Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes - Farmville, Virginia
August 25, 2026, 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
Jennifer Morris – Director, Amelia County
Mackenzie Gunn – Appointed VCE Director, Amelia County & VCE ANR agent
Dr. James Gates, Jr.- Director, Prince Edward County
Haley Norton – Associate Director, Conservation Specialist, Fort Pickett
Erin Small – Associate Director, VCE ANR Agent Prince Edward County

Board Members, Staff & Partners Absent:

Horace Adams –Director, Prince Edward County / Secretary
Dr. Kathy Gee - Associate Director, Nottoway County
Tara Ciavarella - NRCS District Conservationist, Amelia
Jeremy Evans - NRCS District Conservationist, Nottoway/Prince Edward
Cristy Cook – Farm Service Agency, CED
Patrick Murphy – Virginia Department of Forestry

PSWCD Staff Present:

Kelly Atkinson – Education Specialist
Kevin Dunn – Senior Conservation Specialist
Deanna Fehrer – Finance and Records Manager
Claire Helmke – Program Support Specialist
Tyler Smith – Conservation Technician
Paula Totten – District Manager
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist

Partners Present:

Denney Collins - Conservation District Coordinator, Dept. Conservation & Recreation
Jessica Showalter, Virginia Department of Forestry

Visitors Present:

Adam M. Davis, Longwood University
Greg Phipps, Prince Edward County Resident
David Tillapaugh, Prince Edward County Resident

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, August 25, 2026. Chairman Moyer welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 11:03 am. A quorum was present. No additions to the agenda were recorded.

Mr. Moyer welcomed Mr. Greg Phipps and Mr. David Tillapaugh to the board meeting. Mr. Tillapaugh expressed concerns about a proposed data center in Farmville, highlighting its significant water consumption, which could possibly deplete the local aquifer and impact the community. They cited a study in Henrico County showing a data center would drain the aquifer to Yorktown. The proposed center would consume as much water as 20,000 residents daily. They emphasized the need for transparency and suggested redirecting development to more beneficial projects. Mr. Tillapaugh acknowledged the necessity of data centers but questioned the decision to place them in densely populated areas, suggesting alternative, less impactful solutions.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

On a motion by Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the July 28, 2026, minutes as presented.

TREASURER'S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Morris and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the July 2026 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 following practices for FY27 VACS (CB $20,383.75 OCB $28,125.00)

Amelia:

Hoot Owl Hollow Farm	**Tax Credit Only: SL-7**	
05-26-0115 #738759	Actual Cost	$12,275.00
	Total Cost Share	$9,206.25
	Tax Credit	$767.19

Prince Edward:

Christopher G Ranson	**CCI-SE-1 - Stream Exclusion (800ft)**	
05-27-0006 #761211	Total Cost	$400.00
	Total Cost Share	$400.00
#761213	**CCI-SL-6W Stream Exclusion w/Narrow Buffer (765')**	
	Total Cost	$1,823.75
	Total Cost Share	$1,823.75
Bob Martin-Creek View Farm	**SL-8B - Cover Crop for NM (148 ac, Rye, Late Kill)**	
05-27-0013(768157)	Estimated Cost	$14,800.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	$14,800.00
James W. Garnett	**SL-8B - Cover Crop for NM (48 ac)**	
05-27-0014(768566)	Estimated Cost	$3,360.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	$3,360.00

OCB

Nottoway

Guy Cattle Company, LLC	**Tax Credit Only: SL-6W, 35'Buffer**	
05-26-0087 #730245	Actual Cost	$92,953.50
	Total Cost Share	$76,709.53
	Tax Credit	**$4,060.99**
Bassett Hound Haven Estates	**CCI-SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (11,100')**	
05-27-0005 #760481	Estimated Cost	$15,625.00
	Total Estimated Cost Share	$15,625.00
L&L Parrish Cattle Ranch	**CCI-SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (8,200')**	
05-26-0002 #738668	Estimated Cost	$12,500.00

	Total Estimated Cost Share	$12,500.00

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following practices for FY27 VACS (OCB WFA $32,554.65).

OCB - Whole Farm Approach

Nottoway

WFA-NM

Harrison Moody	**NM-1A - NMP Writing and Revision (352.8ac)**	
05-27-0007(762926)	Estimated Cost	$2,116.80
	Estimated Cost-Share	$2,116.80
Harrison Moody	**NM-5N - Precision NM -Nitrogen (216.6ac)**	
05-27-0007(762926)	Estimated Cost	$1,624.50
	Estimated Cost-Share	$1,624.50
Harrison Moody	**NM-5P - Precision NM -Phosphorus (216.6ac)**	
05-27-0007(762926)	Estimated Cost	$2,361.75
	Estimated Cost-Share	$2,361.75

WFA-CC

Harrison Moody	**SL-8B - Cover Crop for NM (314.9ac)**	
05-27-0007(762925)	Estimated Cost	$26,451.60
	Estimated Cost-Share	$26,451.60

Ms. Fehrer reminded the Board that the funding for Whole Farm Approach is not included in the grant agreement amounts but reimbursed.

