



**Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Farmville, Virginia
May 26, 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
Horace Adams- Associate Director, Prince Edward County

Board Members Absent:

Gary Dillard – Associate Director, Amelia 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:

Dr. Wilkie Chaffin –Director, Prince Edward County / Treasurer
Juan Whittington –Appointed Director, Amelia County
Haley Norton- Appointed Director, VCE Nottoway County
Sarah Eck – Associate Director, Nottoway County
Kelly Atkinson – PSWCD Education Specialist
Denney Collins – DCR Conservation District Coordinator

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, May 26, 2020. Chairman Moyer called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and led the group in prayer. A quorum was physically present. As reported in the March meeting minutes, the United States is in the midst of a health pandemic (Covid-19) and while restrictions in Virginia are beginning to relax, Piedmont SWCD continues to take precautions by limiting the number of people gathered in one room. There was no April meeting of the PSWCD Board of Directors.

The Board was made aware of a provision in the Code of Virginia (§2.2-3708.1) that would allow remote participation of board members in meetings of a public body. A policy was drafted by staff and approved by Grant Kronenberg, the legal counsel for Piedmont SWCD. **On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the Piedmont SWCD Remote Participation Policy (attached).** The Board by consensus approved for the May 26, 2020 meeting, the attendance via conference call for Dr. Chaffin and Mr. Whittington due to medical conditions that currently prevent them from attending and Ms. Norton due to a personal matter (child care). Associate director, Ms. Eck, staff member, Kelly Atkinson, and DCR CDC, Denney Collins, also participated in the

conference call. At this point in the meeting, the conference call was initiated and those listed above joined the meeting.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the March 24, 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 March - April 2020 Treasurer's Report as presented to be filed for audit.

The staff prepared a plan of operations document during the Covid crisis, which was implemented the week of March 23, 2020, but the document was not completed in time for the March 24, 2020 Board of Directors meeting. Attached is Piedmont SWCD's plan of operations which was distributed to the Board after the March board meeting. On May 18, 2020, the Governor of Virginia began to relax restrictions with a phased approach to reopening the state. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved PSWCD's "Continued Operations – Phase 1" addendum (attached).** Two staff members are working regularly in the district office and two staff members continue to telework for the majority of their work. Office spaces have been rearranged to one person per office and social distancing guidelines have been implemented. The office building remains closed to visitors.

As a result of the Covid crisis and the impact on district operations, DCR has proposed changes to the FY20 grant deliverables. Attached are those changes, which will be reviewed by the State Soil and Water Conservation Board on June 3. The changes include extension of dates for cost share obligation, reduction in monthly meetings and other director meeting requirements, eliminating the several reports – strategic plan review/updates, Attachment B, annual plan of work and annual report.

CONSERVATION REPORT - Reported by Mr. Dunn and Mr. Wootton **VACS Application Cancellations & Corrections**

VACS Contract Corrections

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote the following correction was approved:

Benson contract 05-20-0019 approved on January 28, 2020 in the amount of \$1,169.78 for a NM-1 but should have been approved for \$1,518.00. Approve an additional \$348.22 in Chesapeake Bay VACS. (VACS tracking program had the correct amount of \$1,518, but the approval spreadsheet was incorrect).

VACS Cancellations prior years funding

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote the following cancellations were approved and funds will be returned to DCR by June 30, 2020:

-Don Benson 05-16-0019, WP-1, \$50,000 2016 CB VACS (client decided not to implement due to the high probability of a large storm event causing significant damage and requiring a large

amount of out of pocket funds to repair in order to meet the lifespan obligations).

-RM Watkins 05-18-0029, WP3, \$5,501.42 – (\$3,235.25 2017 CB transfer; \$2,266.16 2018 CB VACS) (client completed on his own).

-Elois Archer Revocable Trust 05-19-0074, SL-11 \$1,277.10 and WP-3 \$1,960.50 (CB VACS). The Archer projects will be installed with NRCS funding. However, the District will issue a tax credit upon completion and the estimated tax credits were previously approved.

