

THOMAS JEFFERSON SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
June 28, 2023

Present:

Directors: Stephen Lucas (Vice Chair), Mark Campbell, David Collins, Carolyn Daughters, John Easter, Enrique Hernandez, Julie Jones, Rosalyn Koontz, Steven Meeks, Thomas Pratley (present at 10:08 a.m.)

Assoc. Directors: Mark Wastler

Staff: Anne Coates, Lisa Hyatt, Luke Longanecker, Mark McEldowney, Amy Moyer

Agencies: Debbie Cross (DCR), Kory Kirkland (NCRS)

Remote Participants:

Staff: Tim Talley

Absent:

Directors: Angus Murdoch, Joseph Thompson

Assoc. Directors: Richard Fox, Lonnie Murray, Carrie Swanson

A regular meeting of the Thomas Jefferson Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors was held at James Monroe's Highland Event Barn, 2050 James Monroe Parkway, Charlottesville, Virginia.

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Lucas called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

STAFF, PARTNERS, AND GUESTS PRESENT: Staff and partners present were identified as listed above.

ADDITIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA: None.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Ms. Coates noted that sandwiches will be provided at the end of the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

ACTION ITEMS:

Budget and Finance Committee Report:

Treasurer's Report and Financial Statements – May 2023:

Mr. Meeks reported that the Budget and Finance Committee met this morning and recommended approval of the May financial reports.

MOTION: Mr. Easter moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Ms. Daughters seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

City of Charlottesville Funding Agreement for FY24:

Mr. Meeks shared that the District was presented with an updated funding agreement from the City of Charlottesville. The Committee recommended to the Board that the OAG be consulted before the District signs and that Ms. Coates be given delegated authority to pursue developing a final agreement that is agreeable to both the District and the City. Ms. Coates may sign the agreement before the next meeting if there are no outstanding concerns.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to give Ms. Coates signing authority on the funding agreement with the City of Charlottesville after negotiations. Mr. Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DCR – Attachment D Budget Template for FY25:

Mr. Meeks explained that Attachment D is a planning document to guide DCR funding allocations to SWCDs. The document estimates District expenses related to DCR programs two years in the future. This year's submission has a potential direct impact on FY25 state funding.

Ms. Coates noted that the level funding scenario is \$3.1 million in cost-share and the increased funding scenario is \$5.8 million in cost-share.

Ms. Koontz asked when the current lease ends. Ms. Coates replied June 30, 2024. Mr. Meeks noted that line item seven reflects that the District's rent will likely increase in either the current location or possible relocation of the Charlottesville office.

Ms. Jones asked if the increase scenario adds enough FTEs to meet the \$5.8 million. Ms. Moyer replied that Ms. Coates and Mr. Longanecker put together an organizational chart including everything they would want to deliver that target, and then they pulled back from that for the base scenario. Mr. Pratley noted the chart sent by email summarizing the number of FTEs. Ms. Moyer said that the base scenario has 14.5 FTEs in total and the increase scenario has 17.5 FTEs in total; DCR does not fund the positions listed under education or other programs.

MOTION: Ms. Daughters moved to approve the Attachment D Budget Template for FY25. Mr. Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FY24 Annual Plan of Work:

Ms. Coates presented the FY24 Annual Plan of Work, which was also provided in the Board packet. Ms. Coates stated that the adoption and review of an Annual Plan of Work is a DCR contract requirement. She would like to get an early start on the next Strategic Plan. She asked all the Committees to review the Annual Plan of Work throughout the year and comment and update their own sections as needed. She commented that this will be another busy year, with a minimum cost-share target of \$4 million and a total of \$5.5 million available.

Ms. Daughters noted a correction to the Dam Committee roster.

