

THOMAS JEFFERSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
May 26, 2021

Remote Participants:

Directors: Pratley (Chair), Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray (joined at 10:10 a.m.), Swanson (joined at 10:28 a.m.), Thompson

Assoc. Directors: Cowger, Tingley

Staff: Coates, DaMitz, Gyurisin, Hyatt, Longanecker, Moyer, Talley

Agencies: Bayless (NRCS), Lipinski (NRCS)

Absent:

Assoc. Directors: Bartz, Merle-Smith, Tweardy

The Board of Directors convened a decentralized meeting via Zoom due to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Pratley called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.

ROLL CALL: Ms. Moyer called the roll to confirm a quorum of Directors. Attendance was confirmed as listed above.

Motion to Conduct Electronic Meeting:

MOTION: Mr. Lucas moved that the Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors certify that the nature of the state of emergency caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, as declared by the Governor of Virginia, makes it impracticable or unsafe for the Board to assemble in a single physical location, and further that the purpose of the meeting, including all agenda items as reflected in the meeting's prepared agenda, is to transact or discuss business that is statutorily required or that is necessary to continue operations of the Board and the discharge of the Board's lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities. Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Thompson

Nays: None

Absent: Swanson

ANNOUNCEMENTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mr. Pratley asked if any comments were received from the public. Ms. Moyer confirmed that no public comments were submitted.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA: Ms. Coates added the TAC update to the Agriculture Committee report.

ACTION ITEMS:

Directors Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to approve the Directors Meeting Minutes for April 28, 2021. Ms. Daughters seconded the motion. The motion passed 9-0, with one abstention, by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley
Nays: None
Abstain: Thompson
Not Voting: Jones
Absent: Swanson

Personnel/Operations Committee Report:

Mr. Pratley reported that the Personnel/Operations Committee considered potential hiring and staffing changes, FY22 proposed salaries, FY21 spring incentives, updates to the personnel policy position matrix, use of dedicated reserves for a vehicle purchase and other expenses related to hiring a new conservation specialist, and a professional workload analysis.

Salary Increase for FY22:

Ms. Coates related that the Personnel/Operations Committee reviewed proposed salary increases, comprised of a three percent cost-of-living increase and varied merit increases, and all were supported by the Committee.

MOTION: Mr. Lucas moved that the Board accept the recommendation from the Personnel/Operations Committee for salary increases. Ms. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Thompson
Nays: None
Absent: Swanson

Spring Staff Incentives to be added to Payroll in June 2021:

Mr. Pratley related that the Personnel/Operations Committee recommended FY21 spring incentives at a total of \$21,000, with the spring bonus looking at performance over the fiscal year. Mr. Campbell asked if a certain amount is budgeted for staff bonuses and whether it is split 50-50 between mid-year and end-of-year. Ms. Coates replied that that an allowance was included in the FY21 and FY22 budgets, but they are shifting towards just merit increases. Ms. Coates said that rather than 50-50 split, the holiday bonus is more a token of appreciation, and any higher incentives are reserved for the spring, as better financial information is available closer to the end of the fiscal year.

MOTION: Mr. Thompson moved to approve \$21,000 in total for spring staff incentives. Ms. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Thompson
Nays: None
Absent: Swanson

Hiring New Conservation Specialist – Job Description:

Mr. Pratley related that the Personnel/Operations Committee recommended hiring a new Conservation Specialist. Mr. Pratley noted the need to add “other duties as needed” to the proposed job description. Ms. Coates asked the Board to approve this job description for advertisement, with any minor modifications that staff needs to make, such as temporary job modifications related to COVID-19.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to accept the job description, allow staff to make any necessary changes to develop it and attract the best candidates, and approve the addition of this position. Mr. Meeks seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Thompson
Nays: None
Absent: Swanson

Personnel Policy Position Matrix Updates:

Mr. Pratley reported that the Personnel/Operations Committee reviewed suggested pay grade changes to ensure adequate hiring ranges and salaries reflective of current duties, clarifications to experience and knowledge requirements, and elimination of unnecessary position categories. Mr. Pratley requested that the District Manager position be changed to Executive Director and explained precedent for this.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to accept the position matrix updates with the change of title from District Manager to Executive Director. Mr. Murray seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-1 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Swanson, Thompson
Nays: Meeks

Ms. Coates noted that that funding is set aside in dedicated reserves for a vehicle and computers. She has reached out to DCR and will follow up with DHRM for recommendations for a workload analysis consultant.

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to adopt the Personnel/Operations Committee report. Mr. Lucas seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Swanson, Thompson
Nays: None
Not Voting: Campbell

Budget/Finance Committee Report:

Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements – April 2021:

Mr. Meeks reported that he reviewed the financial statements and reports and found everything to be in order. Ms. Moyer noted the DCR fourth quarter disbursement has not yet been received.

