



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Farmville, Virginia
November 24, 2020 11:00 a.m.**

Board Members Present:

Ricky Rash – Director, Nottoway County/Vice Chairman
Charles “Chuck” Arnason –Director, Nottoway County / Secretary/Acting Treasurer
Allison Crews – Director, Amelia County
Bill Powers –Director, Prince Edward County
Haley Norton- Appointed Director, VCE Nottoway County

Board Members Absent:

Larkin Moyer –Director, Amelia County / Chairman
Dr. Wilkie Chaffin –Director, Prince Edward County / Treasurer
Juan Whittington – Appointed Director, Amelia County
Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia County
Horace Adams- Associate Director, Prince Edward 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:

Sarah Eck – Associate Director, Nottoway County
Denney Collins – Dept. Conservation & Recreation, Conservation District Coordinator
Kelly Atkinson – PSWCD Education Specialist
Brendan Burke – PSWCD Equipment Manager
Jeremy Evans, NRCS District Conservationist Nottoway/Prince Edward office

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, November 24, 2020. Vice Chairman Rash called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. A quorum was physically present. Members, partners and staff listed above participate remotely via Zoom videoconference, but no voting directors were present via Zoom. Additional agenda items included VASWCD raffle and James River Buffer program. The agenda was adopted by group consensus.

SECRETARY’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the October 27, 2020 minutes as presented.

TREASURER’S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board accepted the October 2020 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit.

CONSERVATION - Reported by Mr. Dunn and Mr. Wootton

VACS FY21 Correction:

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved additional CB cost share of \$5,120.00 for contract 05-21-0025 (415172) for 102.4 acres of SL-8B that were inadvertently left off of the September Conservation Report.

VACS FY21 Cancellation:

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the cancellation of the following application:

Prince Edward County

Lewis H. Gillispie

05-21-0043 (420526)

FR-1 Afforestation of Hay, Crop and Pasture Land (16 ac)

Estimated Cost	\$ 2,400.00
Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 4,200.00

VACS FY21 Approval:

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following VACS FY21 application with 3 practices as presented below totaling \$23,799.95 in Chesapeake Bay FY21 VACS funding and \$432.32 in tax credits:

Prince Edward County

Christopher G. Ranson

05-21-0046 (421892)

SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (35'/10yr) (3200')

Estimated Cost	\$ 21,170.00
Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 17,994.50
Estimated Buffer Payment	\$ 2,080.00
Total Estimated Cost Share	\$ 20,074.50
Total Estimated Tax Credit	\$ 273.88

05-21-0046 (421893)

SL-7 Extension of Watering System (55ac)

Estimated Cost	\$ 2,535.00
Estimated Cost Share	\$ 1,901.25
Estimated Tax Credit	\$ 158.44

05-21-0046 (421891)

CCI-SL-6N Stream Exclusion Narrow Buffer- Maintenance (765')

Estimated Cost	\$ 1,823.75
Estimated Incentive	\$ 1,823.75

The total of CB VACS21 approvals is \$28,919.95

After the above transactions, the following funding remains:

Chesapeake Bay VACS-21	\$ 190,091.64
Outside Chesapeake Bay VACS-21	\$ 0.00

Agriculture Conservation Plans

On a motion by Ms. Crews seconded by Ms. Norton and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following agriculture conservation plans as presented:

Amelia

Whitaker Farms	CP-05-21-0006	BMP
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Nottoway

Jamie S. Hawley	CP-05-20-0016	BMP
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The following conservation plan was signed by staff:

Prince Edward

Shirley Barksdale	CRP
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No-till drill:

Ms. Fehrer and Mr. Burke shared information regarding the drill program performance from August until present. The drills were very busy during the fall planting season with over 800 acres seeded. One drill (#2) was not operable and was used for spare parts. Last October the Board submitted an application to DEQ for 50% funding assistance to purchase an additional drill. Due to complications with policy language the program was put on hold. Language changes have been implemented to allow SWCD participation in the program. Based on long-term drill usage and the drill program's support of the mission of the PSWCD, the Board discussed replacing the two oldest drills. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved purchasing two (2) new 10' drills (one with a warm season grass box) through the DEQ funding assistance program, and to dispose of the two oldest drills (#2 and #4).** The discussion for the method of disposition was tabled.

