



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes February 25, 2020 4:00 p.m.**

Board Members Present:

Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County/Vice Chairman
Dr. Wilkie Chaffin –Director, Prince Edward County / Treasurer
Chuck Arnason –Director, Nottoway County / Secretary
Allison Crews – Director, Amelia County
Bill Powers –Director, Prince Edward County
Juan Whittington –Appointed Director, Amelia County
Haley Norton- Appointed Director, VCE Nottoway County
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County
Sarah Eck – Associate Director, Nottoway County
Horace Adams- Associate Director, Prince Edward County

Board Members Absent:

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman

SWCD Staff Present:

Kelly Atkinson – Education Coordinator
Deanna Fehrer- District Manager
Charlie Wootton – Senior Conservation Specialist
Earl Long – Intern, Longwood University

Partners Present:

Denney Collins – DCR CDC
Olivia Plant – NRCS Acting Conservationist, Amelia
Doug Audley – Department of Forestry, Amelia

Guests Present:

Daphne and Jerry Cole - Nottoway County citizens

CALL TO ORDER & WELCOME

A regular meeting of the Piedmont SWCD Board of Directors was held at the Mullins-Starke Camp located in Crewe, Virginia on Tuesday, February 25, 2020. Vice-Chairman Rash called the meeting to order, welcomed directors, staff and partners. A quorum was present. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the agenda was approved as presented.**

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the January 28, 2020 minutes as presented.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Ms. Fehrer reported the past due equipment rental invoice from Joe Jenkins of \$846.61 has been paid in full. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by**

unanimous vote, the Board accepted the January 2020 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit.

CONSERVATION REPORT

VACS Application Approvals

On a motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS applications, totaling \$48,280.00 in Chesapeake Bay funding:

Prince Edward

Timothy Mark Jenkins

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0066)

FR-1 Afforestation of Hay, Crop and Pasture Land (13.8 ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 1,380.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 3,105.00

Sterling Investments LLC

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0068)

FR-1 Afforestation of Hay, Crop and Pasture Land (40 ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 4,000.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 9,000.00

Josh H. Whirley

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0059)

CCI-SL-6W Stream Protection -Wide Buffer Maintenance (9460')

Estimated Cost \$ 13,575.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 13,575.00

Ann C Bradshaw

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0069)

CCI-SL-6W Stream Protection -Wide Buffer Maintenance (15,200')

Estimated Cost \$ 20,250.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 20,250.00

CCI-SL-6N Stream Protection-Narrow Buffer Maintenance (2800')

Estimated Cost \$ 2,350.00

Estimated Cost Share \$ 2,350.00

DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic Applications

There were no septic applications for action.

Agriculture Conservation Plans

On a motion by Mr. Arnason seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following conservation plans:

Nottoway

George P. Kite III

CP-05-20-0002

BMP

Robert W. Norfleet

CP-05-20-0003

BMP

Thomas M. Coppedge

CP-05-19-0009

BMP

Prince Edward

Kent McMillan

CP-05-20-0004

BMP

Sterling Investments LLC

CP-05-20-0005

BMP

Boot Hill Dairy (5)

Compliance

On a motion by Dr. Chaffin, seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following conservation plans signed by staff to be recorded in minutes:

Prince Edward

Stacy Bolton
Frank Century Farm LLC

CREP
CRP

Ag BMP Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) 2020

Mr. Rash reported that the guidelines for the operation of the BMP TAC in 2020 have changed from having a representative from each Area to representation from each SWCD. A district can have one representative and one proxy on the full TAC and different representatives to serve on the sub-committees.

Dr. Chaffin motioned to appoint Mr. Rash as the Piedmont SWCD representative on the Ag BMP TAC for calendar year 2020 and then amended his motion to also include Mr. Wootton as Mr. Rash's proxy on the committee. Mr. Arnason seconded the motion and motion carried by unanimous vote.

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved Mr. Wootton to serve on the Ag BMP TAC stream exclusion sub-committee and for Mr. Rash to serve on the programmatic sub-committee.

Ms. Collins reminded the Board that recommendations for changes to the VACS program are due to DCR by March 10, 2020. Ms. Fehrer reported that a letter regarding the cost share rates for the FR-1 practice has been drafted and will be sent to the Board for review and then submitted to DCR by the March 10 deadline.

Equipment Program

Ms. Fehrer gave an update from DEQ regarding the purchase of a no-till drill utilizing the DEQ loan program. According to Lars Bolton, DEQ Loan Program Manager, the loan program staff are preparing recommendations for changes to the loan program that will allow SWCDs to get financial assistance for the purchase of conservation equipment, however, those recommendations will need to be approved by the State Water Control Board in September 2020 and would become effective immediately following the approval. Mr. Arnason suggested we wait until after the changes to proceed with the purchase of a new no-till drill through the loan program. An updated application may need to be submitted.

FINANCE

Ms. Fehrer reported she has received a notification from DEQ with an intent to award the two septic grant proposals submitted to DEQ in November 2019. The grant for Flat, Deep, West and Nibbs watersheds has been initially approved for \$171,979 and Spring, Briery, Saylers, Bush and Little Sandy watersheds have been approved for \$215,710. The grants will begin in October 2020 and end in September 2024. DEQ is completing the paperwork to extend the current septic grants to September 30, 2020 so there will be no lapse in funding.

