

**Robert E. Lee Soil & Water Conservation District**  
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**Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**The Spring House Restaurant**  
9789 Richmond Hwy  
Lynchburg, VA 24504  
May 27, 2021 – 6:00 p.m.

**Directors:** Jeff Floyd, Chairman  
(Present) Doug Perrow, Treasurer  
Brandon Payne  
Charles Smith  
Joetricia Humbles  
Karen Angulo  
Brandon Schmitt

**Directors:**  
(Absent) Bruce Jones  
Nancy Jo Billings  
Chad Barrett, Assistant Treasurer

**Staff/Partners:** Jonathan Wooldridge, RELSWCD District Manager/Sr. Ag BMP Cons. Spec.  
(Present) Cindy Miller, RELSWCD Office Administrator  
Mark Hollberg, DCR Conservation District Coordinator  
Don Yancey, USDA Natural Resources Conservatist  
Rick Butler, Virginia Department of Forester

**Others:** Timberlake WID, George Schrader, Treasurer  
Turner Neblett, Mason and Sandy Neblett  
Sabrina Melton, Amanda Melton

**Call to order:** The regular meeting of the Robert E. Lee Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors was called to order May 27, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., by Jeff Floyd, Chairman, at The Spring House Restaurant, 9789 Richmond Hwy, Lynchburg, Virginia.

**Acknowledgement of Guests:** Turner Neblett- Mason and Sandy Neblett and Sabrina Melton- Amanda Melton: Scholarship recipients and family.

**Adopting the Agenda:** Jeff Floyd, Chairman, asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Motion was made to approve the agenda as presented with Adopting of the Agenda moved after Call to Order. (Perrow, Payne, passed 7/0)

**Reading and Approving the April 22, 2021 Minutes:** Jeff Floyd, Chairman, asked if there were any corrections to the minutes (copy filed with the minutes). **Motion was made to approve the minutes as presented. (Perrow, Schmitt, passed 7/0)**

## REPORT OF OFFICERS/PARTNERS/STAFF

**1-Treasurer's Report – April 2021 –Doug Perrow, Treasurer,** gave the treasurer's report (copy filed with minutes). All bank statements were reconciled to the respective ledgers and QuickBooks program. The April 2021 Treasurer's report will be filed in the District Office.

**2-DCR Conservation District Coordinator Report - Mark Hollberg, CDC,** gave the May report (copy filed with minutes).

### Administration:

Fourth quarter disbursement letters sent to SWCDs on May 7. Attachment E fourth quarter reports are due July 15<sup>th</sup>. FY22 budgets needs Board of Director approval in June. Finance Committee meetings are needing documented review of the *Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations*.

### Va Ag Cost Share (VACS)

BMP projects are due for payment prior to the close of the fiscal year and need to be complete and paid by June 30<sup>th</sup>. **Notify David Bryan by May 14** of any projects needing DCR approval prior to district action to carry over a third time into a 4<sup>th</sup> program year. See the *FY22 Carryover* report in Logi at "Shared Reports>District Year End Reports>Fiscal Year Closeout Reports.

Under the current VACS Program there is currently only one allowance for increasing estimated cost share for practices and that is due to "*site conditions unforeseen during the design of the practice*" such as dry well or hitting rock during construction where "*additional material expenses must be directly related to the unforeseen site condition*" (VACS Guidelines Pages II-29 and II-30). Inflation is not an "unforeseen site condition." In response to **significant inflation** in the cost of construction materials during FY21, the **State Board has authorized districts to utilize their FY22 VACS allocations to provide additional cost-share funding to VACS participants to accommodate the increased cost of materials.** This allowance only applies to 2020 and 2021 contracts not yet paid and carried over into FY22. Eligible are SL-6, WP-2 and WP-4 variants as well as SL-7. Districts will be allowed to use their new FY22 average cost lists to revise old cost estimates (i.e. Estimated Instance Cost and Estimated Cost Share Payments) for eligible 2020 and 2021 contracts. Upon district board approval, FY22 VACS allocation will be transferred to PY20 or PY21 in tracking to serve updated contracts. Districts are not authorized to provide additional FY21 VACS funds to contracts that exceed the Estimated Instance Cost developed in accordance with the District's approved FY21 average cost list. The State Board's approved motion has been sent to district staff. Consult it for details.

Districts should **develop their FY22 average cost list** based upon market costs of components in their local area. Once the first 2022 application is ranked and approved using the District-approved Average Cost List and Secondary Considerations, every single VACS applicant must be treated the same thereby avoiding unfair treatment of participants and minimizing the potential of litigation. For FY22 the **State Board has approved for inclusion in the PY22 VACS manual provision for a one-time, mid-program year update to Average Cost Lists** under certain market-based conditions such as we are currently facing. This provision would be handled similarly to the Participant Cap Variance Request process and will require both district and DCR approval.

