

THOMAS JEFFERSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
January 25, 2017

Present:

Directors: Pratley, Bradshaw, Campbell, Collins, Easter, Goodman, Meeks, Murray, Murdoch, Swanson, Thompson,

Staff: Sappington, Coates, DaMitz, Eiserman, Hyatt, Martin Johnson, Mary Johnson, Longanecker, Ramsey, Talley, Walton

Agencies: Cross (DCR), Bayless (NRCS)

Guests: Charlotte Rae

Absent:

Directors: Wagner (Director), McGoff, Tingley (Assoc. Directors)

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Pratley established a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:36 am.

ADDITIONS / CHANGES TO THE AGENDA:

- Area II Spring Meeting (A. Sappington) and Legislative Agenda (S. Meeks) were added to Discussion Items.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ACTION ITEMS:

Report of Nominating Committee:

- Ms. Bradshaw reported that she and Ms. McGoff met to discuss potential candidates to serve as officers for the calendar year 2017. She stated the Committee recommended that the current slate of officers continue to serve in their current capacities, (Tom Pratley, Chair; Brian Wagner, Vice-Chair; Steven Meeks, Secretary; John Easter, Treasurer). Mr. Pratley opened the floor for additional nominations. Hearing none, the following motion was made:

MOTION: *Mrs. Swanson moved to approve the recommendation of the Nominating Committee. Mr. Thompson provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.*

Approval of the Minutes:

Mr. Pratley opened the floor for changes to the minutes. There were none.

MOTION: *Mr. Easter moved and Mr. Meeks seconded to approve the Director's Meeting Minutes for December 14, 2016. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.*

Personnel/Operations Committee Report:

- Mr. Pratley stated the Committee met and reviewed the TJSWCD Annual Plan of Work, as well as District Job Descriptions and Performance Standards. He stated the Committee recommended approval of all three documents.

MOTION: *Mr. Easter moved and Mr. Meeks seconded to approve the recommendation of the Personnel/Operations Committee and the three stated documents. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.*

Finance/Budget Committee Report:

- Mr. Easter reported the Committee met and reviewed the monthly financial reports and everything appeared to be in order.

MOTION: *Mr. Thompson moved to approve the Finance/Budget Committee report. Ms. Swanson seconded the motion and without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.*

Ag Committee Report:

- Mr. Thompson provided a brief summary Ag Committee meeting on Wednesday, January 18th. He stated they discussed the issue of non-responsive producers on the backlog 2015 SL-6 project list (100% cost share), and Committee authorized staff to send a letter to these producers informing them in order to remain eligible for 100% cost share, they must respond by April 1, 2017. If this deadline is not met, the producer will be removed from the 2015 SL-6 backlog list, and must reapply for any additional cost share funds they may be eligible for.
- Luke Longanecker read the list of projects and funding amounts recommended for approval by the Ag Committee (see Consent Agenda).
- Mr. Thompson added that the Committee was interested in getting feedback on FR-1 tree planting projects, specifically their successes and/or failures. He added that cost share funds are available for a one-time replanting only - should the project initially fail. Additional discussion took place related to this topic.
- Mr. Meeks questioned whether separate funding approval was needed for the individual projects since they also appear on the Consent Agenda. After a brief discussion, Ms. Cross explained that as long as the individual projects and approved funds are recorded in the meeting minutes, it is up to the District as to how to present them for the meeting.

MOTION: *Mr. Murray moved to approve the Ag Committee report. Mr. Campbell provided the second, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Water Resource Committee Report:

- Mr. Murray reported the Committee met and recommended approval for the following projects:
 - Craig, RB-3 (repair): \$2,333.50
 - Vincel, RB-2 (connection to public sewer); \$4,500.00
 - Schickel, RB-4 (install system): \$4,000
 - Harris, RB-4P (pump system): Increased funding by \$850 for a total amount of \$6,300.00
- Mr. Murray stated the Committee recommended denial of funding for Wood, RB-3 (a septic repair project), since they could see no water quality benefit to the request.
- Mr. Murray added the Committee recommended approval for the Peabody School VCAP Conservation Landscaping project in the amount of \$3,500.

