

THOMAS JEFFERSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
January 29, 2020

Present:

Directors: Pratley (Chair), Bartz, Campbell, Collins, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Thompson, Willis

Assoc. Directors: McGoff, Merle-Smith

Staff: Coates, Gyurisin, Longanecker, Moyer

Agencies: Cross (DCR), Lipinski (NRCS)

Guests: Carolyn Daughters, Kelsey Cowger

Absent:

Directors: Easter, Swanson

Assoc. Directors: Tingley, Tweardy

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Pratley called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Mr. Pratley announced that the Secluded Committee will meet at 12:30 p.m. for a call with the Office of the Attorney General to review deed restrictions. The Area II meeting is May 12 in Middleburg. The District strategic planning session is February 13 at the Department of Forestry.

GUEST INTRODUCTIONS: Kelsey Cowger expressed interest in serving as an Associate Director.

ADDITIONS / CHANGES TO THE AGENDA: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

CLOSED SESSION: None.

ACTION ITEMS AND UPDATES:

Directors Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: Mr. Lucas moved to approve the Directors Meeting Minutes for December 18, 2019. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.**

Report of Nominating Committee and Election of Officers:

Ms. McGoff presented the slate of officers: Mr. Pratley for Chair, Mr. Thompson for Vice Chair, Mr. Meeks for Treasurer, and Mr. Lucas for Secretary. Mr. Pratley asked for any nominations from the floor; there were none.

MOTION: Mr. Lucas moved that nominations be closed. Mr. Collins seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.**

MOTION: Mr. Thompson moved to accept the report of the Nominating Committee and elect the slate of officers as presented. Mr. Collins seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.**

Committee Signups:

Mr. Pratley and Ms. Coates asked Directors and Associate Directors to review the committee membership list and communicate any changes or new committees on which they wish to serve. The Dam Committee and the Legislative Committee need someone to chair the committee.

Purchasing Policy Updates:

Ms. Moyer summarized proposed amendments to the purchasing policy to align the small purchase thresholds with the current VPPA limits at which competitive sealed bids and competitive negotiation are required. The existing District policy sets the limits at \$50,000 for goods and nonprofessional services and \$30,000 for professional services, while the current VPPA thresholds are \$100,000 and \$80,000. Below IFB and RFP thresholds, the small purchase policy sets out guidelines for how many quotes to obtain based on the price range of the purchase.

Mr. Meeks stated that the Budget/Finance Committee reviewed the amendments and recommended approval.

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to approve the purchasing policy amendments. Mr. Lucas seconded the motion. Staff responded to questions regarding the amendments. After discussion, ***the motion passed unanimously.***

Budget/Finance Committee:

Mr. Meeks reported on fiscal year-to-date financial statements, noting that revenues are at 58 percent of annual budget amounts and expenditures are at 56 percent of annual budget amounts, at 50 percent through the fiscal year. Moving costs totaled \$8,000, with some tables yet to be purchased, staying within budget with no use of reserves. One uncleared check is from November and the rest more recent.

Mr. Campbell asked about the payment to the Local Government Investment Pool. Ms. Moyer replied that the Board elected to move a portion of reserve funds to LGIP for a greater return than the SunTrust money market account.

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

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to authorize signature of an LGIP application to update the address and officers. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion, and ***the motion passed unanimously.***

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to authorize updates to checking account signature cards to list Steven Meeks, John Easter, Steve Lucas, Anne Coates, Luke Longanecker, Lisa Hyatt, and Amy Moyer as signatories. Mr. Thompson seconded the motion. Mr. Meeks summarized check signing policies. After discussion, ***the motion passed unanimously.***

Water Resources Committee:

Mr. Murray reported that septic and urban practices are included on the consent agenda for approval. The committee discussed outreach strategies for the remaining Hardware funding, the recent VCAP contractor training, and other opportunities for educational programs. Mr. Murray related that the committee also discussed scoring adjustments for CCAP and ACAP to reflect local program interests that may differ from VCAP rankings. VCAP is weighted towards things like permeable pavers, while Charlottesville and

Albemarle have an interest in wildlife habitat.