VACS Cancellations FY20 Chesapeake Bay

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote the following FY20 CB cancellations were approved:

Whitaker 05-20-0017 NM-1 \$2,023.60 (DCR wrote plan)

Poore 05-20-0025 NM-1 \$1,239.40 (DCR wrote plan)

Glasscock 05-20-0028 SL-8 \$2,397.00 (Did not plant)

Blanton 05-20-0037 S-L8B \$9,452.00 (Did not plant)

Kirby 05-20-0043 S-L8B \$5,894.00 (Did not plant)

Jenkins 05-20-0066 FR-1 \$3,105.00 (Installed under DEQ program)

Boot Hill Dairy- 05-20-0047 FR-1 \$15,885.00 (Installed under DEQ program)

Reamford 05-20-0030 SL-8H \$706.00 (Did not plant)

VACS Cancellations FY20 Outside Chesapeake Bay

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote the following FY20 OCB cancellations were approved:

Reamford 05-20-0030 SL-8B \$4,628.00 (Did not plant)

Triple R 05-20-0010 SL-8H \$650.00 (Did not plant)

VACS Approvals:

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following six VACS practices, totaling \$32,048.78 in Chesapeake Bay funding:

Prince Edward

Charles F. Brisentine

(C. Bay)

05-20-0080

SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (50'/10yr) (2200')

Estimated Cost \$ 20,495.00

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 19,470.25

Estimated Buffer Payment \$ 2,000.00

Total Estimated Cost Share \$ 21,470.25

Nottoway

Terry L. Greer

(C. Bay)

05-20-0079

SL-7 Extension of Water System (20.5ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 3,387.50

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 2,540.63

Estimated Tax Credit \$ 211.72

Amelia

R. M. Watkins & Sons Inc.

(C. Bay)

(05-20-0016)

NM-6 Manure Injection (166.9 ac)

Estimated Cost \$ 7,510.50

Estimated Cost-Share \$ 7,510.50

<u>Smith Tobacco Farms</u>	NM-1A N. M. Plan Writing & Rev. (28.7 ac)	
(C. Bay)	Estimated Cost	\$ 57.40
(05-20-0034)	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 57.40
<u>John C. Ashman</u>	NM-1A N. M. Plan Writing & Rev. (210.5 ac)	
(C. Bay)	Estimated Cost	\$ 421.00
(05-20-0006)	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 421.00
<u>Richard Goode</u>	NM-1A N. M. Plan Writing & Rev. (24.5 ac)	
(C. Bay)	Estimated Cost	\$ 49.00
(05-20-0040)	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 49.00

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, with Mr. Moyer leaving the room, the Board approved the following VACS practice totaling \$18,390.18 in Chesapeake Bay funding and an estimated tax credit of \$17,500.00:

AMELIA

<u>Oakmulgee Dairy</u>	SL-6W Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer (50'/10yr) (9,500')	
(C. Bay)	Estimated Cost	\$ 35,986.50
05-20-0036	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 10,390.18
	Estimated Buffer Payment	\$ 8,000.00
	Total Estimated Cost Share	\$ 18,390.18

*** In combination with EQIP- Federal C-S-\$23,797.00**

<u>Oakmulgee Dairy</u>	WP-4 Manure Storage	
(C. Bay)	Estimated Cost	\$ 362,038.25
05-20-0036	Estimated Cost-Share (EQIP)	\$ 271,528.00
	Total Estimated Tax Credit	\$ 17,500.00 MAX

DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic Application Cancellations

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved three septic cancellations:

Flat Creek, Nibbs Creek

LaTasha Henderson	05-19-0063	RB-1 Septic Pumpout	\$225.00 Cost Share
Violet Jones	05-19-0015	RB-1 Septic Pumpout	\$270.00 Cost Share
Sharon Jones	05-19-0018	RB-1 Septic Pumpout	\$225.00 Cost Share

DEQ 319(h) Residential Septic Application Approvals

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved three septic applications that were previously approved by staff due to emergency repairs needed:

Spring Creek, et al.

