

THOMAS JEFFERSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
June 26, 2019

Present:

Directors: Pratley (Chair), Campbell, Collins, Easter, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Thompson, Tingley

Assoc. Directors: McGoff

Staff: Coates, Longanecker, Moyer

Agencies: Cross (DCR), Lipinski (NRCS)

Guests: Navarre Bartz, Kelsey Cowger

Absent:

Directors: Swanson, Wagner

Assoc. Directors: Tweardy

Staff: DaMitz, Eiserman, Gyurisin, Hyatt, Talley

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Pratley called the meeting to order at 10:19 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

GUEST INTRODUCTIONS: Mr. Pratley introduced guests Navarre Bartz and Kelsey Cowger. Mr. Pratley suggested inviting candidates to attend the September meeting.

ADDITIONS / CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None.

CLOSED SESSION: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION ITEMS AND UPDATES:

Directors Meeting Minutes:

MOTION:** Mr. Meeks moved to approve the Directors Meeting Minutes for May 29, 2019. Mr. Lucas seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.

Building Location:

Mr. Pratley and Ms. Coates gave an overview of potential new office locations. The landlord would like the District to move from its current Charlottesville office space by November and has offered a two-story space in new construction next door. Ms. Coates noted that only the first floor will be ADA accessible, and the meeting room would be located downstairs, but staff has concerns about being split over two floors. Directors reviewed a comparison of projected lease costs over a six-year period. Ms. Coates stated that the Charlottesville location would run over \$60,000 by year six, with the lease including utilities and common area maintenance. Ms. Coates has obtained pricing on a space in North Garden, where the landlord offered two options, to either include or exclude utilities and common area maintenance. The current landlord has also offered a smaller second-floor space on Dale Avenue but pricing was not yet available. Directors and staff have looked for other spaces, but they are not seeing less than \$20 per square foot in Charlottesville.

Mr. Longanecker shared staff concerns about parking and accessibility. They looked at a radius including Ivy, Crozet, and Scottsville. He commented that with a satellite office already in Louisa, North Garden makes sense geographically as far as the area they serve.

Mr. Murray suggested arranging a staff tour of the North Garden location. Mr. Murray asked about driving time for Directors. Mr. Lucas replied that all candidates on the ballot in Louisa are on the western end of the county. Mr. Pratley remarked that North Garden is only ten minutes out from the 64/29 exit, and ten minutes is not a long drive for partner agencies and customers. Mr. Lucas said it is an easy drive. Mr. Easter prefers to remain in the current space at the current price through the end of the current lease term, and the landlord can buy them out and pay the delta in rent if he wants them to leave sooner. Mr. Thompson asked if the North Garden space will need to be refreshed. Ms. Coates replied that it is in good shape but will need an additional restroom. Mr. Easter asked about the square footage compared to the current space. Ms. Coates replied that it is 1,000 square feet more (3,000 square feet in the new space versus 2,000 square feet currently). Mr. Easter asked if they can get a smaller portion of the space. Mr. Meeks said that would be difficult because the space is already built out. Ms. Coates noted that it has a nice large boardroom, but that would not be as heavily used as the current meeting space. Mr. Pratley commented that the current meeting space is tight.

Mr. Murray stated that the North Garden location could increase Hardware outreach. Mr. Thompson commented that Charlottesville programs are growing rapidly, and North Garden would move away from that. Mr. Easter asked Ms. Coates to further explore rent discounts or lease buyouts. Ms. Cross remarked that June would be a terrible time for staff to move, with the end of the fiscal year. Mr. Tingley encouraged timeline flexibility to pick a good month for staff workload. Directors asked Ms. Coates to discuss the moving timeline with staff and come back with the preferred option to use in negotiations.

Personnel/Operations Committee Report:

Ms. Coates reported that Ms. Eiserman is interested in returning to full-time status, the Personnel/Operations Committee supports this change, and the Budget/Finance Committee agreed that there is adequate funding for it. Ms. Coates asked to modify the position matrix to change the pay grade for the Agricultural Administrative Assistant I position, to include a range up to pay grade 9 to match the advertised hiring range for the new position.

MOTION:** Mr. Easter moved to accept the modification to the staff position matrix. Mr. Meeks seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.

Budget/Finance Committee:

Mr. Tingley reported that the Budget/Finance Committee recommended approval of a \$250 donation to support the Piedmont Master Gardeners' 30th anniversary event at The Paramount Theater. The event would offer the opportunity to promote urban BMPs.

