



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Farmville, Virginia
February 28, 2023 11:00 a.m.**

Board Members Present:

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman
Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County /Vice Chairman
Charles “Chuck” Arnason –Director, Nottoway County / Treasurer
Horace Adams- Director, Prince Edward County
Allison Crews – Director, Amelia County
Juan Whittington – Appointed Director, Amelia County
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County
Sarah Eck – Associate Director, Nottoway County
Mackenzie Gunn – Associate Director, Amelia County & VCE ANR agent
Dr. Kathy Gee, Associate Director, Nottoway County & LU Environmental Science Prof.

Board Members, Staff & Partners Absent:

Bill Powers –Director, Prince Edward County / Secretary
Erin Small – VCE Appointed Director, Prince Edward County

SWCD Staff Present:

Kelly Atkinson – Education Specialist
Kevin Dunn – 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
Jordan Rabon, Private Lands Biologist, Quail Forever
Jeremy Evans, NRCS District Conservationist, Nottoway/Farmville
Tara Ciavarella, NRCS District Conservationist, Amelia

Guests Present:

Marina Morris, Youth Conservation Leadership Institute participant

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, February 28, 2023. Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer. A quorum was present. Ms. Atkinson introduced Marina Morris, a student from Amelia County, who is participating in the Youth Conservation Leadership Institute.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Ms. Crews, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the January 24, 2023 minutes as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the January 2023 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit.

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

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS practice cancellation in OCB VACS funding:

Thomas Boose (OCB)	SL-1 Permanent Vegetative Cover (5 ac)
05-22-0023 (463744)	Estimated Cost \$ 1,741.25
	Estimated Cost-Share \$ 1,741.25

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS practice corrections totaling an additional \$100.00 in CB VACS funding (contract 05-23-0023) and the correction of extent of exclusion on contract 05-23-0016:

AMEVA	CCI WP-4 Animal Waste Control Maintenance (1 Structure/34 Animal Units[AU])
05-23-0023 (521706)	Estimated Cost \$ 5,850.00
	Estimated Cost-Share \$ 5,850.00

*Original Instance had 30 AU; 34 AU should have been approved with an increase of \$100 c/s.

Triple R Dairy LLC	CCI WP-2N Stream Exclusion Maintenance (8,700')
05-23-0016 (521650)	Estimated Cost \$ 6,525.00
	Estimated Cost-Share \$ 6,525.00

*Original Instance listed as CCI-WP-2W and footage listed as 6,525'. Correct extent of exclusion is 8,700'.

Mr. Rash reported that he, Mr. Arnason and Mr. Kevin Dunn met with Mr. R.L. Dunn at his farm on February 24 to discuss the concerns he continues to have with his PSWCD approved projects. During the visit, they walked the entire farm, answered his questions and explained how the guidelines, specifications and program policies are developed and how they are enforced by DCR. Mr. Dunn signed the June 22, 2022 letter that documented approval of additional cost share funding for contract 05-22-0060. (A copy is attached to these minutes). Kevin Dunn will return to the farm and help with installing a corner portion of a fence and hopefully that practice will be completed soon and can be paid. Ms. Eck suggested the board have a discussion about lessons learned from this issue. Mr. Rash reported that in his career on the PSWCD Board that there have only been three instances where Directors have had to step in to help with resolution/communication.

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved increases in the following VACS contracts (utilizing FY23 cost list) totaling \$ 6,309.05 in CB VACS funding:

Dunn Right Meadows LLC	SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (50'/10yr) (5,800')
05-22-0060 (468988)	Estimated Cost \$ 65,859.50 69,569.50
	Estimated Cost-Share \$ 62,566.53 (95%) 66,091.03
	Estimated Buffer Payment \$ 4,000.00 4,000.00
	Total Estimated Cost Share \$ 66,566.53 70,091.03

*\$3,710.00 Increase Cost- \$3,524.50 C-S Increase

Dunn Right Meadows LLC 05-22-0060 (469423)*	SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (50'/10yr) (2,450')		
	Estimated Cost	\$ 49,269.00	51,283.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 46,805.55(95%)	48,718.85
	Estimated Buffer Payment	\$ 2,400.00	2,400.00
	Total Estimated Cost Share	\$ 49,205.55	51,118.85

*\$2,014.00 Increase- \$1,913.30 C-S Increase

Dunn Right Meadows LLC 05-22-0060 (471073)	SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Bufer (35'/10yr) (2,400')		
	Estimated Cost	\$ 14,925.00	15,950.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 12,686.25(85%)	13,557.50
	Estimated Buffer Payment	\$ 1,600.00	1,600.00
	Total Estimated Cost Share	\$ 14,286.25	15,157.50