Mr. Dunn stated that a producer wanted to apply for cost-share with the District but upon reviewing some of the past projects that are still under lifespan, he is out of compliance. Ms. Collins recommended addressing practice compliance requirements in the Districts secondary considerations for FY28 and stated that DCR could do a random spot-check at any time if a letter with documentation was sent to DCR to review.

SEPTIC PROGRAM APPROVALS

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following septic applications totaling $659.25 Grant #16969 and $382.50 Grant #16970 as presented:

Grant #16969 – Spring Creek – Prince Edward

Tiffany A Capati	**RB-3M Conventional Septic System Inspection/Maintenance**	
05-27-0011 (766519)	Estimated Cost	$879.00
	Estimated Cost-Share 75%	$659.25

Grant #16970 – Flat & Nibbs Creek - Nottoway

Carol Hensley	**RB-1 Conventional Septic System Pump-out**	
05-27-0010 (766419)	Estimated Cost	$450.00
	Estimated Cost-Share 85%	$382.50

Ms. Fehrer reported that $60,000 of the Spring Creek grant #16969 would expire at the end of August. She stated that this was FY20 & FY21 funding. She stated that with a pending contract modification, there will be approximately $98,000 available for cost-share.

Ms. Totten updated the Board on the status of the Coverly Farm Conservation Easement. She reported that Conservation Region Land Conservancy approved in July to move forward as a potential easement co-holder with the District for Coverly Farm. She stated that Conservation Partners was submitting a grant application to Virginia Land Conservation Foundation for funding to establish the easement. Ms. Totten reported she spoke to Mr. Harvie, and he indicated that if he did not receive grant funding, there would not be a conservation easement on Coverly Farm.

Ms. Totten gave an update on ARC LLC correspondence. She stated that Mr. Ashley had called to discuss moving forward with a MOU with the District for technical services. She stated that she informed Mr. Ashley that the District did not perform any erosion and sediment control duties for Prince Edward county or the Town of Farmville or has performed any streambank restoration in riparian areas and that his request for technical services were not in our scope of work.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Chair Arnason

During the July 28, 2026, PSWCD board meeting, the Board authorized Mr. Arnason to sign the FY27 Grant Agreements upon receipt. Mr. Arnason signed the Grant Agreements on July 31,2026

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the FY27 DCR grant agreement number 503CSTA-27-34-GF for Cost-Share and Technical Assistance ($4,254,087 CB, $268,353 OCB, $673,497 TA) and FY27 DCR grant agreement number 503OPS-27-34-GF for Administrative Operations ($314,589 Admin/Ops., $63,000 Dam Main.)

Ms. Fehrer reviewed the updated FY27 budget. She stated the additional $43,608 in the FY27 Administrative Operations grant agreement is split between salaries, staff travel & training, office operations, director travel, IT support, program outreach, vehicle purchase fund, program support, office furniture and education programming.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the updated FY27 budget as presented that includes changes to FICA taxes and 2 staff bonuses effective July 1, 2026.

Ms. Fehrer reviewed the list of dedicated reserves for carryforward funds to FY2027.

On a motion by Ms. Morris, seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the dedicated reserves as presented.

Mr. Arnason reported that the District would like to get a new credit card through Truist that was just in the District's name. He stated the old credit card had Ms. Fehrer's name on the card.

On a motion by Dr Gates, seconded by Ms. Morris and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved applying for a new Truist credit card and cancelling the old one.

Mr. Arnason reported that the office staff needed a dedicated cell phone for 2-part authentication for online account verifications. He stated that at the conservation staff needed tablets to use for field work.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Morris and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the purchase of a cellphone for the office and 3 tablets for staff.

Ms. Collins reported that the DCR FY26 grant assessments had been sent to all the districts. She stated there are several deliverables for the grant agreements for FY26. Piedmont had A's across the board for the Admin/Op assessment. She thanked the staff for their hard work. Ms. Collins stated the Cost-share/TA grant agreement has it's own set of deliverables. She stated that there was a change last year that CDCs are no longer just the ones completing the assessments. Ms. Collins reported that as a CDC she gives the grade she feels is deserved of the district and then the engineering staff, conservation staff, as well as central office staff do their own review. There was one B rating for Conservation plan completion and the rest were A's. Mr. Wootton stated that he protests the B rating. He stated that if he missed something, then fine but if the rating is due to not liking the way something was written, then that was subjective. Ms. Collins asked for a letter from the District stating their protest.

Ms. Totten reported that the Nissan would need some minor repairs due to a fender bender that occurred traveling back from the staff training at Graves Mountain Lodge on Thursday August 20.