FY22 Budget:

Mr. Meeks reported that the Budget/Finance Committee reviewed the proposed budget and recommended adoption as presented. Ms. Moyer stated that the primary change in the FY22 Budget is higher technical assistance funding associated with the increased cost-share allocation. The budget was drafted around an estimate of obligating \$2.4 million of the \$3.2 million cost-share allocation, holding some technical assistance funding in reserve. Personnel costs are higher with adding a position. Ms. Coates explained that a proportional amount of technical assistance funding must be returned if the District obligates less than 90 percent of the \$3.2 million cost-share allocation. Ms. Coates noted that cost-share allocations vary widely year-to-year, and this is the highest allocation the District has received.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to adopt the FY22 Budget as proposed. Mr. Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0, with one abstention, by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Swanson, Thompson
Nays: None
Abstain: Campbell

MOTION: Mr. Lucas moved to adopt the Budget/Finance Committee report and the Treasurer's Report and financial statements for April. Ms. Daughters seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0, with one abstention, by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Swanson, Thompson

Nays: None

Abstain: Campbell

Agriculture Committee Report:

Mr. Longanecker reported that the Agriculture Committee approved one SL-7. With that approval, they are out of funding for FY21 VACS projects and starting a waitlist for FY22 signups.

Cost Increase for Equine Project – Design Issue and Corrective Action (EQ-20-0019: \$300):

Mr. Longanecker outlined corrective action to address a design issue on an equine compost facility. Equine grant funding is fully committed, so the \$300 cost-share for improved drainage would be paid from general funds.

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to allocate \$300 for the equine compost facility corrective action. Mr. Lucas seconded the motion. The motion passed 11-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Swanson, Thompson

Nays: None

Not Voting: Collins

Mr. Longanecker reported that the Agriculture Committee reviewed the FY22 cost list and recommends waiting until July to see where prices are at that point before setting component prices for the year. One mid-year cost list change is now permitted. The Agriculture Committee also discussed outreach strategies, electronic meetings and delegated authority, and tax credit policy updates.

TAC Update:

Mr. Longanecker related that recommendations for consideration in the FY22 TAC cycle are due June 15. He will compile a list and seek feedback.

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to accept the Agriculture Committee report. Mr. Murray seconded the motion. The motion passed 12-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Swanson, Thompson

Nays: None

Strategic Plan – Update on Draft:

Ms. Coates thanked those who have submitted input. The final plan will be presented at the June 30 meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Committee Minutes:** Personnel/Operations Committee (5/5/2021), Budget/Finance Committee (5/11/2021), Agriculture Committee (5/18/2021)
2. **Consent Items:** See attached list for Agriculture Cost Share and Tax Credits (if applicable)

CONSENT AGENDA (cont'd.)

5/26/2021

Agriculture Practices

Last Name / Business	Contract #	Instance	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share	Potential Tax Credit	Final Tax Credit	Conservation Plan Approval
Massie	02-21-0085	431877	SL-7	\$ 20,773.67		-	Yes

The motion passed 12-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Swanson, Thompson

Nays: None

RATIFICATION AGENDA:

1. **Ratification List:** Water Resources Committee (see attached list)

Ratification Agenda - May 26, 2021											
Item	Delegated Authority	Last Name / Business	Contract #	Instance	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share	Potential Tax Credit	Final Tax Credit	Conservation Plan Approval	Approval Date	
Water Resources Committee											
1	Murray	Deul	02-21-0086	432019	RB-1	\$227.50	-	-	n/a	5/20/21	

Mr. Pratley called attention to the item approved by delegated authority.

MOTION: Mr. Thompson moved to approve the Ratification Agenda. Mr. Murray seconded the motion.

The motion passed 12-0 by the following roll call vote:

Ayes: Campbell, Collins, Daughters, Easter, Jones, Lucas, Meeks, Murdoch, Murray, Pratley, Swanson, Thompson

Nays: None

COOPERATING AGENCIES REPORTS:

DCR: Ms. Coates highlighted items of importance from Ms. Cross’s monthly written report (*see attached report for details*).

NRCS: Mr. Bayless noted the confirmation of the new Deputy Secretary of Agriculture and shared updates on federal programs. CSP signup is closed and ranking is in progress. The state agronomist has planned video meetings for those interested in cropland CSP. VASWCD is sponsoring a video meeting for SWCDs to learn more about the NRCS-SWCD Memorandum of Agreement. Signups will be announced soon for the new EQIP conservation incentives program. Bale grazing assistance may be available.

VCE: Ms. Swanson reported that 156 households participated in the well water testing collection this month.

DEQ: DEQ provided a written report.

FSA: No updates.

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

VASWCD/NACD: No updates.

STAFF REPORTS:

Ms. Coates reported that staff is looking for potential in-person meeting locations.

Mr. Pratley called attention to the site visit log and staff newsletter in the packet.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Mr. Murray reported on his participation in easement inspections and Albemarle County's rural stream health initiatives series.

Mr. Campbell left the meeting at 11:45 a.m.

Mr. Murdoch noted the warm season grasses workshop in Blackstone on June 3.

Mr. Lucas reported that monitors have been installed on the four high-hazard dams.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the chair adjourned the meeting at 11:53 a.m.

Submitted by: _____
Recording Secretary

Approved: _____
Chair