MOTION: Mr. Easter moved to adopt the FY24 Annual Plan of Work. Mr. Collins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Personnel and Operations Committee Report:

Job Descriptions:

Ms. Coates shared job descriptions for Agricultural Administrative Assistant I and Agricultural Administrative Assistant II for Directors to review with no changes requested at this time. Ms. Coates also shared the revised Executive Director job description; duties have been updated to reflect the title change two years ago. The Management Analyst position is in the process of transferring from being primarily an Albemarle County employee to being a District employee on July 1; the new job description is titled Business and Finance Administrator. The Personnel and Operations Committee reviewed the job descriptions and recommended Board approval.

MOTION: Mr. Pratley moved to approve the job description for the Executive Director position. Ms. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to approve the job description for the Business and Finance Administrator position. Mr. Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Pay Grade Change for Agricultural Engineering Specialist:

Ms. Coates related that the Agricultural Engineering Specialist position was approved last month at pay grade 15. However, after further market analysis, an increase from pay grade 15 to pay grade 16 is proposed in hopes to gain a stronger candidate for this position. The Personnel and Operations Committee and the Budget and Finance Committee recommended approval of the pay grade increase.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to approve the pay grade increase for the Agricultural Engineering Specialist. Ms. Koontz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

HR Consultant:

Ms. Coates shared that the Personnel and Operations Committee reviewed the proposal from Gallagher for continued HR consulting work into FY24. Ms. Coates responded to questions regarding the scope of work provided in the Board packet.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to move forward with the HR consultant. Ms. Koontz seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

DCR – FY24 Grant Agreements:

Administrative and Operational Support Grant Agreement and Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Grant Agreement:

Ms. Moyer related that the FY24 administration and operational support funding is stable from FY23. FY24 cost-share funding is set just under \$5.5 million, with about \$700,000 available in technical assistance funding. DCR requires that the Board approve the grant agreements.

MOTION: Mr. Pratley moved to approve the FY24 DCR grant agreements. Mr. Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agriculture Committee Report:

FY24 Secondary Considerations:

Mr. Lucas reported that the Committee met June 20 but did not have a quorum. The Committee discussed secondary conditions for cost-share projects.

Mr. Longanecker explained that that secondary conditions are items considered beyond the Conservation Efficiency Factor ranking calculated by the DCR tracking program. Factors like farm size, herd size, and watershed are identified as additional priorities. The secondary considerations are similar to last year, with an additional priority for practices on farms with a written nutrient management plan. Mr. Longanecker noted that the document also includes policies, application deadlines, and procedural guidelines.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to approve the FY24 Secondary Considerations. Mr. Meeks seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FY24 Carryover List:

Mr. Lucas noted that the carryover report lists projects under construction or approved but not yet finished that need to be carried over to the new fiscal year.

Mr. Longanecker stated that the report shows what projects staff are currently working on. Projects under construction currently total \$5.8 million; a small portion are septic projects. Staff are working on new signups to meet 90 percent obligation for the current year while also spending the next year or so completing the previous year's projects.

Mr. Pratley inquired about certain projects that have a cutoff point for carryovers. Mr. Longanecker shared that not many projects reach that point, but the District is seeing well contractors backlogged with months of work causing some projects to stall. Ms. Cross explained that stream exclusion practices can be carried over up to four years with justification, but no further extensions can be made. Mr. Longanecker noted that certain practices have different timelines.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to approve the FY24 Carryover List. Mr. Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Lucas congratulated the agriculture program staff for obligating 94.3 percent of the cost-share funds. Ms. Hyatt thanked the Board for their support.

Mr. Lucas reported that the Agriculture Committee discussed the potential for Directors to accompany staff to upcoming agricultural fairs in Louisa in July and in Fluvanna in August. The Agriculture Committee also discussed NRCS local workgroup topics.

Dam Committee Report:

Mowing and Maintenance Contract – Dam Mowing & Maintenance LLC:

Mr. Lucas shared that the solicitation for dam maintenance went out and only one bid was submitted by the current contractor. Mr. Lucas commented that Mr. Narehood out of Rustburg has done an outstanding job the past several years. Ms. Moyer noted that the contract has a renewal option for two additional years.