*\$1,025.00 Increase- \$871.25 C-S Increase

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS practices totaling \$ 45,878.75 in CB VACS funding:

Amelia (CB)

AMEVA 05-23-0023 (523309)	NM-6 Manure Injection (61.5ac)		
	Estimated Cost	\$ 2,767.50	
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 2,767.50	

W D Coleman 05-23-0008 (523278)	CCI SL-6W Stream Exclusion Maintenance (4,506')		
	Estimated Cost	\$ 7,382.50	
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 7,382.50	

Nottoway (CB)

Ronald L. Boyd 05-23-0075 (522993)	CCI SL-6W Stream Exclusion Maintenance (9,423')		
	Estimated Cost	\$ 13,528.75	
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 13,528.75	

Prince Edward (CB)

James R. Farley, Sr. 05-23-0076 (523285)	CCI SL-6W Stream Exclusion Maintenance (16,360')		
	Estimated Cost	\$ 22,200.00	
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 22,200.00	

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews (with Mr. Moyer leaving the room) and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS practice totaling \$ 4,522.50 in CB VACS funding:

Oakmulgee Dairy 05-23-0007 (523313)	NM-6 Manure Injection (100.5ac)		
	Estimated Cost	\$ 4,522.50	
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 4,522.50	

On a motion by Mr. Rash seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the following VACS tax credit totaling \$ 111.86 (designated approval in December by Conservation Committee):

W. D. Coleman 05-23-0008 (504428)	SL-7 Extension of Water System (75%) (41.43ac)		
	Total Actual Cost	\$ 1,789.80	
	Total Cost Share	\$ 1,342.35	
	Tax Credit Approved	\$ 111.86	

On a motion by Ms. Crews, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following 319 Residential Septic contract totaling \$ 200.00:

Spring Creek #16969

Approval

Jesse Yeatts

05-23-0068 (522453)

RB-1 Conventional Septic System Pump out (rental)

Estimated Cost \$ 400.00

Estimated Cost Share (50%) \$ 200.00

Ms. Fehrer reported that Mr. Whittington will be hosting our producer appreciation event at his farm and he suggested we combine it with our April board meeting, as we have usually done this with prior award banquet events. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Adams and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved board meeting time changes and funding as follows: changing the April 25 board meeting time to 2:00pm with the customer appreciate event following at 5:00pm; and approving an estimated \$3,050.00 of funds to provide food, table/chair rentals and porta-john rentals for the event.** Ms. Fehrer said they would be sending out invites to producers who have participated in our programs in FY22 & 23, and our partners. The estimated cost is based on 100 attendees.

Ms. Fehrer thanked Ms. Gunn for taking the leading in organizing the Partner meeting on Monday, March 20 at 4:00pm which will be held in the conference room at the Amelia County Administrative office. Partners who will be presenting information will include PSWCD, VCE, DOF, NRCS, FSA, VSU Small Farm Outreach and James River Association. There will be light refreshments. The meeting is focusing on new farmers and smaller, underserved farmers. Ms. Fehrer asked everyone to share the meeting information/flyer.

Ms. Crews requested that the District continue to promote itself and the programs/services it offers by using signage. She asked board members, staff and partners to install either the BMP signage or SWCD signs at their farms/homes. She showed an example of a corrugated plastic sign with metal stakes (similar to realtor signs) that she had made. The District will purchase some generic PSWCD signs.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Chair Arnason

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved purchasing two gift cards of \$30 each as prizes for the Poster Contest (digital and paper versions).

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved a donation of \$300 each to Camp Woods and Wildlife and the VT Soil Judging Team for travel to the National Collegiate Soils Contest in Oklahoma. (Request letters attached).

PLANNING - Chair Eck

Ms. Fehrer reviewed the Annual Plan of Work for the upcoming month of March, highlighting several events and deadlines. She also reviewed the repetitive monthly tasks that staff perform. The Earth Team Volunteer program is a program of USDA-NRCS. The PSWCD counts hours that Associate Directors volunteer as part of this program. Mr. Evans provided

more information about the program, the application process, and what types of volunteer opportunities are available.

WATERSHED - Chair Arnason

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Adams and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved a quote of \$1,300.00 from fencing contractor Gary Hamby, to move and install approximately 82' of fence at Buffalo #8 dam (from the emergency spillway to the top of the training dike).

