Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes - Farmville, Virginia
September 22, 2026, 11:00 a.m.

Board Members Present:

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman
Charles "Chuck" Arnason –Director, Nottoway County / Treasurer
Horace Adams –Director, Prince Edward County / Secretary
Jennifer Morris – Director, Amelia County
Dr. James Gates, Jr.- Director, Prince Edward County

Board Members, Staff & Partners Absent:

Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County /Vice Chairman
Mackenzie Gunn – Appointed VCE Director, Amelia County & VCE ANR agent
Haley Norton – Associate Director, Conservation Specialist, Fort Pickett
Erin Small – Associate Director, VCE ANR Agent Prince Edward County
Dr. Kathy Gee - Associate Director, Nottoway County
Deanna Fehrer – Finance and Records Manager
Cristy Cook – Farm Service Agency, CED
Jessica Showalter, Virginia Department of Forestry

PSWCD Staff Present:

Kelly Atkinson – Education Specialist
Kevin Dunn – Senior Conservation Specialist
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
Tara Ciavarella - NRCS District Conservationist, Amelia
Jeremy Evans - NRCS District Conservationist, Nottoway/Prince Edward
John Womack – NRCS Area Resource Conservationist
Royce Coleman – Amelia County – Environmental Manager
Patrick Murphy – Virginia Department of Forestry

Visitors Present:

Hunter Fowlkes, Fuqua School – Student

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, September 22, 2026. Chairman Moyer welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 11:05 am. A quorum was present. No additions to the agenda were recorded.

Ms. Atkinson introduced Hunter Fowlkes, a senior from Fuqua School. She stated he is interested in the agriculture field and is here today to learn about Soil & Water Conservation Districts.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the August 25, 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 August 2026 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

On a motion by Dr. Gates, seconded by Mr. Adams and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following conservation plans for FY27 VACS

Armistead Taylor Harvie	CP-5-27-0002
James T Rice	CP-5-27-0003
Wesley P. DeBusk	CP-5-27-0001
Patrick B. Burke	CP-5-25-0015

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Morris and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following practices for FY27 VACS (CB $340,657.10 OCB $67,013.50).

C.B.

Amelia:

Armistead Taylor Harvie	**SL-6W Stream Exclusion w/ Wide Buffer (50' buffer, 4200')**	
05-27-0012 #766679	Estimated Cost	**$ 74,725.00**
	Estimated Cost-Share	**$ 70,988.75**
	Estimated Buffer Payment	**$ 6,400.00**
	Tot. Est. Cost-Share	**$ 77,388.75**
Patrick B. Burke	**SL-7 Extension of Watering Systems(75ac.)**	
05-27-0020 #781289	Estimated Cost	**$ 12,920.00**
	Estimated Cost-Share	**$ 9,690.00**

Nottoway:

James T Rice	**SL-6W Stream Exclusion w/ Wide Buffer (50' buffer, 800')**	
05-27-0019 #778431	Estimated Cost	**$ 13,875.00**
	Estimated Cost-Share	**$ 13,181.25**
	Estimated Buffer Payment	**$ 800.00**
	Tot. Est. Cost-Share	**$ 13,981.25**
05-27-0019 #779139	**SL-7 Extension of Watering Systems (15.77ac.)**	
	Estimated Cost	**$ 6,000.00**
	Estimated Cost-Share	**$ 4,500.00**
	Total CB Approvals-Structural	**$ 105,560.00**

OCB

Nottoway

Stacy Bolton	**CCI-SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (5000')**	
05-27-0025 #783678	Estimated Cost	**$ 5,500.00**
	Total Estimated Cost Share	**$ 5,500.00**
Wesley P. DeBusk	**SL-6W Stream Exclusion w/ Wide Buffer (50' buffer, 2400')**	
05-27-0018 #771358	Estimated Cost	**$ 48,850.00**
	Estimated Cost-Share	**$ 46,407.50**
	Estimated Buffer Payment	**$ 4,000.00**
	Tot. Est. Cost-Share	**$ 50,407.50**