MOTION: Mr. Easter moved to approve the dam mowing and maintenance contract. Ms. Daughters seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

TJWRP Foundation:

Mr. Easter related that the Foundation is considering one new easement and the expansion of an existing easement, which will be presented to the District Board for review and approval at a later date. Mr. Easter shared the option of possibly having an additional meeting for both Boards to meet together. Directors discussed ways to bring both Boards more in sync.

Board Appointments – Reappointment of Jeff Sitler, David Stone, and Joseph Thompson to terms ending January 31, 2027:

Mr. Easter noted that Jeff Sitler (Albemarle), David Stone (Louisa), and Joseph Thompson (District Director) are up for reappointment.

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to reappoint Jeff Sitler, David Stone, and Joseph Thompson to the Foundation Board of Directors. Ms. Daughters seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislative Committee Report:

Mr. Campbell reported that the Committee met June 1 to review legislative agenda items. The list was scaled back from previous years because either there is existing VASWCD policy or the issues have been addressed. The Committee recommended a legislative agenda item to revert to the previous election requirements for SWCD candidate financial reporting. The Committee also recommended supporting funding requests for any items on VASWCD's legislative agenda that were not fully funded for FY24.

Ms. Coates asked that a Director join the Area II legislative agenda call on July 27.

Mr. Pratley shared that he spoke with Delegate Ware about carrying a bill to correct the election filing requirements. Ms. Cross related that VASWCD and DCR staff have been looking at how to work with the State Board of Elections on policy changes for the next election. Mr. Collins said he wrote to Delegate Avoli but did not get a response.

MOTION: Mr. Campbell moved to approve the legislative agenda for submission to Area II. Ms. Daughters seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Education and Water Resource Committee Report:

Mr. Lucas reported that the Committee met on June 20 and reviewed a number of approvals. Ms. Hyatt shared that septic projects are being completed across all of the TMDLs, and the Tye and Hardware postcard mailings have been successful in providing new projects for the District.

Mr. Lucas related that Meghan Sobott and Courtney Harlow-Humphreys are also doing great with getting VCAP projects approved and are expanding into the surrounding counties for additional projects.

Ms. Hyatt shared that Ms. Coates, Mr. Longanecker, and she will be meeting in the coming weeks to look at additional grant funding from DEQ. The current Tye and Hardware grants are nearing completion. An additional round of Goldmine funding is expected this fall.

Ms. Jones commended the residential team on a great year. Ms. Hyatt noted the projects from Ms. Harlow-Humphreys and Ms. Sobott featured in the staff newsletter.

Ms. Daughters noted a correction to the attendee list in the meeting minutes.

Ms. Pratley asked what came of Mr. Murray's question about signing authority as an Associate Director chairing the Committee. Ms. Coates replied that Committee chairs usually sign contract documents, but Mr. Lucas is signing as vice chair for documents that require a Director's signature.

Election Updates:

Candidate names were provided for each locality within the District as confirmed by the local registrars' offices. Directors discussed the challenges with the current election filing process. Ms. Cross noted the Soil and Water Conservation Board's policy not to appoint sitting Directors who did not file for reelection.

Delegated Authority List Revisions:

Ms. Coates shared that with the merger of the Education and Water Resources Committee, the delegated authority list was updated and needs to be approved by the Board to reflect the changes.

Ms. Coates asked that the Board also approve delegated authority for Mr. Meeks to sign Attachment D.

MOTION: Mr. Easter moved to approve the delegated authority list. Ms. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION: Ms. Jones moved to approve delegated authority for Mr. Meeks to sign Attachment D on behalf of the District Board. Ms. Daughters seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. **Committee Minutes:** Agriculture Committee (6/20/2023); Budget and Finance Committee (5/31/2023); Education and Water Resources Committee (6/20/2023)
2. **Consent Items:** Urban and Septic Cost-Share (see attached list)

CONSENT AGENDA (cont'd.)