MOTION:** Mr. Tingley moved to approve the donation proposal of \$250 to the Piedmont Master Gardeners. Mr. Easter seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Tingley reported that the biggest change in the proposed budget is the amount of DCR support, driven by increased cost-share funding. Staffing levels will increase by 1.5 FTEs. The budget is conservative in case they do not obligate 90 percent of cost-share funds and have to return the associated technical assistance funding.

MOTION: *Mr. Thompson moved to approve FY 2020 Proposed Budget. Mr. Easter seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Tingley reported on fiscal year-to-date financial statements, noting that expenditures are at 87.9 percent of annual budget amounts and revenues are at 83.3 percent of annual budget amounts. Expenses are slightly over budget primarily due to non-recurring bonuses in December, and they expect to come in at budget for the year.

Mr. Murray asked about the net loss of \$200,000. Ms. Moyer replied that is due to current-year disbursements of cost-share funding received in prior fiscal years, and not due to operating costs.

MOTION: *Mr. Meeks moved to accept the financial report. Mr. Murray seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Tingley related that DCR asked for budget projections for operational support needs to support level and increased cost-share funding scenarios. The committee recommended one additional senior-level staff position and two additional entry-level staff positions to meet the increased cost-share objectives. Staff revised Attachment D to reflect committee recommendations to include a senior-level new hire, rather than all entry-level new hires.

Ms. Cross addressed questions regarding the purpose and review process for Attachment D.

MOTION: *Mr. Thompson moved to approve Attachment D, as revised by the Budget/Finance Committee. Mr. Easter seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.*

Climate Committee:

Mr. Tingley reported that the Climate Committee is reviewing national healthy soils initiatives adopted by other states and considering how they fit here. The committee will make a recommendation to the Board in future.

Legislative Committee:

Ms. Coates reported that she modified last year's legislative agenda and shared it with the Legislative Committee. Committee members asked for a new item for statewide septic program funding. Other items include monitoring for the remaining SWCD dams and an equine census.

Ms. Cross addressed questions regarding the Area II review process, noting that submissions are due by July 15 and only Directors on the July 25 conference call may vote. She spoke further to the statewide association review process.

Mr. Murray asked to better differentiate District-wide septic from TMDL-focused programs. He would place septic right behind VCAP in terms of priority. He suggested support for equine cost-share rather than an equine census.

Mr. Pratley suggested specifying a dollar amount in the septic request. Ms. Cross noted that VCAP is only funded for a year. Mr. Meeks said to ask for continued support of VCAP. Mr. Murray suggested \$500,000 as a starting point for septic funding outside of TMDL areas. Ms. Coates felt there is still a need for an equine census.

MOTION: *Mr. Easter moved to adopt the legislative agenda with the amendments discussed. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion.*

Mr. Collins commented that he is still bothered by the erosion and sediment control process for linear utility projects. Mr. Collins asked how to further this item. Mr. Pratley replied that it was adopted as part of the VASWCD legislative agenda last year but they could not find a legislator to carry the item. Mr. Murray said they need to research state code or work with other organizations to propose a specific code change.

Mr. Collins expressed concern about the solar array in Covesville with a runoff ditch to the creek. Mr. Meeks said that is a local zoning matter.

Mr. Pratley suggested bringing back the linear utility project item next year after further research to flesh out the language and seek legislative support. Mr. Tingley commented that SELC will know how to amend the enabling legislation. Mr. Murray supports adding the item this year if they can meet with an attorney or SELC regarding the language before the submission.

VOTE: *Mr. Easter called the question. Mr. Pratley noted the motion was to adopt the legislative agenda with the amendments discussed prior to the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.***

Agriculture Committee Report:

Mr. Thompson summarized the Agriculture Committee meetings and reviewed projects recommended for approval (*see attached minutes and reports for details*). The June 13 meeting addressed programmatic review, secondary considerations, cost-share policies, FY 2020 VACS funding and practice updates, cost list updates, carryover list updates, and outreach methods and partners. The June 26 meeting addressed project approvals, cost estimate increases for FY 2019, continued review of the FY 2020 cost list, approval of the carryover report, and review of the final outreach flyers.

Mr. Murray suggested a habitat award. Ms. Coates recommended asking the new hire to research a comprehensive annual awards package and work with the Public Relations Committee on this.

Mr. Longanecker noted a correction to the Oakdale LLC amount, as the committee agreed to pay for 50 percent of the total for new wells, for a revised approval amount of \$4,472.