Approvals- Agronomic

CB

Contract Number	Business	BMP ID	Practice	Funding Sources	County	Extent Requested		Est.Cost	Est Cost Share
05-27-0016	Southside Ag Enterprises LLC	771155	SL-8B	CB VACS	Nottoway	216.3	Ac	$17,304.00	$17,304.00
05-27-0021	Charles Glasscock	781710	SL-8	CB VACS	Amelia	95.1	Ac	$3,804.00	$3,804.00
05-27-0022	Caroline Farms, Inc.	782898	SL-8B	CB VACS	Amelia	203.7	Ac	$20,370.00	$20,370.00
05-27-0023	Whitaker Farms Inc.	783272	SL-8B	CB VACS	Amelia	474.7	Ac	$33,229.00	$33,229.00
05-27-0023	Whitaker Farms Inc.	783273	SL-8H	CB VACS	Amelia	12.6	Ac	$252.00	$252.00
05-27-0023	Whitaker Farms Inc.	783297	NM-1A	CB VACS	Amelia	578.3	Ac	$1,156.60	$1,156.60
05-27-0027	R. M. Watkins & Sons, Inc.	783934	NM-6	CB VACS	Amelia	400	Ac	$18,000.00	$18,000.00
05-27-0028	David Benson	784416	SL-8B	CB VACS	Amelia	602.6	Ac	$42,182.00	$42,182.00
05-27-0029	David Ashman	784417	SL-8B	CB VACS	Amelia	5.8	Ac	$406.00	$406.00
05-27-0029	David Ashman	784418	SL-8H	CB VACS	Amelia	37.4	Ac	$748.00	$748.00
05-27-0030	Flippin & Sons Farms	784420	SL-8B	CB VACS	Amelia	522.7	Ac	$36,589.00	$36,589.00
05-27-0031	Charles Allem	784998	WQ-4	CB VACS	P. E.	90.5	Ac	$4,072.50	$4,072.50
05-27-0033	Featherstone Farm Seed LLC	785121	WQ-4	CB VACS	Amelia	372.6	Ac	$16,767.00	$16,767.00
05-27-0033	Featherstone Farm Seed LLC	785046	SL-8H	CB VACS	Amelia	297.6	Ac	$5,952.00	$5,952.00
05-27-0033	Featherstone Farm Seed LLC	785120	SL-8B	CB VACS	Amelia	253.6	Ac	$17,752.00	$17,752.00
05-27-0033	Featherstone Farm Seed LLC	785191	SL-8B	CB VACS	Nottoway	235.9	Ac	$16,513.00	$16,513.00

OCB

Contract Number	Business	BMP ID	Practice	Funding Sources	County	Extent Requested		Est.Cost	Est Cost Share
05-27-0026	John Bledsoe	783924	SL-8B	OCB VACS	Nottoway	123.4	Ac	$11,106.00	$11,106.00

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following practices for FY27 VACS (OCB WFA $2,544.75).

OCB WFA

Contract Number	Business	BMP ID	Practice	Funding Sources	County	Extent Requested		Est.Cost	Est Cost Share
05-27-0016	Southside Ag Enterprises LLC	771158	WFA-CC	OCB WFA	Nottoway	26.1	Ac	$2,192.40	$2,192.40
05-27-0016	Southside Ag Enterprises LLC	771162	WFA-NM	OCB WFA	Nottoway	26.1	Ac	$352.35	$352.35

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 District's 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 Ms. Morris and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following septic applications totaling $225.00 for Grant #16969 as presented:

Spring Creek
Anthony Ellington
05-27-0015 (771171)

RB-1 Conventional Septic System Pump-out
Estimated Cost $ 450.00
Estimated Cost-Share 50% $ 225.00

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Adams and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following septic corrections totaling $85.00 for Grant #16969 as presented:

Corrections
Edith Haskins
05-26-0121 (739223)

RB-4 Conventional Septic System Replacement/Repair
Original Estimated Cost $ 10,825.00
(Original) Cost-Share Approved 85% $9,201.25
Estimated Cost $10,925
(Revised) Estimated Cost-Share 85% $9,286.25
Additional ($85.00)

Ms. Totten reported there would be changes to the contacts for the Soil and Water Conservation District Policy for Handling Agricultural Stewardship Act Complaints with VDACS. She stated the Primary contact will change to Mr. Kevin Dunn, and Mr. Larkin Moyer will remain the secondary contract.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason and seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the updates to the Soil and Water Conservation District Policy for Handling Agricultural Stewardship Act Complaints as presented.