Ms. McGoff commented that permeable pavers are highly effective in reducing runoff to streams, which does benefit wildlife and riparian zones. Mr. Murray explained that lawn conversion practice on its own does not rank in VCAP anymore, but they could adjust scoring to qualify it for CCAP/ACAP, and they could do a lot of lawn conversions for the cost of few permeable paving practices. Mr. Thompson explained that VCAP is a statewide program, whereas the District can work with the localities on their preferences for use of the local funding. Mr. Murray noted the local comp plan sections on biodiversity. Ms. Coates said their goal would be to send permeable paver projects that rank to VCAP for funding, in order to better leverage the local funding for smaller projects. Ms. Coates and Ms. Cross noted that VCAP ranking has become more competitive as more districts participate.

Mr. Pratley inquired about the status of VCAP funding. Ms. Coates said VASWCD expects to allocate all existing funding by June 30, and additional state funding is proposed for next year. Mr. Gyurisn responded to questions regarding the VCAP application review process. Ms. Cross noted that several state budget amendments are proposed to increase the funding.

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

Agriculture Committee Report:

Mr. Thompson explained the end-of-year tax credit process. He summarized the Agriculture Committee meeting and reviewed projects recommended for approval, noting that they approved three project increases and two new projects. Mr. Thompson asked that a list of project codes be distributed for reference. He related that there is \$1.3 million left to obligate from an allocation of almost \$2.4 million, and staff is confident they can allocate the remaining funding. He noted that under current policy, a significant portion of technical assistance funding must be returned if they obligate less than 90 percent of cost share funding. Mr. Thompson shared information on the Technical Advisory Committee and cover crop practices.

Mr. Thompson noted the workload and staffing challenges posed by the large increase in cost share funding. He stated that policy changes to increase base funding are helpful, but losing proportional technical assistance funding under the 90 percent obligation threshold makes it an all-or-nothing scenario. The Soil and Water Conservation Board will reconsider this policy at its March meeting.

Mr. Pratley asked about a letter to the SWCB. Mr. Thompson asked if the Board would like staff to draft a letter to the SWCB and DCR with suggestions for what they see as an appropriate structure for how districts are funded relative to the cost share they receive. Mr. Pratley said the Board could consider the letter at the February meeting. Ms. Coates related that she and Greg Wilchens met with Kat Maybury, and Ms. Maybury asked that they be specific in their letter. Ms. Cross suggested noting the amount of funding subject to loss. Ms. Coates noted that \$253,000 is subject to return, and while a significant portion was held in reserve to complete multi-year contracts, the District could face a \$60,000 budget deficit in this fiscal year.

Mr. Pratley asked Ms. Coates and Mr. Thompson to draft a letter for consideration at either of the February meetings.

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

Legislative Committee Report:

Mr. Meeks reported that he attended VASWCD Legislative Day and visited all ten offices for Senators and Delegates representing the District. VASWCD participants solicited budget amendments for VCAP. Mr. Meeks gave an overview of notable items on the VASWCD legislative tracking report, including goat grazing on stream buffers, candidate party affiliation and financial reports, and WIP implementation requirements for nutrient management plans and livestock stream exclusion. Directors are encouraged to contact local representatives.

Ms. Coates asked whether to seek Board consensus on positions before requesting a meeting with Delegate Sally Hudson. After discussion, it was generally agreed to oppose party affiliation, support financial disclosure requirements as amended to exempt candidates spending less than \$1,000, oppose mandates as drafted, support additional VCAP funding, and support BMP and TA funding.

MOTION: *Mr. Thompson moved that a group of staff and Charlottesville Directors meet with Delegate Hudson to discuss the Board consensus position. Mr. Bartz seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.***

Mr. Murray expressed interest in meeting with Senator Creigh Deeds.

Mr. Lucas related that Delegate McGuire submitted a request for the Virginia Department of Health to study what is causing algal blooms at Lake Anna.

