



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

Board Members Present:

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman
Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County /Vice Chairman
Horace Adams –Director, Prince Edward County / Secretary
Charles “Chuck” Arnason –Director, Nottoway County / Treasurer
Jennifer Morris – Director, Amelia County
Dr. James Gates, Jr.- Director, Prince Edward County
Juan Whittington – Appointed At-Large Director, Amelia County
Mackenzie Gunn – Appointed VCE Director, Amelia County & VCE ANR agent
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County
Dr. Kathy Gee, Associate Director, Nottoway County
Erin Small – Associate Director, VCE ANR Agent Prince Edward County

Board Members, Staff & Partners Absent:

PSWCD Staff Present:

Deanna Fehrer - District Manager
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist
Kevin Dunn – Senior Conservation Specialist
Kelly Atkinson – Education Specialist
Tyler Smith – Conservation Technician
Paula Totten – Assistant District Manager

Partners Present:

Denney Collins, Conservation District Coordinator, Dept. Conservation & Recreation
Cristy Cook, County Executive Director, Farm Service Agency
A.J. Austin – Program Tech (CED trainee), Farm Service Agency
Chris Silvestri – Program Technician, Temporary, Farm Service Agency
Jeremy Evans, NRCS District Conservationist, Farmville/Nottoway
Tara Ciavarella, NRCS District Conservationist, Amelia
Claire Helmke, Farm Bill Biologist, Quail Forever
Doug Stanley, Prince Edward County Administrator
Keith Burgess, Monacan SWCD District Manager

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

A regular meeting of the Piedmont SWCD Board of Directors was held at the Prince Edward County Agriculture building on Tuesday, January 28, 3025. Chairman Moyer welcomed everyone, opened the meeting with prayer and called the meeting to order. A quorum was present.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the November 26, 2024, minutes as presented.

TREASURER’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Adams and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the December 2024 Treasurer’s Report as presented to be filed for audit.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - Chair Dillard

Mr. Dillard introduced Ms. Paula Totten as the newly hired Assistant District Manager. Ms. Totten worked for the PSWCD several years ago as a Conservation Specialist and has conservation work experience with partners, NRCS and FSA. Everyone welcomed Ms. Totten.

Ms. Atkinson was also recognized and congratulated for her 5 years of service at Piedmont SWCD.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE Mr. Dunn, Mr. Wootton and Mr. Smith presented:

During November 26, 2024, PSWCD board meeting, the Board authorized Mr. Rash to approve any VACS contracts during the month of December and they would be included in the official January meeting minutes. **On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the following VACS approvals from December totaling \$6,279.00 CB funding and \$104.16 in tax credits as presented:**

Nottoway County

SR Self Directed LLC
05-25-0004 (589604)

SL-7 Extension of Watering and Grazing Mgmt. Systems (83.45ac).

Original Estimated Cost	\$ 11,730.00
Original Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 8,797.50 (75%)
Revised Estimated Cost	\$ 20,102.00
Revised Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 15,076.50(75%)

***Additional \$6,279.00 Cost-Share**

Amelia County

Dwayne D Moore
05-25-0050 (643926)

SL-1 Permanent Vegetative Cover on Cropland

Cost	\$ 2,746.55
Cost-Share	\$ 2,329.91
Tax Credit	\$ 104.16

Tax Credit Approval Only

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS applications totaling \$5,000.00 CB funding and \$3,688.96 in tax credits as presented:

Nottoway County
SR Self Directed LLC
05-25-0004 (589601)

SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (50’/10yr) (2,400’)

Total Actual Cost	\$ 55,222.54
Total Cost Share	\$ 49,887.00
Tax Credit to be approved	\$ 2,053.73

***Tax Credit Only**

(589604)	SL-7 Extension of Watering and Grazing Mgmt. Systems (83.45ac).		
	Total Actual Cost	\$	20,600.98
	Total Cost-Share	\$	14,060.06
	Tax Credit to be approved	\$	1,635.23
	*Tax Credit Only		
(648294)	CCI-SL-6W Stream Exclusion w/wide buffer-Maintenance 2,800'		
	Estimated Cost	\$	5,000.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$	5,000.00

On a motion by Ms. Morris, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the following septic applications totaling \$788.00 Grant #16970 as presented:

Flat Creek Grant #16970

Nancy Moody	RB-1 Residential Septic Pump-out		
05-25-0101 (647780)	Estimated Cost	\$	450.00
	Estimated Cost Share (85%)	\$	383.00
Reginald Rather	RB-1 Residential Septic Pump-out		
05-25-0100 (647239)	Estimated Cost	\$	450.00
	Estimated Cost Share (90%)	\$	405.00

On a motion by Mr. Whittington, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following CREP renewal conservation plans.

3-CREP Renewal

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Chair Arnason

Mr. Arnason reported the finding of the audit. The auditors found a credit on account receivable in the amount of \$113.29 and a second approval of an invoice (invoice was to DCR). The final audit documents will be sent to the District later this spring. Mr. Arnason also reported the IRS mileage rate as of January 1, 2025, is .70/mile.

Ms. Fehrer reported she had received notice of changes in the Virginia Procurement Act that require the use of eVA procurement system. Staff will be receiving training soon, but it may affect future purchasing methods.

PLANNING

On a motion by Mr. Arnason and seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the renewal of Associate Director terms for Dr. Kathy Gee and Erin Small.

Ms. Fehrer reviewed the Annual Plan of Work for January, February and March. Ms. Fehrer passed around a committee sign-up sheet and a request for any changes to the VASWCD District Directory.

