



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Farmville, Virginia
July 25, 2023 11:00 a.m.**

Board Members Present:

Larkin Moyer – Director, Amelia County / Chairman
Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County / Vice Chairman
Bill Powers – Director, Prince Edward County / Secretary
Charles “Chuck” Arnason – Director, Nottoway County / Treasurer
Horace Adams- Director, Prince Edward County
Juan Whittington – Appointed Director, Amelia County

Board Members, Staff & Partners Absent:

Allison Crews – Director, Amelia County
Erin Small – VCE Appointed Director, Prince Edward County
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County
Mackenzie Gunn – Associate Director, Amelia County & VCE ANR agent
Dr. Kathy Gee, Associate Director, Nottoway County & LU Environmental Science Prof.
Tyler Smith – BMP Conservation Technician

SWCD Staff Present:

Kelly Atkinson – Education Specialist (remote attendance)
Kevin Dunn – Conservation Specialist
Deanna Fehrer - District Manager
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist

Partners Present:

Denney Collins, Conservation District Coordinator, Dept. Conservation & Recreation
Jeremy Evans, NRCS District Conservationist, Nottoway/Farmville
Tara Ciavarella, NRCS District Conservationist, Amelia
Cristy Cook, Farm Service County Executive Director, Nottoway/Prince Edward

Guests Present:

Crystal Wooldridge, Amelia County Environmental Manager
Jessica Easter, Amelia County Environmental Department
Jennifer Morris, Amelia County citizen

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

A regular meeting of the Piedmont SWCD Board of Directors was held at Prince Edward County Natural Resources and Agriculture building on Tuesday, July 25, 2023. Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting with prayer. A quorum was present.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the June 27, 2023 minutes as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the June 27, 2023 Conservation Committee minutes as presented.

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS practice cancelation:

Prince Edward (CB)

Perry Farm, Glenn Cooper	SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (50'/10yr) (5000')	
05-23-0083 (529460)	Estimated Cost	\$ 51,600.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 49,020.00 (95%)
	Estimated Buffer Payment	\$ 11,200.00
	Total Estimated Cost Share	\$ 60,220.00

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS applications (CB \$78,262.50):

Prince Edward (CB)

George M. Dickoff	CCI-SL-6W Maintenance Practice (9660')	
05-24-0001(532358)	Total Cost	\$ 14,575.00
	Total Cost Share	\$ 14,575.00

Perry Farm, Glenn Cooper	SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (50'/10yr) (5000')	
05-24-0003 (537987)	Estimated Cost	\$ 55,250.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 52,487.50 (95%)
	Estimated Buffer Payment	\$ 11,200.00
	Total Estimated Cost Share	\$ 63,687.50

On a motion by Mr. Whittington, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS application (CB \$38,238.00) and conservation plan with Mr. Moyer leaving the room:

Oakmulgee Dairy	SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (50'/10yr) (3,500')	
05-24-0011 (537987)	Estimated Cost	\$ 36,040.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 34,238.00(95%)
	Estimated Buffer Payment	\$ 4,000.00
	Total Estimated Cost Share	\$ 38,238.00

Conservation Plan for contract 05-24-0011

The following FSA conservation plans were signed by staff: RM Watkins & Sons Inc., Lockett Garnett and Reamford Farms (2)

Mr. Wootton reviewed changes in the FY24 VACS program. (attached summary)

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Chair Arnason

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the correction of last month's return of FY23 VACS Chesapeake Bay allocated funding to meet the 90% allocation obligation requirement. The corrected amounts are a return of \$595,987.18 and proportional technical assistance of \$54,160.42.

PLANNING

Mr. Moyer received an email from Ms. Crews informing the Board of her resignation.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the resignation of Amelia elected director Allison Crews. The action will be sent forward to the State Soil and Water Conservation Board in September. Due to the upcoming elections, the Board will not pursue appointing a replacement. The District's quorum requirements will be reduced to 4.

Ms. Fehrer reviewed the Annual Plan of Work accomplishments for July and upcoming workload for August.