MOTION: *Mr. Meeks moved to approve the Water Resources Committee report and project funding recommendations. Mr. Thompson provided the second, and without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.*

Appointment of Records Officer:

- Mr. Johnson reported that a new Records Officer must be appointed by the Board to replace the current ones, Alyson Sappington and Deloris Bradshaw.

MOTION: *Mr. Meeks moved to appoint Mary Johnson as the new Records Officer for the TJSWCD. Mr. Easter provided the second, and without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.*

Cost Share project Increase:

- Mr. Thompson reported that the Ag Committee was not able to formally meet and approve an increase to an existing cost share project. Luke Longanecker provided additional details on the increased funding request of \$573.00 for Coleman, a WP-2 fencing project

MOTION: *Mr. Meeks moved to approve the increased funding request with Ms. Swanson providing the second. Without further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.*

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Cost Share Projects: Williams, SL-6 (\$17,619.40); Fairmount Capital Partners. LLC, SL-6 (\$162,760.60); Prins, SL-6 (\$41,425.66); Barksdale Asset Protection Trust, LE-1T (\$65,479.14); Brumfield, FR-1 (\$13,910.75)
- Conservation Plans: Williams, SL-6; Fairmount Capital Partners. LLC, SL-6; Prins, SL-6; Barksdale Asset Protection Trust, LE-1T; Brumfield, FR-1
- Septic Pump-Outs \$150 each (RB-1): Redlands Farm (3 total); Smith; Davis; Mitchell; Sheffield; Goodwin; Stouch; Bragg; Williams; Payne
- Project Increases: Ryalls, SL-6 (\$1,354.11); Parr, SL-6 (\$1,862.50)
- Final Tax Credit: Coleman, (\$259.50); Barrell (\$56.15)
- Potential Tax Credit: Brumfield, FR-1 (\$852.56); Prins, SL-6 (\$2,589.10); Barksdale Asset Protection Trust, LE-1T (\$2,888.75)
- Committee Minutes: Budget Committee (12/14/2016); Ag Committee (12/14/2016 & 01/18/2016); Personnel/Ops Committee (01/18/2017)

MOTION: *Mr. Meeks moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Easter provided the second. The motion passed unanimously.*

DISCUSSION ITEMS:**TJWRP Foundation Roles and Responsibilities:**

- Mr. Thompson referred to the handout that was included in their board packets (see attached). He provided a brief background of the history of the Thomas Jefferson Water Resource Protection Foundation (TJWRPF) and explained the roles and responsibilities of the TJSWCD and TJWRPF Board of Directors.
- Mr. Thompson stated that the TJWRPF established a Finance and Budget Committee that was commissioned to research and prioritize the increasing staff workload needed to fully support Foundation activities now and in the future. He added that he was appointed as Chair of the TJWRPF Finance and Budget Committee, and that the Committee will also be reviewing and updating the processes and procedures when acquiring new easements and examining opportunities to expand the program to perhaps meet current land development stormwater management regulations. A brief discussion ensued, and Mr. Pratley reminded the Board that a joint meeting between the TJWRPF and TJSWCD Boards was discussed and adopted in the TJSWCD Annual Plan of Work. This prompted additional dialogue. Mr. Thompson closed by stating he will provide an update to the TJSWCD Board once the Committee has completed their analyses and presented their recommendations to the Foundation Board for review and approval.

2017 Committee Assignments:

- Mr. Pratley asked the Directors to review the updated committee assignments (see attached) and to contact Mary Johnson with any changes they may have.

Update to Area II Spring Meeting:

Ms. Sappington reported that she has been working on the logistics and added the meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 11th, 2017. She has been researching local vineyards that might be available and reported that the Barboursville Vineyard has agreed to work within the District budget. She stated that a final decision on the location is still pending. The Directors engaged in dialogue regarding additional details and ideas for the meeting.

Legislative Update:

Mr. Meeks reported that the top VASWCD priorities for this year are related to the Freedom of Information Act, the Conflict of Interest Act and budget amendments to provide funding for cost share programs. He briefly reviewed each proposal with the Directors with Ms. Cross expanding on various proposed legislative actions.