MOTION: *Mr. Thompson moved to accept the Legislative Committee report. Mr. Murdoch seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.***

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Committee Minutes:** Agriculture Committee (12-16-19); Water Resources Committee (12-18-19); Budget/Finance Committee (12-18-19)
- Consent Items:** See Attached Lists for Agriculture Cost Share and Tax Credits (if applicable), Septic Cost Share, and Urban Cost Share

Agriculture Practices

Last Name / Business	Contract #	Instance	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share	Potential Tax Credit	Final Tax Credit	Conservation Plan Approval
Goodwin	02-20-0128	383291	WP-2W	\$15,048.32	-		yes
Triple 2 Farms	02-20-0129	383290	SL-6W	\$34,524.43	\$629.02		yes
Increases							
Mangham	02-19-0121	334882	WP-2	\$270.00			
Anderson	02-20-0071	377903	SL-7	\$4,267.76			
Elk Creek Farm	02-15-0301	209001	SL-6	\$31,302.40			
Swift Run Farm	02-19-0112	333265	SL-6	\$8,696.88			
Helbert	02-20-0114	381304	RB-1	\$175.00			

Urban Practices

Last Name / Business	Contract #	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share
Lutz	02-20-001	RG	\$3,500.00
Donnelly	02-20-001	RG	\$3,500.00

Septic Practices

Last Name / Business	Contract #	Instance	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share
Gardner	02-20-0127	383142	RB-1	\$175.00
Coleman	02-20-0126	383140	RB-1	\$175.00
Green	02-20-0125	383139	RB-3	\$2,500.00

MOTION: Mr. Thompson moved to adopt the Consent Agenda. Mr. Murray seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

COOPERATING AGENCIES REPORTS:

DCR: Ms. Cross summarized information from her monthly report (see attached report for details). She noted the higher base funding of \$169,674 in FY21. Budget amendments are proposed to shift this higher base funding to general fund dollars. New Directors must complete COIA training before the end of February. Ms. Cross plans to offer new Director training in February or March, possibly after the Board meeting, and then a regional session will be held in Charlottesville on April 20. She noted the need to reconfirm the FOIA Officer and Records Retention Officer for the new year.

NRCS: Mr. Kirkland provided an update on federal programs. \$26 million in EQIP funding and \$6 million in CSP funding for Virginia has been announced, they are waiting on final rules, and application approvals expected to start in March. General CRP signup is open until the end of February. Staff is training on new conservation planning and assessment tools.

DEQ: DEQ provided the attached written report.

FSA: FSA provided the attached written report.

VCE: No updates.

DOF: No updates.

TJWRPF: Mr. Thompson reported that easement inspections are moving forward.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:**Remote Participation Policy:**

Mr. Pratley noted that a remote electronic participation policy will be discussed in February.

STAFF REPORTS:

MOTION: *Mr. Thompson moved to reappoint Amy Moyer as FOIA Officer and Records Retention Officer for 2020. Mr. Collins seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.***

Ms. Coates reported that she hired Megan Seibel as the facilitator for the strategic plan session. They will have a conference call on the agenda this week. Ms. Coates has invited several partner agencies and program participants. Staff will present an overview of current programs to start the session.

Mr. Pratley suggested selling the Dodge pickup truck.

MOTION: *Mr. Thompson moved to sell the Dodge pickup truck. Mr. Meeks seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.***

Ms. Coates noted the staff newsletter and site visit log included in the agenda packet.

Ms. Coates reported an offer was made and accepted for the Albemarle Agricultural Administrative Assistant position. Audrey Kirschner will start February 10.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Ms. McGoff related that she is stepping down as an Associate Director, after serving as a staff member and an Associate Director for nine years.

MOTION: *Ms. Willis moved to appoint Carolyn Daughters as an Associate Director. Mr. Lucas seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.***

MOTION: *Mr. Collins moved to appoint Kelsey Cowger as an Associate Director. Mr. Bartz seconded the motion, and **the motion passed unanimously.***

Mr. Thompson congratulated staff on the VCAP contractor training and the progress in encumbering BMP funds.

Mr. Meeks noted that he will be at the NACD meeting in Las Vegas during the strategic plan session. He missed five meetings in 2019 due to NACD and VASWCD business and asked that this be entered in the minutes:

January 30, 2019: Attended NACD Annual Meeting representing Virginia on the NACD Board of Directors

April 24, 2019: Attended the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board meeting representing TJSWCD and VASWCD

July 31, 2019: Attended NACD Summer Board Meeting representing Virginia

October 30, 2019: Traveled to Richmond to meet with Natural Resources Secretary Stricker

November 20, 2019: Attended Virginia TAC meeting representing TJSWCD and VASWCD

Mr. Lucas reported that Piedmont SWCD has signed a contract with AMT for dam engineering services.

ADJOURNMENT:

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

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:25 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Recording Secretary

Approved: _____
Chair