MOTION: *Mr. Murray moved to accept the Agriculture Committee report and approve the carryover report. Mr. Murdoch seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.***

Water Resources Committee:

Mr. Murray summarized the recent Water Resources Committee meeting, reviewed projects recommended for approval, and provided updates on the DEQ grants (*see attached minutes and reports for details*). The committee discussed water resource concerns related to solar projects. Mr. Murray commented that localities may lack guidance on BMPs for solar projects, and he shared details about the Covesville project where it appears that stream buffers were removed to create a clear channel to the stream. The committee asked to refer this to the Climate Change Committee to work with staff to propose solar BMP standards.

Ms. Coates expressed concern about staff workload capacity to address solar BMPs, given grant and contract deliverables. She is reluctant to make regulatory recommendations to localities. Discussion ensued about the appropriate locality contacts and existing resources.

Ms. McGoff agreed that the District should educate its localities on this topic, it is climate-related if they push for alternative energy, and there is overlap between agriculture and solar. Ms. McGoff left the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

Mr. Thompson suggested checking DEQ standards. Mr. Meeks suggested that Directors with concerns make contact with localities, rather than asking staff to do so. Mr. Pratley noted that ESC enforcement falls to the localities, and perhaps this could be settled with a few phone calls or emails rather than drafting BMPs. Mr. Pratley commented that regulatory bodies or the state association may be better suited to address this issue. Mr. Murray wants to keep this issue on the radar before it becomes a major problem.

Mr. Murray plans to contact Albemarle County staff to inquire about the Coveseville project. Mr. Lucas noted that smaller projects with land disturbance under 10,000 square feet are exempt. Mr. Lucas asked to keep this topic with Water Resources rather than referring it to Climate. Ms. Coates suggested adding the topic to the annual plan of work and strategic plan if they want to dedicate staff hours to this.

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to accept the Water Resources Committee report. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.**

Desktop Procedures:

Ms. Coates noted that the revised Desktop Procedures manual and update summary were distributed and Board review is required.

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to confirm review of the Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations. Mr. Easter seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.**

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. **Committee Minutes:** Agriculture Committee (6-13-19) and (6-24-19); Water Resources Committee (5-29-19); Personnel/Operations Committee (6-24-19), Budget Committee (5-29-19).
2. **Consent Items:**

Agriculture Practices

Last Name / Business	Contract #	Instance	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share	Potential Tax Credit	Final Tax Credit	Conservation Plan Approval
Seamans Orchard	02-19-0144	338532 & 338608	CCI-SE1	\$5,575.00			
John Hesselbart	02-19-0143	338330	CCI-SE1	\$5,616.00			
Ann Van Daventer	02-19-0145	339114	CCI-SE1	\$2,950.00			
Project Increases				Increase Amount			
Oakdale LLC	02-19-0123	334945		\$3,050.00 \$4,472.00			

Septic Practices

Last Name / Business	Contract #	Instance	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share
Project Increases				Increase Amount
Adams	02-19-0131	338988	RB-4P	\$1,600.00
Packett	02-19-0118	338987	RB-4	\$4,500.00
Plaskey	02-19-0126	338989	RB-4P	\$1,200.00

MOTION: Mr. Thompson moved to approve the Consent Agenda, as amended. Mr. Meeks seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.**

COOPERATING AGENCIES REPORTS:

DCR: Ms. Cross presented training certificates and summarized information from her monthly report (see attached report for details). Ms. Cross also presented the General Assembly resolution recognizing Magnolia Farm, suggesting coordinating to present it at a Board of Supervisors meeting.

NRCS: Mr. Lipinski reported on open programs.

FSA: FSA provided the attached written report. Ms. Coates noted that it was clarified that the District can place its brochures in FSA offices, but only joint events may be promoted in the FSA newsletter.

DOF: Ms. Coates shared that DOF would like to attend an upcoming meeting to discuss tree programs.

VCE: No updates.

DEQ: DEQ provided the attached written report.

TJWRPF: No updates.

Mr. Easter left the meeting at 12:15 p.m.

STAFF REPORTS:

Ms. Coates reported on an equine program site visit with the grantor. The new entry-level position has been advertised, and one complete application has been received so far. Ms. Coates shared the General Assembly commendation and flag recognizing Mr. Meeks for his service.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Mr. Meeks reviewed the election candidates list. He noted the NACD grass-roots engagement efforts planned for August recess.

Mr. Murray reported that he received a request from Lake Monticello for native plant info.

Mr. Thompson pointed out the staff newsletter highlight regarding the Tye grant, where 21 miles of streams were protected.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: *Mr. Thompson moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Lucas seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.***

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:37 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Recording Secretary

Approved: _____
Chair