James River Riparian Buffer Program:

Ms. Fehrer provided the Board information about a buffer implementation program that is available to all landowners in the Upper and Middle James watersheds. The James River Association and Department of Forestry are providing 100% of project costs to install riparian buffers. Department of Forestry staff have met with Piedmont staff to discuss the program, but additional information is needed. A flyer about the program is attached.

PLANNING

On a motion by Ms. Norton, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board elected the following officers for 2021:

Chair – Larkin Moyer

Vice Chair – Ricky Rash

Secretary – Bill Powers

Treasurer – Charles Arnason

Last month the Board agreed to purchase VASWCD Education Foundation raffle tickets for a \$100 donation. The District received 20 tickets and will submit them back to the VASWCD office with the PSWCD as the ticket holder. Any winning prizes will be held for future events that might need an item for a door prize or a donation for future VASWCD auctions.

WATERSHED

Mr. Wootton provided a power point of dam projects that are ongoing. The training dike at Buffalo #2 has been constructed with seeding to be completed this week. The remote monitoring equipment has been installed on 4 dams and a storm event last week provided an opportunity to test out the connections and data monitoring. All went according to plan. Access to the remote monitoring data will be given to Prince Edward County emergency services.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION

Ms. Atkinson reported Area 4 and Area 5 SWCDs will work together to offer a virtual Area Envirothon competition. PSWCD has one team from Amelia High School that has committed and Ms. Atkinson is communicating with 2 additional schools. Ms. Atkinson is working on the Wednesday Watershed James River video series with Nottoway 4H agent, Teri Abston, and has visited Bear Creek Lake State Park to shoot video footage about vernal pools. Evaluations for the outdoor classroom mini grant projects have been extended to February 16, 2021. Ms. Atkinson prepared and distributed an interactive Fall newsletter to area educators.

LEGISLATIVE

Mr. Rash reported he will be working with the VASWCD leadership to enhance the VASWCD Legislative Committee in the new year. The VASWCD is looking to shorten their legislative agenda to reflect potential restrictions on the members of the General Assembly in the upcoming 2021 General Assembly session. It has been suggested that each representative only sponsor 5-8 legislative bills due to COVID and a possible shortened session. It is likely VASWCD will be removing the \$15M for dam rehabilitation and also support for the Healthy Soil Coalition program. The VASWCD will finalize the 2021 Legislative Agenda at their virtual annual meeting on December 7, 2020.

Area V will hold their meeting via Zoom conference on Tuesday, December 1, 2021. The conference room will be available for directors and staff to attend jointly.

FINANCE (no report)**PERSONNEL**

Ms. Fehrer congratulated Ms. Atkinson on passing her Chesapeake Bay Landscaping Professional course.

DISTRICT MANAGER AND PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS

Department of Conservation and Recreation (Attached)

Ms. Collins reported 2nd quarter disbursements letters have been sent. Reminders for trainings and meeting dates can be found on her report.

USDA-NRCS – Farmville & Amelia (Attached)

Mr. Evans reviewed his report and mentioned that the deadline for FY21 EQIP applications is December 18, 2020, unless the funding for federal government operations is not extended and staff will be furloughed.

VCE

Ms. Norton reported VCE is working to provide pesticide re-certification training and tobacco producer GAP certification within the new COVID guidelines that limit groups to no more than 25. Ms. Norton advertised a new statewide program, "Women in Agriculture", which provides a forum of networking and speakers to female agriculture producers and industry.

PSWCD Staff (Attached)

Ms. Fehrer announced Prince Edward County has a new County Administrator, Mr. Douglas Stanley and that PE County is submitting an application for the renewal of a water withdrawal permit at Sandy River Reservoir. A public comment period will be announced soon.

ROUNDTABLE:

Ms. Crews mentioned she is continuing to participate in the VA Soil Health Coalition and has been listening to several interesting podcasts about cover crops, crimper and no-till methods of farming. She also announced she will be attending the ACRES Eco-Agriculture Conference.

Mr. Rash reported he took Dr. Chaffin his 20-year service pin and was able to visit with him for a short time. Dr. Chaffin is ill and unable to attend the VASWCD annual meeting where he would have normally received his service pin.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

Staff, DCR & NRCS reports; James River Buffer Program flyer

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

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