Due to General Assembly action this spring the **cap for the 25% agricultural bmp tax credit will be raised from \$17,500 to \$25,000.** For BMPs installed on land where there is an approved RMP the bmp will be eligible for a 50% tax credit up to a \$50,000 cap. These tax credits will now be based upon 25% of true out-of-pocket costs (including any inflationary effects) AFTER discounting cost-share. This should help ease the burden of inflation plaguing VACS participants. Once the law goes into effect on July 1, it will be retroactive to January 1,

DCR has requested that NO further Tax Credits be issued until after July 1, 2021. DCR will share further details about these changes as well as changes to Equipment Tax Credits at the upcoming June VACS Update sessions in June.

Ninety percent of a district's FY21 allocations must be obligated by June 30 to receive a "Fully Satisfied" rating on its FY21 grant assessment. Please let me know if your district wants to transfer unobligated FY21 VACS allocation to another district or to DCR. Completing such transfers prior to June 30 can help the District meet the 90% goal. Any unobligated VACS cash remaining with the District after June 30 must be returned to DCR. If the District has not obligated at least 90% of its allocation by June 30, a proportional amount of Technical Assistance ("in addition to Base TA" only) must be returned as well.

The State Board has approved a one-time extension for DCR certified conservation planners whose certificates will expire in 2021. An extension of 60 days from the date of certificate expiration will be provided for a conservation planner to achieve the necessary contact hours (30) and to submit a conservation plan for review by the Department.

Conservation Selling Skills is required for DCR Conservation Planner Certification and is typically offered every other year. This year's offering comprises three two hour virtual sessions (9am-11am) on **July 6, 8 and 13** at 3 pm. Participation in all three sessions is required to meet DCR planner certification. More details and registration coming. Training is on file.

**3-USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Report** - Don Yancey, District Conservationist, (copy filed with minutes)

#### EQIP

5 EQIP applications for FY21 are pre-approved for funding. 4 applicants want to move forward and we are currently in the process of getting those applications ready for contract obligation.

#### CRP/GRP/WRP

3 CRP/CREP 2021 participants have applied for a re-enrollment of their contracts. The status reviews for the CRP and CREP contracts that will expire in September of 2022 in Appomattox and Amherst counties have been completed. The status reviews for the ones in Campbell County still need to be completed. These status reviews will be completed prior to the end of September 2021.

#### CSP – Conservation Stewardship Program

4 new CSP applications for this fiscal year. 5 applications from last year that are being carried over into this year. These CSP applications need to be planned, assessed and ranked by June 25, 2021. 7 CSP contracts that will be expiring at the end of 2021. These participants have submitted an application to renew their contracts before they expire at the end of this calendar year. We will be working with these applicants later this summer and into next fall to estimate and evaluate their renewal applications.

#### Conservation Compliance

We have 8 tracts to evaluate for conservation compliance, field work has been completed. The results of these reviews will be reported by August 20, 2021. MOU is being revised for review.

Personnel Changes

I will be retiring at the end of May. I want to thank the R.E. Lee SWCD staff and the Board of Directors for all the cooperative efforts and support over the years. It has been a pleasure working with you.

Jonathan Lipinski, Soil Conservationist from the Louisa Service Center, will be the Acting District Conservationist in Rustburg effective June 6<sup>th</sup>, until the position is filled.

Lauren Cheatham, new Soil Conservationist who will start work at the Rustburg Service Center on June 6<sup>th</sup>.

**4-Virginia Department of Forestry Report** – Rick Butler, Appomattox Forester – (copy filed with minutes)

Planted 1000 acres in Appomattox this year. All requests eligible for cost share were filled.

The James River program received right at 100 acres of open field planting which was 100% cost shared.

Not many fires this year because of another wet Spring

Conducted the FFA Area forestry contest in which Buckingham county won 1<sup>st</sup> place and will go to the State competition at Dabney Lancaster College.

We have 22 tracks dealing with Herbicides.

**5-Virginia Cooperative Extension Report** – Bruce Jones, Appomattox VCE Agent – No report was provided due to Director was absent.

**6-RELSWCD District Manager/Sr. Ag BMP Conservation Specialist Report:** Jonathan Wooldridge gave the April report (copy filed with minutes).

Projects:

Working on plans and designs for new projects. Monitoring progress on projects under construction. Also meeting new producers that are interested in our programs. Working on estimates and maps for possible new projects for next program year. Helping out with soil testing and flagging out waterways not to be sprayed. Advising on erosion issues. Working on Nutrient Management Plans for producers.

**Practices and Conservation Plans for Board Approval:**

Contract #	Instance#	Watershed/ County	Est Cost	C/S AMT	Comp Date	Fund	Practice
10-21-0024	431912	OCB/AP	\$11,328.10	\$11,328.10	June 30,2021	PY21 OCB VACS	SL-15A

**Motion approved (Payne, Schmitt 7/0)**

Watershed Dams:

Watershed dams are doing well and in good shape. Checking on the dams as the rainfall events happen. Handled the Watershed Dam Maintenance bid process: 5 bid packets picked up, 3 bid packets were returned.

Halls Landscaping - \$20,000.00. John Harris - \$34,800.00. Benton Bowman - \$38,400.00.

**Motion made to approve Halls Landscaping for mowing contract. (Schmitt, Payne 7/0).**

All but 1 practice for FY 15 practices due to be completed by June 30, 2021 and paid.