Ms. Fehrer also reported budget requests to the three localities have been submitted with requests for level funding.

PLANNING

After the January Board meeting, Emily Gibbs, recently appointed Associate Director representing Amelia County, contacted Ms. Fehrer with her resignation as an Associate Director because of her workload this year, but that she is interested in serving in 2021 if a position is

available. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted a resignation from Emily Gibbs.**

WATERSHED

Mr. Arnason reported A. Morton Thomas & Associates (AMT, Inc.) met with Mr. Arnason, Mr. Charles Wilson, DCR SWCD dam engineer, and Ms. Fehrer in early February and visited the 8 dams that have already been approved for engineering design funding. AMT submitted a proposal for one of the projects and the proposal cost was much higher than the approved funding. Mr. Wilson and AMT met on Monday to review the proposal and scope of work. According to Mr. Wilson, AMT has a better understanding of the scope of work needed and funding the SWCDs will have for projects. They will be submitting a revised proposal.

Mr. Arnason reported that the annual dam inspections will be conducted March 11-12, 2020. Ms. Fehrer reported the District's current maintenance contractor trapped beavers and muskrats at 12 of the dams.

LEGISLATIVE

Dr. Chaffin reminded everyone that the weekly report from Don Wells, VASWCD past Legislative Chair, is continuing to be emailed to the "All District" list serve and to review to keep updated on legislative activity related to SWCDs and natural resources. Dr. Chaffin also reminded everyone of the upcoming Area V Spring meeting on Wednesday, March 4, 2020 to be held in Buckingham and hosted by Peter Francisco SWCD.

Mr. Rash reported that both HB1422 and SB704 included language that required livestock exclusion from waterways and nutrient management plans on agricultural operations. Discussions were contentious but the VASWCD was able to work with legislators and the Secretary of Natural Resources to remove the regulatory aspect of the language until 2026 unless the state meets its Watershed Implementation Plan III reduction goals. The bills passed by the House and Senate with those amendments.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION

Mr. Powers reminded everyone of the upcoming education program deadlines and events that are listed on the agenda. Ms. Atkinson reported she has not received any scholarship applications as of today, but several teachers and students have contacted her regarding the program and she expects to receive several applications. The Youth Conservation Camp dates have been confirmed for July 12-18, 2020. Ms. Crews commented that she attended one of the 'Speaker Series' for the Envirothon program that featured our own Mr. Wootton as the resource specialist, and that the training was well done and the students were engaged. The District will have a booth at First Friday's event on May 1, 2020 at Riverside Park in Farmville.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT *(See attached report)*

Ms. Fehrer reminded everyone to review her report of what the staff have been accomplishing. She mentioned that Mr. Long, our college intern, has been assisting with power point slides and the program brochure for the awards program and she has been keeping him busy with other district work.

PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS

Department of Conservation and Recreation (See attached report)

Ms. Collins reported that 3rd quarter disbursement letters have been sent to districts and districts should expect to receive their disbursement shortly. Ms. Collins will be providing a Phase I training to new directors and associate directors on March 30 in Farmville and a Phase II training is scheduled for April 6, 2020 in the Farmville conference room. A replacement for the data manager job held by Roland Owens has not been named. The Tappahannock CDC position has been filled by Elizabeth Stockton. Other appointments are listed on her report. The State Soil and Water Conservation Board will hear additional concerns at their March 26, 2020 meeting about the FY21 Base Technical Assistance funding as related to agricultural cost share returned to DCR.

Virginia Cooperative Extension

Ms. Norton reported she has not been informed when the ANR agent positions at Amelia and Prince Edward offices will be filled. Currently she is assisting the Amelia office and Eric Bowen is assisting the Prince Edward office.

USDA-NRCS (See attached report)

Olivia Plant, acting District Conservationist for Amelia and Powhatan, introduced herself. She is filling in for Rachel Loveday who is temporarily the acting Area Resource Conservationist. Ms. Plant reminded the Board of upcoming program application deadlines as outlined on her report and that Mr. Hancock will most likely be the point of contact for the upcoming annual local workgroup discussion with the Board.

Department of Forestry

Mr. Audley reported that tree contractors are out and working on the many tree planting projects. Mr. Henry Womack and Mr. Gwyn Tyler, long time DOF employees who serve Appomattox, Prince Edward and Buckingham counties, are retiring at the end of the month.

ROUNDTABLE/PUBLIC COMMENT

Nottoway citizens Daphne and Jerry Cole reported they were canoeing the Nottoway River (which flows in the Fort Pickett reservoir and is the drinking water source for the Town of Blackstone) and observed cattle in the river as well as a large amount of sediment washing from a property into the Nottoway reservoir. They reported the problems to the Town of Blackstone but also asked what else could be done. Mr. Rash suggested the Coles contact Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services that has a division to report agriculture related concerns.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The annual Conservation Awards banquet will follow at 6:00p.m.

ATTACHED REPORTS

Conservation; DCR, NRCS and Staff reports

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

Approved By: _____ Date: _____
Charles Arnason, Director / Secretary