6/28/2023

Urban Practices				
Last Name / Business	Contract #	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share	Funding Source
Kelly Forbes	02-23-030	CL-1	\$ 6,560.00	VCAP
Diane Szaflarski	02-23-033	CL-3	\$ 6,332.00	VCAP
Diane Szaflarski	02-23-034	CL-1	\$ 3,191.20	VCAP
William Grover	02-23-035	CL-1	\$ 1,379.86	VCAP
Chris Kabbash	02-23-036	CL-3	\$ 7,000.00	VCAP

Septic Practices				
Last Name	Contract #	Instance	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share
Project Perry Inc.	02-23-0181	529416	RB-1	\$ 200.00
Project Perry Inc.	02-23-0181	529417	RB-1	\$ 200.00
Pace	02-23-0183	529450	RB-1	\$ 320.00
Henry	02-23-0182	529449	RB-1	\$ 200.00
John	02-23-0178	529243	RB-1	\$ 320.00
Hoadley	02-23-0177	529242	RB-1	\$ 200.00
Esch	02-23-0176	529241	RB-1	\$ 200.00
Weed	02-23-0175	529239	RB-1	\$ 200.00
Brewer	02-23-0118	529452	RB-1	\$ 320.00
Roth	02-23-0184	529455	RB-1	\$ 320.00

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

RATIFICATION AGENDA:

1. **Ratification List:** Agriculture Committee, Education and Water Resources Committee, Personnel and Operations Committee

Ratification Agenda - June 28, 2023							
Item	Delegated Authority	Last Name / Business	Contract #	Instance	Practice Code	Estimated Cost Share	Approval Date
Education and Water Resources Committee							
1	Murray	Hickman	02-23-0148	528999	RB-4P	\$ 6,000.00	6/6/2023
2	Murray	Rhodes	02-23-0185	529543	RB-3M	\$ 2,600.00	6/22/2023
Agriculture Committee							
3	Lucas	June 2023 Cost Share Waiting Approval					6/15/2023
4	Lucas	FY23 Cost Increases for Carryover Projects List					6/15/2023
Personnel and Operations Committee							
5	Thompson	Hardware TMDL (PO 17166) Modification #3					6/14/2023

MOTION: Mr. Meeks moved to approve the Ratification Agenda. Mr. Easter seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

COOPERATING AGENCIES REPORTS:

DCR: Ms. Cross summarized information from her written report. She noted the new OAG contact for SWCDs. Quarterly reports are due July 17, and DCR will run their official obligation report on July 18. End-of-lifespan verifications that expire December 2023 need to be verified by September 30. Random verifications are scheduled for September. Registration is required for the Area II legislative call. She noted additional training for technical staff on the tracking program is occurring on July 19 and July 26. The VACDE annual training at Graves Mountain Lodge will be held from August 22 through August 24. The VASWCD annual meeting will be located in Norfolk this year.

DEQ: DEQ provided a written report.

NRCS: Mr. Kirkland shared federal programs updates, noting that most of their EQIP applications are under contract and they had a strong CSP year with preapprovals in all four counties within the District. He thanked the Agriculture Committee for their local workgroup comments.

VCE: Mr. Hernandez shared information on upcoming outreach and events. In addition, he described an increase in feral swine problems in some areas of the District.

VASWCD: Mr. Meeks shared that the VASWCD board met virtually last week. Graduation occurred for the Youth Conservation Leadership Institute which took place at Randolph-Macon College this year; the District had one participating student.

NACD: Mr. Meeks mentioned that he will be traveling next month for the summer NACD meeting in Bismarck, North Dakota.

STAFF REPORTS:

Ms. Coates referenced the staff newsletter, which has a lot of great education updates. She noted that the RIPE Partnership is now known as the Alliance to Advance Climate-Smart Agriculture, and the project start date has been delayed. Ms. Coates spoke to the workflow challenges associated with increased volume and additional staff.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Directors gathered for group photographs.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:49 a.m.

Submitted by: _____
Recording Secretary

Approved: _____
Secretary