Donald Lee, Jr.	RB-4 Septic System Replacement	
(05-20-0078)	Estimated Cost	\$ 5,525.00
Prince Edward County	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 4,143.75 (75% cost share rate)
Marcus Thomas	RB-4 Septic System Replacement	
(05-20-0077)	Estimated Cost	\$ 6,400.00
Prince Edward County	Estimated Cost-Share	\$ 4,480.00 (70% cost share rate)

Flat Creek, Nibbs Creek

Bronson Lynch (05-20-0081)	RB-1 Septic System Pumpout		
Amelia County	Estimated Cost	\$	350.00
	Estimated Cost-Share	\$	175.00 (50% cost share rate)

Agriculture Conservation Plans

On a motion by Mr. Powers, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, with Mr. Whittington abstaining, the Board approved the following conservation plans:

Prince Edward

Marvin Fisher	CP-05-20-0009	BMP
Charles Brisentine	CP-05-20-0012	BMP

Nottoway

Jennifer Morris	CP-05-20-0008	BMP
Garland L. Rogers	CP-05-20-0010	BMP
Terry Greer	CP-05-19-0010	BMP

Amelia

Featherstone Farm	Tax Credit	BMP
Don Benson	Tax Credit	BMP
Ameva Farm Inc.	Tax Credit	BMP

After the above transactions, the following FY20 funding remains:

Chesapeake Bay VACS-20	\$	99,998.40
Outside Chesapeake Bay VACS-20	\$	41,900.40
319 Septic Grant – Flat Creek, et al.	\$	34,240.00
319 Septic Grant – Spring Creek, et al.	\$	17,536.00

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the FY21 VACS Secondary Considerations and ranking sheet were approved (attached). Mr. Wootton reported DCR had pre-approved and there were no significant changes from FY20.

On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the FY21 VACS cost list (attached). Mr. Wootton reported changes were made to the installation of water well costs and FR1 pine planting costs.

WATERSHED - reported by Mr. Arnason

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Powers and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the contract dated April 9, 2020 Project 19-0710.000 from AMT Engineering for pre-design services (surveying and geo-tech) of 10 projects at 7 dams in the amount of 62,650. Mr. Arnason reported that over the past couple of months, Charles Wilson, DCR SWCD dam engineer, helped with negotiations of the contract based on funding allocated to the projects. Next month AMT will submit the proposal for design services. A copy of the contract is on file at the office.

The remote monitoring equipment has been ordered by DCR and will require alteration permits for installation. **On a motion by Ms. Crews, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by**

unanimous vote, the Board approved alteration permits prepared by DCR Charles Wilson for Buffalo #4, Buffalo #5, Bush #2 and Bush #7 dams for the installation of the remote monitoring equipment.

Other items reported:

- Concerns from a landowner at Bush #2 regarding trespassers on their property were communicated with the staff. To remedy the concerns and to reduce vehicle traffic on top of the dam, Charles Wilson had no objections to the landowners installing a steel pole gate on top of the dam near the east end groin.
- Mowing of the dams will begin June 1.

FINANCE

Dr. Chaffin reported that Ms. Atkinson had written a grant in the amount of \$5,000 to the Virginia Outdoors Foundation for a kudzu removal project on an educational and public walking trail located on Fuqua School property. Goats would be utilized to remove the invasive vine with follow-up maintenance performed by Fuqua School. Funding was allocated to the grant in the amount of \$3,500. Staff members prepared a contract document with 'Goat Busters' who will perform the services, and a MOU with Fuqua School for accessing the property. The following documents are part of the project:

On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the following: Grant #ARF2020-005 from the Virginia Outdoors Foundation in the amount of \$3,500, Contract with Goodling Enterprises, dba Goat Busters in the amount of \$3,750, MOU with Fuqua School documenting the project and liability to Goodling Enterprises, and expenditure of \$250 from PSWCD education budget to finalize the project. Documents are on file at the office. Ms. Atkinson will prepare a video of the project and other outreach media.

Due to mis-use of gift cards by several SWCDs, auditors and DCR are requiring a policy for the use of gift cards. Ms. Fehrer will work on a policy to be reviewed in June, but in anticipation of the policy the need for a gift card is required now. **On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved the purchase of a \$30 gift card from Walmart to be given to the Conservation Poster Contest winner, Natasha Carricato, a 4th grader at Prince Edward Elementary School.**

The office copier/printer is broken and it is more economical to purchase a new copier rather than repair. **On a motion by Mr. Powers, seconded by Mr. Whittington and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved purchasing a HP Pro 577DW printer/copier for \$759.00 from Key Office, who will deliver and install.** Quotes were obtained from at least 6 vendors.

Ms. Fehrer reported she will be working with the Finance Committee to develop a budget after the Soil and Water Conservation Board meets on June 3 to approve DCR grant agreements.