Following the November Board meeting, several edits were made to the district's draft by-laws. Ms. Fehrer requested the Board review the edited document and will present the final draft at the February meeting.

WATERSHED - Chair Arnason

On a motion by Mr. Arnason and seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board agreed to the contract for engineering services between the Shenandoah Valley SWCD and Schnabel Engineering LLC (RFP #70943) (2024-TERM-JDES).

Ms. Fehrer reported that the repair at Bush #2 dam and the dam inspections are scheduled for March. Ms. Fehrer also reported that a Table-Top Exercise with Prince Edward County has been scheduled for May 21st. An updated DBIZ mapping has been approved by Dam Safety for Buffalo #4 dam.

Ms. Fehrer attended the December Prince Edward Planning Commission meeting where she provided information regarding watershed dam structures Bush #6 and Bush #7. A public hearing was held concerning a solar development that will be adjacent to the two dams. She shared concerns of solar infrastructure impacting emergency spillway operations, access to dam sites and potential additional stormwater runoff. Prince Edward County planner, Robert Love, addressed the concerns during the meeting and agreed the County would ensure the solar developer would comply with the required setback limits. They will also share runoff calculations once the project has a final site plan. Mr. Stanley clarified that the mapping shown that evening (and during today's meeting) was not the final site plan. The Planning Commission approved the project during their January meeting and it will be on the agenda at the January Board of Supervisors meeting.

Mr. Moyer reported there will be a Farm Bureau meeting on February 15 at 9:00am at "The Barn" on Poor House Road in Farmville that will feature a speaker on solar technology. Ms. Gunn had viewed a similar You Tube video and said it was informative. She will forward the link to the office staff.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - Chair Rash

Mr. Rash reported that due to water issues in the City of Richmond, VASWCD Legislative Day was cancelled. There was only one budget amendment that the VASWCD was able to put forth. Mr. Rash also reported that it is most likely the legislation limiting local authority to make decisions of solar development in their localities will be approved.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION – Chair Gunn

Ms. Atkinson announced that applications for Youth Conservation Camp and the Lindy Hamlett Scholarship are available in the office or on the District website. The scholarship amount has been increased to \$2,000 per awardee. Ms. Atkinson encouraged the Board and partners to help promote these programs. Ms. Atkinson also announced that Fuqua had committed to having an Envirothon team this year. She has been working with the Amelia County schools to provide after school enrichment programs.

DISTRICT MANAGER AND PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS

District Manager & Staff reports (Attached)

The monthly workload for all the staff is included in the attached report. Ms. Fehrer highlighted that Mr. Smith did a great job planning the Partners Meeting for landowners in Amelia and Nottoway County. The event was well attended with approximately 30 attending the event. Partner participation and farmer panel interviews were appreciated.

All desktop computers have been replaced, including Windows 11 and Microsoft 365 business software. The new phone system was installed in the first week of January and the District's phone number has changed to 434-392-7071.

Prince Edward County

Mr. Stanley updated the board on several items: The County is working to bring a \$5B data center development into the county; Harbor Freight and Wawa are scheduled to open soon. Bill Jenkins will serve as the chairman of the PE Board of Supervisors for 2025. The County is finalizing a comprehensive plan and will host an open house for final public comment. They are also finalizing an economic strategic plan and incorporating agriculture into the plan. Boundary lines have been clarified between Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties. Lastly, Prince Edward County was recognized by the VA Business Council as one of the best places to work in Virginia.

Department of Conservation and Recreation (Attached)

Ms. Collins had no further information to add to her report.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Ms. Gunn reported that she participated in the Partners meeting with the District. Ms. Gunn also reported that she is participating in the VATECH VALOR program, Virginia Agriculture Leaders Obtaining Results, leadership program. She hopes to share some of the information she is learning in this program with the Board, staff and partners. VCE Prince Edward office is sponsoring a Fruit Tree program on February 11. Other upcoming programs include VCE Winter Conference at VT and the Women in Ag program in March. Ms. Jane Henderson from the Amelia VCE office has retired. Ms. Gunn has been appointed the unit coordinator for the Amelia office.

Quail Forever

Ms. Helmke shared her quarterly report and highlighted some of her work. She participated in the Partners Meeting with the District. She reported that VT is doing research on gray fox populations, and they are looking for landowners where they can install wildlife cameras. Ms. Helmke will be preparing for the Area V Envirothon wildlife test. The Quail Forever team is producing a webinar for new landowners.

USDA-NRCS – Farmville & Amelia (Attached)

Ms. Ciavarella reported that her office has 31 applications on file for FY 2025 and completed obligations on 6 CSP Renewal pre-approved applications. Ms. Ciavarella mentioned that Mr. Vega-Rivera will be the acting District Conservationist in Halifax for 120 days.

Mr. Evans reported he and Ms. Ciavarella will be attending the Forage and Grassland Council Meeting on Wednesday in Blackstone. His office has received 18 EQIP and 23 CSP applications that are being evaluated for eligibility.

USDA-Farm Service Agency, Farmville

Ms. Cook introduced Mr. Silvestri as a temporary program assistant. Mr. Austin reported that currently there is no funding available for CREP. Mr. Austin reported that they completed a sign-up for MASC, Marketing Assistance for Specialty Crops. The sign-up was from December 10, 2024, to January 8, 2025. County Committee elections were recently held, and Mr. Charles Wootton was elected to the committee. Workload in the office includes the dairy margin program, small grain acreage reporting and hay and pasture reporting.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:38 pm.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

Treasurer report; Term engineering contract; draft by-laws; Staff & partner reports

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

Approved By: _____ Date: _____
Horace Adams, Director / Secretary