**Agriculture Stewardship Program:**

On May 20, 2021 a Campbell Co. land owner called in a complaint about their pond being muddy and that the cause was from a neighbor' land. Darrell Marshall VDACS, and I went out to investigate the complaint. Darrell Marshall VDACS as of the writing of this report had not reported if the complaint has been declared founded or unfounded.

Trainings are on file.

**8-RELSWCD Office Administrator Report** -- Cindy Miller gave the April report (copy filed with minutes).

**Monthly duties are kept up to date.**

- Reviewed Deliverables requiring review by Committee and set up meeting for the Personnel and Budget/ Finance Committee. Desk Top Procedures were reviewed and approved by the BOD at our August 2020 meeting, so no review required this year.
- Scholarship checks prepared and mailed to appropriate schools. Scholarship letters mailed and invitation included to attend our May 2021 Board of Directors meeting.
- Assisted VASWCD as Proctor for 2021 VA Dominion Energy State Competition on May 16, 2021.

**Outreach:**

- Library outreach project: Health Forest/ Healthy Communities Bookmarks and posters distributed and participating in the Appomattox plant swap in May with promotional items.
- Prepared June Invertebrate project for Libraries to distribute to Appomattox and Campbell Co Libraries.
- Poster contest and Photo contest promoted on Facebook, thru Schools and Libraries
- Facebook post made twice daily.
- Website updated.

**Motion request: Board approved review of the Annual Plan of Work for July 2020-June 2021.**  
**Motion approved (Angulo, Schmitt 7/0).**

**Board reviewed the Strategic Plan for July 2020-June 2024.**

**Note: Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations will not be updated this year.**  
**Board reviewed the Desktop Procedures for July 2020-June 2021 to be the same for next year.**

**Tax Credit Certificate requiring a Director's signature:**

**Contract # 10-21-0016 Instance # 421028 Practice: SL-8B Tax Credit Amount: \$6382.50**

**Meetings are on file.**

**Next Months BOD meeting will be held on Thursday June 24, 2021.**

**9. Timberlake WID – George Shrader gave verbal report**

Update given on the Timberlake WID project. Removal of sediment from 2 of the 3 large coves (Browns and Waterlick Creek) is complete. Browns Creek had a 93% removal rate, Waterlick removal, rate pending data analysis. Equipment pictured is now operating in Buffalo Creek Cove. Buffalo Creek Cove, contains the largest amount of sediment targeted for removal (8000-10,000 cubic yards), the operation can easily be seen from the 460 Timberlake Road 460 W interchange. After Buffalo

Creek Cove, only 2 small, unnamed coves remain to be dredged. Target completion is mid to late June 2021. Below is a May 23, 2021 panoramic view of the sediment disposal site, sometimes referred to as "the bag area: Bags 100 ft long. Sediment slurry is pumped into the geotextile bags after being injected with precise dosing of polymer. The polymer binds the clay/silt particles and water seeps out through mesh. The water is returned to the lake as clean as or cleaner than the water in the lake. The WID Landbook is pending submission. VA DEQ Inspection- DEQ performed a second site inspection on May 25, 2021. Inspection of spillway discharge, dewatering operations/flows, discharge flows were all within permitted limits.

#### REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

**Personnel Committee:** Committee meet on May 10, 2021 the following items were reviewed and approved Personnel description for the Office Administrator, DM/ Sr Cons Specialist. And Personnel Policy.

The appraisal and raise increased were approved as followed: Jonathan Wooldridge increase to \$64,480 and Cynthia Miller increase to \$47,320 approved and to update the current budget. **Motion was made to approve the above: ( Humbles, Angulo 7/0)**

Job description reviews for the PT Conservation Tech and Education Specialist were tabled. **Motion was made to table this discussion (Smith, Angulo 7/0).** Another Personnel Committee will need to schedule a new meeting to rediscuss.

**Budget/ Finance Committee:** The following items were reviewed with no changes requested; Inventory Review, Desktop Procedures dated 6/30/2020 effective 7/1/2020, FOIA request Fee Schedule annual review, Check signing policy annual review, Employee/ Director Expense Reimbursement policy annual review, Purchasing policy annual review, Credit Card policy review, Budget review. **Motion was made to approve the meeting items: (Humbles, Angulo 7/0)**

**Agriculture Committee:** The following items were reviewed and approved the Secondary Considerations ( **Humbles, Schmitt 7/0** ) , Cost Share evaluation sheet ( **Payne, Smith 7/0** ), Average cost list, Labor log and equipment time ( **Payne, Smith 7/0** ).

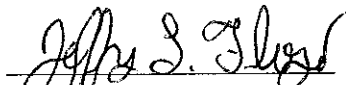
UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

NEW BUSINESS- Motion made to accept Kyle Bolts resignation. **Approved (Humbles, Payne 7/0).**

PUBLIC COMMENT - None

ANNOUNCEMENTS – None

ADJOURNMENT - The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 7:34 p.m. (Perrow, Payne passed 7/0)

  
Jeff Floyd, Chairman

  
Cindy Miller, Office Administrator