The employees will be at annual training August 22-24. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved changing the August 22 schedule board meeting to August 29, 2023.**

WATERSHED - Chair Arnason

Mr. Arnason reported all remote monitoring units have been installed. Staff are working with Mr. Charles Wilson to activate and finish setup. Bander Smith group submitted their findings on the evaluations of gates, riser towers and other components of the dams at Bush #2, #5, #6 and #7. Mr. Thompson reported the main issues were large amounts of beaver debris and mud built up around the base of the riser towers. Gate evaluations on Bush #2 and Bush #6 were not possible because of the gates were buried in debris/mud. Bush #2, #6 and #7 need replacement stems and guides on the gates; outfall pipes need regrouting on Bush #5, #6 & #7; replacement of trash rack on Bush #2; and smaller repairs such as replacing missing/broken hardware. Several videos of the inspections of each component (riser inside/outside, principal spillway, outfall) were played. A detailed written report along with videos for each dam are on file in the office. The priority is removing and controlling the beaver and then removing beaver debris and completing the repairs. Mr. Thompson has requested an estimate from Bander Smith on the removal of debris and the repairs they suggested. Depending on the amount of the estimate, the District may have to ask for additional quotes. The work is specialized as it will require another dive to examine the 2 gates. Mr. Thompson has also contacted Southside SWCD to inquire about their beaver management program. Bander Smith has recommended the work be completed as soon as possible to avoid further damage and clogging of intakes/spillway pipes.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - Chair Dillard

No report.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - Chair Rash

No report.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION - Chair Powers

Ms. Atkinson reported on the following activities:

- Planning for the new school year has begun including updating school contacts, preparing a teacher newsletter and developing conservation monthly themes which will help plan resources and programs.
- She is finalizing planning for the upcoming Project WILD teacher workshop in September and an upcoming Envirothon program training at Graves Employee training
- Work has begun on the annual report and design files for the mobile education trailer have been submitted to a local design/build firm for a construction estimate
- She will be submitting VACS signup notices to local newspapers and to the District's social media accounts
- The invasive pest, Spotted Lanternfly, has been detected in Lynchburg and is most likely in our counties. If someone finds the insect, they are to notify VCE where it was found and then destroy the insect.

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

Ms. Fehrer reviewed most of the staff's work during the Annual Plan of Work review. Here is a recap: year end reporting has been completed and all reports submitted before the deadline; outreach and signup for PY24 VACS is being completed, including a new brochure; several new documents are being prepared including social media guidance and a marketing/outreach plan. Ms. Fehrer reminded everyone to review the summary of accomplishments for FY23 and expressed her appreciation to the staff for all the conservation that was applied and for the many education programs given (attached). Ms. Fehrer reported that the human resource consultant has completed her review of the District's Personnel Policy and the comments will be forwarded to the Personnel Committee for consideration. The consultant will be reviewing job descriptions.

Department of Conservation and Recreation (Attached).

Ms. Collins reviewed several highlights on her report including upcoming deadlines and trainings. Funding disbursement letters will be sent shortly. The Clean Water Farm Award program has been updated to include a deadline of October 2 for both local and grand basin award applications. Ms. Collins will be contacting staff to schedule administrative file reviews and field verifications.

Farm Service Agency

Ms. Cook reported her office is completing the 22-23 acreage reporting. Nationwide there has been a good response to Grasslands CRP enrollment and General CRP. There were no offers accepted in the Farmville office for Grasslands CRP and two were accepted for general CRP. A new employee will be starting August 28 in the Farmville office. Ms. Cook will be traveling to Texas to represent VA FSA employees at the NASCO meeting. VCE in Farmville will be hosting a 'Fireside Chat' with farmers on Monday, July 31 at the Three Roads Brewery in Farmville.

USDA-NRCS – Farmville & Amelia (Attached)

Ms. Ciaverella reported her office has received 2 CSP applications (one from Amelia and one from Goochland) and 2 CSP re-enrollments. She has participated in 2 outreach events in Goochland and Powhatan that were partnerships with Monacan SWCD which generated several potential new clients. Mr. Evans provided updates on programs and application status. The Farmville office has received pre-approval funding for 6 EQIP and several CSP applications. A new NRCS employee for the Farmville office will be starting in September.

USDA-Private Lands Biologist (Attached)

Mr. Rabon submitted his quarterly report.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

Treasurer report; June Conservation Committee minutes; VACS PY24 program updates; FY23 Program Summary; Staff & partner reports

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

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