Ms. Totten reported that at the request of the board and DCR after the August 25, 2026, board meeting, she contacted Mr. Darrell Kuntz from the Office of Attorney General for guidance on eligibility of a current VACS participant that has two contracts still in lifespan that are not in compliance to apply for additional cost-share. Mr. Kuntz stated that when participants are consistently out of compliance with current contracts a district can deny that individuals' application for future VACS funds. In his correspondence, Mr. Kuntz stated that if the participant has refused to maintain BMPs currently under lifespan, despite their contractual promise to maintain said BMP in compliance with VACS program requirements. This individual is therefore in breach of contract. Since they are already in breach, their future agreement or promise to maintain a new BMP is worthless. Therefore, the district is permitted to deny the application on the grounds that this individual is currently in breach of a contract they entered into with the District. This is because agreeing to grant additional funding would jeopardize the district's obligation to properly administer VACS funds.

Ms. Collins also stated that the VACS Best Management Practice manual states that "any individual who's determined to have knowingly misrepresented its compliance status with the VACS program to the district or district representative may, upon determination of a board of district directors, not be considered an applicant for a period of at least one year but no more than five years".

On a motion by Mr. Arnason and seconded by Dr. Gates and carried by unanimous vote, the Board found the participant with VACS contracts 05-20-0089 and 05-22-0060 to be "out of compliance" and therefore not eligible to apply for VACS cost-share for five years from today.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason and seconded by Mr. Adams and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved moving forward with the process to request the repayment of funds.

Ms. Collins reported that she would work on calculating the amount for repayment. She stated that the District should communicate with Mr. Kuntz about the Board's decision and confirm the Office of Attorney General will handle communication with the participant.

Mr. Dunn discussed new methods and guidance from DCR for visual representation of cover crop percentages for verification. He stated a plan is in place for in-house training. Mr. Dunn reported that he would work with Mr. Smith and Ms. Trisha Mays from Southside SWCD to give refresher training for visual representation of cover crop percentages. He noted there was a pilot program using satellite imagery and apps, to document coverage. However, concerns remain about distinguishing between weeds, like henbit from active cover crops with imagery at high altitudes.

Mr. Evans stated that a new memo from DCR/NRCS for piggyback projects with NRCS addresses how the district and NRCS will collaborate on large-scale projects like building barns or structures. He stated that protocol requires that if one agency is not the lead, the other agency's engineer must review and approve the design to ensure it meets specific risk assessments and water quality standards.

Mr. Womack clarified that the lead agency status depends on professional engineering licensure and job approval authority (JAA). He stated if a staff member has JAA but is not a licensed engineer, a stamped design from DCR may be required to issue payment. Mr. Womack encouraged good communication at the beginning of the project to help the process run smoothly.

Ms. Helmke reported that the District held a meeting on September 15 involving representatives from 14 groups to improve resource sharing and communication between organizations. She noted that the event was successful in building connections between different levels of organizational partners and there were plans to create a public-facing "mini yellow pages" directory for sharing information among participating organizations.

FINANCE COMMITTEE – Chair Arnason

Mr. Arnason reported that the District received notification from DEQ that the District has been pre-approved for the 50% loan forgiveness to purchase two no-till drills. Ms. Fehrer submitted a request for two drills as we discussed in the August meeting with the intent of selling an older drill.

Ms. Totten reported that the District received the new credit card with a $10,000 limit and asked if the Board was ok with that limit. She stated that she didn't feel the District would reach that limit, but paying for Annual Meeting is always expensive.