Mr. Thompson is beginning to perform the annual owner inspections of the dams. The contractor who will be installing the remote monitoring systems is waiting until conditions are drier.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - Chair Dillard

Mr. Dillard reported that employee evaluations will be performed in March.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - Chair Rash

Mr. Rash reported that it was a fairly smooth Legislative session, but a state budget was not approved before the session ended. SWCD budget amendments were approved by both House and Senate, so funding appears to be on track for FY24. The request to transfer unallocated VACS funding from Chesapeake Bay to Outside Chesapeake Bay was not approved. At 1:00pm today, there will be a VASWCD Legislative zoom meeting to bring everyone up to date on actions by the General Assembly. Mr. Rash also reported that the upcoming legislative re-districting may affect many of the representatives in the General Assembly who have supported SWCD programs.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION - Chair Powers

Ms. Atkinson gave an update on the following programs:

She has completed the Facebook "Director Spotlights" and passed around a booklet of the hard copies of the posts. The Area V Envirothon Workshop, held last Friday at the Longwood University Environmental Education Center, hosted 8 teams and provided a lecture on the special topic, "Climate Change" by Longwood University Science Professor Dr. Chris Labrioser.

The Longwood University Graphic Design students continue to work on designs for the mobile education trailer. Ms. Atkinson will serve as a science fair judge for Prince Edward Middle School. She reminded everyone of the March 8 scholarship deadline and Poster Contest workshop and deadline dates.

Mr. Moyer excused himself from the meeting to attend a phone conference. Vice-Chair Rash presided over the remainder of the meeting.

Marina Morris, Youth Conservation Leadership Institute student, provided an explanation of her conservation project which will involve chemical testing in local ponds located in different land uses. After she analyses her results, she will prepare some literature related to water quality health and best management practices.

Ms. Crews represented the PSWCD at the recent “Women in Agriculture” event held in Prince Edward County and reported it was a great event and she met many women who work in the agriculture/conservation field.

DISTRICT MANAGER AND PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS

Department of Conservation and Recreation (Attached).

Ms. Collins reviewed several highlights on her report. She reported that this year is an election year for SWCD directors and a new deadline of third Tuesday in June for filing their candidacy papers. There is also some confusion over several of the forms that potential candidates have to file with their local registrar. DCR is trying to help resolve questions about an “Exemption Form”, which the candidate completes if they do not intend to solicit or accept any campaign contributions and do not intend to spend more than \$1,000.00 of their own funds and the “Statement of Organization” form, which asks about bank account information. The local registrar should be able to answer questions about the forms, but cannot ask for bank account numbers (only names).

Ms. Collins asked that if the District estimates they will have unobligated VACS funds, to please let her know so she can begin the process of transferring to districts with need. Other upcoming dates and reminders were reviewed.

USDA-NRCS – Farmville & Amelia (Attached)

Mr. Evans reviewed his report including workload and upcoming deadlines. He shared a new funding program “Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry Mitigation” provided by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). NRCS will be learning more about the funding, practices, application process and deadlines soon. The program will have a climate smart agriculture focus/soil health. He noted that high tunnels and confined animal feeding operations are not eligible.

Ms. Ciavarella reviewed her report. Her office has been working with producers to get their contracts updated and back on schedule. She is managing the following contracts: 26 active EQIP, 24 CSP and 33 CSP-GCI.

Mr. Rabon, Private Lands Biologist, reported he has been involved in several events: Habitat tour in Halifax County and Woods & Wildlife conference in Culpeper. He is working with landowners on installing wildlife monitoring equipment to record quail activity in May and June.

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)

Ms. Gunn reported on several upcoming programs: Pasture Walk on April 4 at the Vaughan farm in Burkeville; Pond Management workshops, April 11 in Goochland and May 2 in Amelia. She is also helping with a plant swap at the Amelia library and helped setup a ‘seed library’.

Staff reports (Attached)

Ms. Fehrer shared the staff report. She highlighted that the District has been active with several outreach events including VFGC Winter meeting, Women in Ag event and several programs Mr. Smith has been giving. She reported that Ms. Atkinson has been successful in making productive contacts with Prince Edward County schools and that she and Mr. Smith gave

a program to 130 fourth grade students. She reminded everyone that she is ordering PSWCD logo shirts and to let her know if they would like a shirt. Ms. Fehrer passed around PSWCD's report to Area V on happenings in the District.

ROUNDTABLE.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:24 pm.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

Staff & partner reports;

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

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