



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Farmville, Virginia  
August 25, 2020 11:00 a.m.**

**Board Members Present:**

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman  
Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County/Vice Chairman  
Chuck Arnason –Director, Nottoway County / Secretary  
Allison Crews – Director, Amelia County  
Bill Powers –Director, Prince Edward County  
Haley Norton- Appointed Director, VCE Nottoway County  
Horace Adams- Associate Director, Prince Edward County

**Board Members Absent:**

Dr. Wilkie Chaffin –Director, Prince Edward County / Treasurer  
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County  
Sarah Eck – Associate Director, Nottoway County

**SWCD Staff Present:**

Kevin Dunn – BMP Conservation Specialist  
Deanna Fehrer- District Manager  
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist

**Board Members, Staff and Partners participating remotely:**

Juan Whittington –Appointed Director, Amelia County  
Kelly Atkinson – PSWCD Education Specialist  
Brendan Burke – PSWCD Equipment Manager  
Denney Collins – DCR Conservation District Coordinator  
Telecia Berry – NRCS District Conservationist Amelia

**Guests:** Daphne Cole, Nottoway Citizen

**CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME**

A regular meeting of the Piedmont SWCD Board of Directors was held at the Prince Edward Natural Resources and Agriculture Building in Farmville on Tuesday, August 25, 2020. Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer. A quorum was physically present. **Per the Piedmont SWCD Remote Participation Policy and on a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved remote participation via Zoom videoconference for Mr. Whittington, due to medical conditions that currently prevent him from attending in -person.** Additional participants included Ms. Atkinson, Mr. Burke, Ms. Collins, and Ms. Berry. Mr. Moyer welcomed the District's new Equipment Manager, Mr. Brendan Burke, and Ms. Telecia Berry, the NRCS District Conservationist in Amelia.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the July 21, 2020 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 July/August 2020 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit.**

**OPERATIONS:** The Board reviewed updates to the Covid-19 office policy that included guidance for face coverings during District operations per USDA policies.

**CONSERVATION REPORT (BELOW)** - Reported by Mr. Dunn**VACS FY21 Approvals:**

**On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS FY21 applications, (13 applications/30 practices totaling \$227,022.37 in Chesapeake Bay funding and one tax credit \$258.43):**

<b><u>Name/Contract</u></b>	<b><u>Practice/Acres/Estimated Cost Share/Instance</u></b>			
<i>Amelia County</i>				
David Ashman 05-21-0017	SL-8H	39.5ac	\$ 790.00	409792
Don Benson 05-21-0005	SL-8H	39.2 ac	\$ 784.00	407959
	SL-8B	334.7 ac	\$16,735.00	407958
	SL-1	17.9 ac	\$ 4,891.17	407922
	Estimated Cost		\$ 5,924.90	5 yr
	Estimated Tax Credit		\$ 258.43	
Creamfield Farm 05-21-011	SL-8B	122.8ac	\$ 6,140.00	409677
	NM-1	122.8ac	\$ 245.60	409681
	NM-5P	122.8ac	\$ 336.00	409680
Richard Goode 05-21-0009	SL-8H	173.7ac	\$ 3,474.00	409669
Hoot Owl Farm 05-21-0016	SL-8H	256.4ac	\$ 5,128.00	409790
	SL-8B	241ac	\$12,050.00	409786
	NM-1	497.4ac	\$ 497.40	409788
Dexter Jones 05-21-0013	SL-8B	221.6	\$11,080.00	409775
Brian Lewis 05-21-0014	SL-8B	132.9ac	\$ 6,645.00	409777
	NM-1	132.9	\$ 265.80	409779
Dwayne Moore 05-21-0006	SL-8H	54.1 ac	\$ 1,082.00	408487
	SL-8B	295.1 ac	\$14,755.00	408482
	NM- 1	349.1 ac	\$ 698.20	408491

Watkins & Son Inc	SL-8H 256.4ac	\$ 7,240.00	410937
05-21-0019	SL-8B 958.2ac	\$47,910.00	410972
	WQ-4 140.4ac	\$ 4,212.00	410974
	NM-6 502.4ac	\$22,608.00	410976