PERSONNEL

Ms. Fehrer reported that the Personnel Policy required several small edits and clarifications. **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Ms. Crews and carried by unanimous vote, the**

Board approved the edits as presented. A copy of the edits and updated document are on file at the office.

Due to the Covid pandemic and the fact that several staff members are teleworking, Ms. Terri Higgins, a human resource advisor to districts and associate director at Henricopolis and Loudoun SWCDs, has suggested that districts have a teleworking policy in place, mainly to define the expectations of employees working from home and to assign liability. **On a motion by Mr. Rash, seconded by Mr. Arnason and carried by unanimous vote, the Board approved a teleworking policy and agreement for PSWCD as presented.** A copy is on file at the office. Each employee who teleworks will sign the agreement.

The federal government mandated a policy for employers to compensate employees that were unable to work due to being ill with Covid, caring for someone in their household who has Covid or caring for children due to schools being closed. Ms. Terri Higgins has suggested that districts adopt the policy, called First Families Relief Coronavirus Act (FFRCA). **On a motion by Mr. Arnason, seconded by Mr. Rash and carried by unanimous vote, the Board adopted the FFRCA policy as presented.** A copy is on file and posted at the office. On direction from Mr. Dillard, Personnel Chair, staff were compensated as they would have regularly worked. Specifically, Ms. Atkinson who has been working from home because her children's school has been closed, has been compensated for what her average hours would be each week had she been working at the office. She completed most of her hours on a weekly basis from mid-March through mid-May and the additional hours the District paid for were minimal. All the documentation is on file at the office. Ms. Atkinson is now on a reduced summer schedule, but will continue to telework.

Ms. Fehrer reported that all personnel evaluations have been completed and are on file at the office. Mr. Dillard performed Ms. Fehrer's evaluation and reviewed the rest of the evaluations completed by Ms. Fehrer. All evaluations were favorable.

COMMUNICATION / EDUCATION

Ms. Atkinson reported on the goat kudzu removal project and hopes to share a video at the next board meeting. She also reported that the Poster Contest was completed despite Covid and that she received 246 posters from Prince Edward Elementary School and several local girl scout troops. The grand prize winner was Natasha Carricato, a 4th grader at PE elementary school. Audrey Sullivan, a local artist and owner of Farmville Red Door 104 studio, judged the posters. Articles were submitted to the Farmville Herald.

Ms. Atkinson also reported she was asked to serve on the Virginia Association of Environmental Educators (VAEE) that has been tasked with developing an environmental literacy guideline document for K-12 schools. She is working with several other educators on the project.

Ms. Fehrer thanked Ms. Atkinson for preparing the Spring newsletter which featured our conservation awards. Ms. Fehrer also passed out thank you cards received from two of our scholarship winners, Mr. Paul Moore of Amelia County and Ms. Ally Vermillion of Nottoway County. The office also received a thank you letter from the Buy Fresh Buy Local chapter for support of the local publication.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT

Ms. Fehrer reported all staff are continuing normal operations with the exceptions of visitors coming into the office. All meetings are being conducted electronically. Mr. Wootton praised the efforts of VCE and the many trainings they have been doing virtually. Ms. Fehrer reported the following personnel changes of several partners: FSA in Farmville has hired Ashley Loflin as the new County Executive Director; Rachel Loveday has taken the Area Resource Conservationist position at the NRCS Farmville Area office with Olivia Plant continuing to serve as the District Conservationist in Amelia; and Wade Bartlett, Prince Edward County Administrator, will be completing his contract at the end of September and the county is beginning the process of hiring a new administrator.

PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:

Department of Conservation and Recreation: *(See attached report)*

Ms. Collins highlighted a few items on her report including the annual VACS updates trainings will all be delivered via webinars; SWCDs will only receive one VACS manual; and she directed everyone to review upcoming deadlines and dates.

USDA-NRCS – Amelia *(See attached report)*

Virginia Cooperative Extension:

Ms. Norton reported she is continuing to telework as well as rotate coverage in her office as she managed the challenges of working at home with children.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS:

Remote Participation Policy; Plan of Operations; Phase 1 Reopening; FY21 VACS Secondary Considerations and cost list; AMT engineering contract; Virginia Outdoors Foundation grant agreement and corresponding grant/MOU; Personnel Policy revisions; Teleworking Policy; FFRCA Policy

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

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