PLANNING

Mr. Moyer reported that there were initially two nominations for the At-Large Direct position, Colin Whittington and Betsy Jenkins. Ms. Jenkins decided to withdraw her nomination in order to be an associate director. Mr. Moyer stated that Mr. Colin Whittington of Featherstone Farm is the son of the previous At-Large Director, Juan Whittington.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved Mr. Colin J. Whittington as the nomination for At-Large Director for the 2027 calendar year.

On a motion by Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved Ms. Betsy Jenkins as associate director for the remainder of 2026 calendar year.

Ms. Totten shared the FY27 Annual Plan of Work for September, October, and November.

Mr. Moyer announced that the VASWCD annual meeting would be December 6-8 in Roanoke.

WATERSHED - Chair Arnason

Mr. Arnason reported that Mr. Matt Lyons of Schnabel Engineering, Mr. Charles Wilson, DCR engineer, landowner at Bush #7, Ms. Fehrer and Ms. Totten met on site at Bush #7 to evaluate a crushed culvert pipe under the access road and erosion of stream channel. He stated there has been considerable widening of the stream channel since the repairs made after the Hurricane Michael storm in 2018 and the District is concerned that if it continues, it could impact the toe of the dam (downstream side). Mr. Arnason reported that Schnabel would prepare a report and recommendation.

Mr. Arnason reported that Blueform (formerly Bander Smith), started the principal spillway and gate valve inspections on Monday August 24. Buffalo #5-#9. He stated that landowners had been notified.

Mr. Arnason reported that the District will be working with Mr. Wilson, DCR Engineer, to determine what projects to request small dam repair funding for next funding cycle. He stated that requests are due September.

Mr. Arnason reported that Pro-texis would start installing the new remote monitoring systems on all 14 dams in September.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: - Chair Morris

Ms. Morris stated there was nothing new to report.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - Chair Rash

Mr. Rash reported that the VASWCD received a lump sum of $4,000,000 for VCAP in addition to 1,000,000 in grant funds from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. He stated there would be a legislative committee conference call on September 9.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION – Chair Gunn

Ms. Atkinson reported a copy of the annual report was going around for everyone to see. She stated that she was waiting on new photos of staff and directors. She reported she and Mr. Smith took the soil trailer to the Amelia county fair on August 13. Ms. Atkinson reported that she has been working on a MWEE teacher workshop for Nottoway teachers. She reported that Ms. Helmke attended the Butterflies on the Battlefield outreach event and connected with approximately 65 people for VCAP and VACS programs. Ms. Atkinson reported that her connection with Blackstone Primary School would start on Thursday. She stated she would be working with 3rd and 4th graders for the entire school year. Ms. Atkinson reported that the District had a new Enviroscape for educational programs if anyone wanted to see it after the meeting.

DISTRICT MANAGER AND PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS

District Manager & Staff reports

Ms. Totten reported that the staff were working on new signups, finalizing the 'Refer a Farmer' program, looking at updating the District website, going on field visits, and staying busy. She stated that the new drill truck came in and was in the parking lot if they wanted to see it.

Department of Conservation and Recreation (See attached)

Ms. Collins reported that there were new FOIA requirements. She stated that Ms. Totten had attended the training at Graves and she might have a better understanding of the new requirements. She stated that the new requirements were in reference to posting the agenda three business days prior to the board meeting. She noted that this was more of a better business practice that if followed, would stand up in court. Ms. Collins reported there could be no changes to the agenda that involved a final decision after the final agenda was posted, unless the issue was time sensitive and that would need to be stated in minutes.

Ms. Collins reported that FOIA training for elected directors was web-based now and will not be available at the annual meeting. She stated the Federal mileage reimbursement rates have gone up mid-year to $0.76 a mile.

Ms. Collins reported that auditors asked DCR to clarify recommendations for Part1 and Part II of contracts. She stated that Part II must be computer generated but Part III can have payment amounts, payment dates and check numbers handwritten if needed. Ms. Collins reported that Clean Farm Award applications and Grand Basin are due October 1 and

then for BMP verificationsCY26 Random Verifications are due October 31. She reminded the District that End of Lifespan verifications were due by September 30.

Department of Forestry

Ms. Showalter reported that Amelia DOF received $57,000 in cost-share for reforestation, and it has been allocated and there is a $64,000 wait list. She stated that there was still funding for hardwood and GAP cost-share programs.

Virginia Cooperative Extension – Amelia

Ms. Gunn stated that L. K. Mondrey had taken a new position and their administrative person left as well so there was only Ms. Lorena Wright and herself in the Amelia office.

She reported that she was working with Mr. Smith, Ms. Helmke and Ms. Totten on a small ruminant program for the fall.

Virginia Cooperative Extension – Amelia – (See attached)

Comments:

COMMENTS
Mr. Smith gave a presentation on the Septic program
Ms. Norton gave a presentation on the Bald Eagle Monitoring results at Fort Pickett.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 pm.

Submitted By _____ Date: _____
Paula Totten, Piedmont SWCD Staff

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