Wilford Poore	SL-8B 600ac	\$36,000.00	409793
05-21-0018	RYE		

Vaughan Cattle Co.	SL-8H 170.1ac	\$ 3,402.00	409753
05-21-0012	SL-8B 84.2ac	\$ 4,210.00	409755
	WQ-4 270.6ac	\$ 8,118.00	409756

Nottoway County

Nicholas Moody	SL-8B 42ac	\$ 2,100.00	409673
05-21-0010	NM-1 42ac	\$ 84.00	409676
	NM-5P 42ac	\$ 336.00	409674

Prince Edward County

Neubauer Farms	SL-8B; 100.1ac	\$ 5,005.00	409784
05-21-0014	NM-1; 100.1ac	\$ 200.20	409785

**On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Norton (with Mr. Moyer leaving the room and Mr. Whittington leaving the remote participation) and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS applications, (2 applications/9 practices totaling \$50,905.00 in Chesapeake Bay funding and \$20,062.50 in estimated tax credits):**

Featherstone Farm	SL-8H 83.2 ac	\$ 1,664.00	409589
05-21-0008	SL-8B 145ac	\$ 7,250.00	409590
	WQ-4 85.7ac	\$ 2,571.00	409607
	NM-1 1611.2ac	\$ 3,222.40	409545
	NM-4 494.8ac	\$ 2,226.60	409546
	NM-5P 908.1ac	\$ 7,264.80	409548
	NM-5N 553.4ac	\$ 4,427.20	409547
	<u>Tax Credits Only: (Acres under USDA programs)</u>		
	SL-8H 125.1ac	\$ 3,127.50	409663
	SL-8B 209.7 ac	\$ 5,242.50	409625
	WQ-4 467.7ac	\$11,692.50	409608
Oakmulgee Farm	SL-8B 256.1ac	\$ 12,805.00	408562
05-21-0007	WQ-4 315.8	\$ 9,474.00	408564

**DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic Applications Approvals - NONE****Agriculture Conservation Plans - NONE**

After the above transactions, the following funding remains:

<b>319 Septic Grant – Flat Creek, et al.</b>	<b>\$ 27,293.50</b>
<b>319 Septic Grant – Spring Creek, et al.</b>	<b>\$ 19,186.00</b>
<b>Chesapeake Bay VACS-21</b>	<b>\$ 469,413.45</b>
<b>Outside Chesapeake Bay VACS-21</b>	<b>\$ 30,291.00</b>

**Drill Rental Rates**

**On a motion by Ms. Crews, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved increasing the drill rental rates to the following: 10 acres and less \$150.00/rental; 10.1-50.00 acres \$14/acre; 50.1 acres and greater \$13/acre; and imposing a \$50 cleaning fee if seed is not adequately removed from the seed boxes after use.**

**Mr. Arnason recommended to table a discussion about charging a late fee until after this drill season.** The Board reviewed a new checklist form and by consensus approved its use. Drill rates and cleaning fee will go into effect beginning September 1, 2020.

**2020 Conservation Awards Program**

DCR will sponsor the Clean Water Farm Award program this year, with applications due by October 1, 2020, but districts may have to purchase the signage. The awards will be presented at 2021 Area Spring meetings rather than during the virtual VASWCD Annual Meeting. The Board tabled discussion about a decision to recognize PSWCD conservation awards this year.

**FINANCE**

**On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the Dedicated and Obligated Funds (VACS, operating, equipment and local) for FY21 in the amount of \$1,346,006.76. Detailed document is attached.**

**On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved an Equipment Storage Agreement (\$1,200/year) between PSWCD and Brendan Burke for the storage of the four no-till drills at his farm.**

The Board reviewed the current list of District inventory (equipment, furniture, computers, etc.). The list is on file at the office.

Mr. Moyer asked if information about drones had been researched. Staff recommended to the Board to contact Grant Kronenberg, the Office of the Attorney General legal representative for districts, to get an opinion on the legal obligations about the use of drones on private property by a public body and certifications/liabilities needed to operate. It was suggested to work with VASWCD to determine if other districts are utilizing drones and prepare a letter on behalf of districts.

Ms. Collins congratulated the District on their grant deliverables and performance for FY20. The District fully satisfied all grant deliverables. Copies of the assessments are on file at the office.