COOPERATING AGENCIES REPORTS:

DCR:

- Ms. Cross reviewed her monthly report with the Board and pointed out some notable topics. She reminded Directors to provide Mary Johnson with any address and/or telephone changes for the new VASWCD Directory. She also noted that the mileage reimbursement rate for 2017 was reduced from 54 cents per mile to 53.5 cents per mile. She reviewed other topics and important dates shown in her report and requested Directors to contact her with any questions they may have.

NRCS:

- Mr. Bayless reported that the sign-up deadline for the Conservation Stewardship Program is February 5th, and February 17th for their EQIP program. He provided funding and status updates to the various NRCS programs.

VCE:

- Ms. Swanson reported her agency is anticipating an 8% cut in funding, and it is unknown when replacements will be hired for the staff leaving under their new early retirement incentive program.

STAFF REPORTS:

- Mary Johnson asked Directors to let her know if they do not want paper copies of the board packets, otherwise she will continue to provide them.
- Lauriston DaMitz reported the District is now accepting applications for the scholarship program. She added the application and information was posted on the District website.
- Michael Ramsey reported he has taken the Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional Level I Certification exam, and encouraged Directors to consider this program if they are interested in learning more about urban stormwater runoff and best management practices.
- Anne Coates thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as District Manager, and commended the staff for their dedication and work efforts.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

- Ms. Easter distributed a copy of a letter he received regarding the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (see attached). He stated the letter outlined Dominion's request to the VA Outdoor Foundation (VOF) to abandon certain conservation easements so the pipeline may be installed through those protected lands. He reported the Piedmont Environmental Council, the Shenandoah Valley Network, and the Valley Conservation Council have written leaders to the easement landowners, asking them to attend the VOF's hearing scheduled for February 9th and express their opposition. Mr. Easter stated concern over the possibility that the VOF may renege on their commitment to holding and maintaining conservation easements into perpetuity as originally promised to the landowners. He added he will be attending the hearing and invited others to attend as well.
- Ms. Bradshaw reported that she had just received an email and that she was also listed as a Records Officer for the District. Ms. Johnson confirmed that once the paperwork is turned in to the Library of Virginia, both she and Alyson would be removed from their list.
- Ms. Goodman inquired if there was any unfinished business with FSA in Louisa since they were meeting in the morning. She stated she has been trying to get a representative to attend the Director's meetings and will continue to do so.
- Mr. Campbell reported that the Virginia Farm Bureau has been working on getting funding restored for the reforestation of timberland, as well as for other cost share programs and technical support. He added he recently attended the American Forage and Grassland Council Annual Meeting in Roanoke, and heard a speaker from New Mexico who was working to unite the environmental community with the agricultural community for management of grasslands. Mr. Campbell stated this speaker provided photographs of public lands that clearly demonstrated the positive role grazing animals play in the cycle of nutrients and sunlight on grasslands. This prompted a discussion where Mr. Pratley asked Ms. Cross if there would be Resource Management Planning funding in the near future. Ms.

Cross stated that funding has not been consistent, and that the next available funding will most likely be for certification of the previously approved Resource Management Plans.

- Mr. Meeks recognized the Farm Bureau as one of the best, well known supporters in lobbying efforts for districts. He added that he will be attending the National Association of Conservation Districts' Annual Meeting scheduled for January 28th through February 1st, 2017 in Denver. He stated he would provide a report upon his return. Mr. Meeks also reported that there is an existing vacant seat on the Virginia Noxious Weed Committee and said he would like to discuss this position with Mr. Murray after the meeting.
- Mr. Murray reported that he had just discovered a private social network for neighborhoods (Nextdoor.com) and that localities and other governmental agencies can post information directly to the citizens in this group. He encouraged the District to make use of website for outreach. He said that he recently posted information on VCAP and received two inquiries from that posting. Mr. Murray also confirmed his unconditional support for the federally funded employees in the conservation industry. He encouraged all to express the value the federal conservation professionals provide to our communities.
- Mr. Pratley once again thanked Ms. Sappington for her dedicated service to the District and wished her well in her retirement. He also expressed a warm welcome to Ms. Coates as her replacement.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: Mr. Easter moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Thompson provided the second. ***The motion passed unanimously.***

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:50 pm.

Submitted by: _____
Recording Secretary

Approved: _____
Chair