Board of Supervisor member.

Ms. Fehrer reminded everyone of the change in the August Board meeting to Tuesday, August 30.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 1:25 pm.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

Staff & DCR reports.

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

Approved By: _____ Date: _____
Bill Powers, Director / Secretary