**PLANNING – no report****WATERSHED**

Ms. Fehrer gave several updates on dam work. AMT Engineering is continuing design phase for several small repairs and that AMT has been invoicing the District when certain milestones are completed. Ms. Fehrer and Mr. Wilson, DCR SWCD engineer, are working to approve the invoices and request reimbursed funds. Ms. Fehrer reported the fall mowing will begin in late September and the installation of remote monitoring equipment will commence next week.

### **LEGISLATIVE**

Mr. Rash reported that the recommendation from the General Assembly for FY22 cost share will most likely be reduced from the current year level, back to a \$30-\$34M program. The \$15M for SWCD dam rehabilitation program is likely to be removed from the Governor's recommendation. The effects of Covid-19 have resulted in a \$2.87 billion dollar shortfall in State revenues.

### **PERSONNEL**

Ms. Fehrer introduced Brendan Burke, the District's new Equipment Manager. Mr. Burke thanked the Board for giving him the opportunity to manage the drill rental program and he looks forward to meeting clients and Board members. Ms. Fehrer mentioned that clients who have rented the drill over the past two years will be notified of the change as well as a notice in the Annual Report, on the website and via Facebook. Ms. Norton suggested to notify all partners.

### **COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION**

**On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved \$5,000 of the education program dedicated funding to be used toward an "Outdoor Classroom Mini Grant" program targeting K-12 schools to help them establish outdoor learning areas on their campus.** Ms. Atkinson reviewed the process, the flyer and application form that she will be using to implement the program.

Ms. Fehrer passed around a draft copy of the FY19-20 annual report. It will be sent to the printer later this week. Ms. Atkinson was part of a committee of Virginia Educators who prepared a "Virginia Environmental Literacy" document that is being sent to K-12 schools to assist them with establishing an Environmental Literacy program in the school. It includes several templates to help identify environmental learning concepts and outside sources of funding, and provides recommendations for community resources, that include soil and water conservation districts. Ms. Atkinson has distributed to the local school systems and teachers.

### **DISTRICT MANAGER AND PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:** (Attached)

#### Department of Conservation and Recreation

Ms. Collins thanked everyone for their continued thoughts and prayers as her husband recovers from his recent accident. She mentioned that additional information will be forthcoming regarding the FOIA on-line training that is a requirement for all elected directors as well as the district FOIA officer.

#### USDA-NRCS – Amelia

Ms. Berry, the recently hired District Conservationist for Amelia and Powhatan counties, introduced herself. She spent the past five years at the Hanover NRCS office and is looking forward to working with producers and the PSWCD staff and directors. Mr. Whittington thanked Mr. Adams for his long-time expertise in helping to train another new conservation staff member.

#### Virginia Cooperative Extension

Ms. Norton reported that pesticide recertification will be offered as an on-line option and details are being finalized. She reminded everyone that VCE has numerous trainings on-line that

include a wide variety of topics. Starting September 1, VCE offices will have at least one person in the office, but not all offices have opened to the public. There is a current hiring freeze and vacancies such as the Amelia Agricultural and Natural Resource agent have not been filled. Ms. Norton is assisting the Amelia office with inquiries.

District Manager

Ms. Fehrer thanked VCE and Ms. Norton for the use of the Zoom conferencing for the Board meeting. She also thanked Stephen Reames for his eight years of service to the District as the Equipment Manager. Ms. Fehrer reported that Ms. Atkinson is taking a course to help her become familiar with the VCAP urban cost share program and that Ms. Atkinson is attending monthly Steering Committee meetings along with Ms. Fehrer. She reminded the Board that there is an upcoming financial audit which will be conducted remotely and that the two septic grants will begin with new grant agreements on October 1, 2020.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Nottoway citizen, Daphne Cole, expressed her thanks for all the good work the PSWCD is doing and was appreciative of the conservation mini grant program being offered to local schools.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

**ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:**

Dedicated Funds; Equipment Storage Agreement; Inventory Listing; DCR Assessments; Staff report; DCR report; NRCS Amelia report

Submitted By \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deanna Fehrer, Piedmont SWCD Staff

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Charles Arnason, Director / Secretary