Ms. Totten reported that she has purchased the new cell phone and three tablets for the office.

PLANNING

Ms. Totten shared the FY27 Annual Plan of Work for October, November, and December.
She reminded the board that VASWCD Annual Meeting will take place from December 6th through December 8th in Roanoke at Hotel Roanoke.

Mr. Dunn reported that since there were issues in the past with districts reserving large numbers of rooms the reserved block of rooms would be filled quickly. He stated that this year the intent was for staff and directors to register for the meeting first and then reserve their hotel room.

WATERSHED - Chair Arnason

Ms. Totten reported that mowing is complete on all dams and Blueform Infrastructure had completed inspections of the principal spillway. She stated that Ms. Fehrer would submit a request for small dam repair funds for 2027.

Ms. Totten reported that Protexis had installed all 14 remote monitoring systems last week; they utilize cell and satellite signals. Ms. Totten reported that she, Ms. Fehrer, Mr. Wootton and Mr. Charles Wilson, DCR engineer, participated in a webinar training on the new system platform, and hoped it would be accessible soon.

Mr. Wootton reported that Mr. Wilson needed to recalibrate the systems and set water levels, but it was up and working.

Ms. Totten reported that Dominion Energy had requested a meeting on October 6 regarding a possible solar site near the Buffalo #4 dam. She stated that the data plan for the new systems would be $12,600 a year, which would be included in the dam maintenance funding.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: - Chair Morris

Ms. Morris stated there was nothing new to report.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE - Chair Rash

Mr. Dunn reported that the VASWCD legislative agenda would be out soon for review before the VASWCD Annual Meeting in December.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION – Chair Gunn

Ms. Atkinson reported that Mr. Fowlkes was looking for an internship in the agriculture industry. She stated he will be available for a short time on Tuesdays and all day on Thursdays during this semester.

Ms. Atkinson passed around the thank you card the District received from Ms. Julia King, one of the scholarship winners. Ms. Atkinson stated she demonstrated the Enviroscape to 66 fourth graders at Blackstone Primary and she and Mr. Smith worked with the Fuqua School ag class on soil texturing and runoff labs. She reported that she had 15 park staff and teachers for the Educator's workshop.

Ms. Atkinson reported outreach efforts include participating in Family and Farm Day with the soil tunnel, setting up a display at the Five County Fair, and upcoming events including the Project Learning Tree workshop and the Twin Lakes Fall Festival which Ms. Helmke will attend.

DISTRICT MANAGER AND PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS

District Manager & Staff reports

Ms. Totten reported that the staff were working on new VACS signups, but more time was being spent in front of the computer trying to enter information in the tracking program.

Department of Conservation and Recreation (See attached)

Ms. Collins reminded staff that SPDA verifications are due by September 28. She stated that if directors need the link to the FOIA trainings on Oct 20th and November 12th she could resend the link. Ms. Collins reported that End of Lifespan verifications are due by September 30th. She stated that the only thing not on her report was the meeting date for the VACS Technical Advisory Committee has been set for November 19, but no location has been set, and subcommittees should be starting to get dates on the calendar.

USDA-NRCS – Amelia (see attached)

USDA-NRCS- Farmville (see attached)

Mr. Evans reported that Mr. Robert Hazlegrove would be retiring with 25 years of service on Friday, September 25.

Department of Forestry

Mr. Murphy reported the death of a long-time service provider to DOF;Randy Slaton, a tree planter for the Department of Forestry for over 25 years, planted approximately 80 million trees during his lifetime in Southside. He stated that there was still a small amount of funding for reforestation as well as some hardwood programs and they are trying to get all those funds obligated. Mr. Murphy reported that fire season is coming and they are already starting to see leaf drop.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:42 pm.

Submitted By Paula E Totten Date: 10-27-26
Paula Totten, Piedmont SWCD Staff

Approved By Horace Adams Date: 10-27-26
Horace Adams, Director / Secretary