## Robert E. Lee Soil & Water Conservation District 7631-A Richmond Hwy.

**Appomattox, VA 24522**

### Phone 434-352-2819 FAX 434-352-9405

**www.releeconservation.com**

## Board of Directors Regular Meeting Minutes

**The Spring House Restaurant**

**9789 Richmond Hwy**

**Lynchburg, VA 24504**

**February 23, 2023 6:00pm**

**Directors**: Jeff Floyd, Chairman

(Present) Brandon Schmitt, Assistant Chairman

Doug Perrow, Treasurer

Chad Barrett, Assistant Treasurer

Karen Angulo

Bruce Jones

Bonnie Swanson

Jennifer Elliott

**Directors:** Charles Smith

(Absent) Brandon Payne

**Staff/Partners**: Jonathan Wooldridge, RELSWCD District Manager/Sr. Ag BMP Cons. Spec.

(Present) Mark Hollberg, CDC, DCR Conservation District Coordinator

Cindy Miller, RELSWCD Office Administrator

Katelin Savage, RELSWCD Education Specialist

**Staff Absent:** None

**Others:** None

**Call to order:** The regular meeting of the Robert E. Lee Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Directors was called to order February 23, 2023 at 6:00 p.m., by Jeff Floyd, Chairman at The Spring House Restaurant, 9789 Richmond Hwy, Lynchburg, Virginia.

**Acknowledgement of Guests:**  None

**Adopting the Agenda:** Jeff Floyd, Chairman, asked if there were any changes to the agenda. M**otion was made to approve the agenda as presented. Approved (Perrow, Schmitt passed 8/0)**

**Reading and Approving of the January 26, 2023 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 written.** **Approved (Perrow, Barrett passed 8/0).**

**REPORT OF OFFICERS/PARTNERS/STAFF**

**1-Treasurer’s Report –January 2023 – Doug Perrow, Treasurer**, gave the Treasurer’s report (copy filed with minutes). Cost Share and Operation Savings bank statements were reconciled to the checkbook and QuickBooks program. No discrepancies noted. All financial reports are on file.

**2-DCR Conservation District Coordinator Report -** Mark Hollberg, CDC gave the February 2023 report. . (Copy filed with minutes).

**Administration:**

Third quarter disbursement letters will be emailed to districts February 10.

Review Admin/Ops grant deliverables:

* “Prepare and follow an **annual plan of work** **…**” with Board documented review at least once annually.
* **“**Develop and maintain a **long-term plan…**” A documented review of the plan is expected at least annually during a scheduled meeting of the District Board.
* **“Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations”** annually reviewed by the District Board or their Finance Committee and documented in official minutes”
* **“Annually review** **and maintain employee personnel documents** including position descriptions, performance expectations, and the District personnel policy; … and conduct annual employee evaluations.” Please provide me a copy of employee position descriptions and the District personnel policy once annually reviewed and updated. Please add the date of review to these documents so readers know the vintage.
* **Plan, coordinate and deliver an outreach event that meets the criteria listed in the grant agreement**

SWCD Director Elections – Elected Director Positions:

General election is **November 7, 2023.**  **The filing deadline is 7:00 pm Tuesday, June 20, 2023 / file Ad 30+ days prior.**

*§*[***24.2-507***](http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/24.2-507)*. Deadlines for filing declarations and petitions of candidacy.  For any office, declarations of candidacy and the petitions therefore shall be filed according to the following schedule: 1. For a general election in November, by 7:00 p.m. on the~~second~~****third Tuesday in June****.*

Information can be found on the State Board of Elections website:

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/candidatepac-info/candidate-bulletins/index.html>

**Choose the Local and Constitutional Offices Bulletin**

Instructions for Candidates – provides links to resources and forms.

<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/candidatepac-info/becoming-a-candidate/index.html>

Below are the forms you will need to complete:

* **Certificate of Candidate Qualifications** <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/SBE_501_4-rev7-18.pdf>
* [**Declaration of Candidacy**](http://elections.virginia.gov/Files/Forms/Candidates/SBE_505_520_Declaration_of_Candidacy_Rev1_15.pdf) <https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/SBE_505_520_Declaration_of_Candidacy_Rev1_15.pdf>
* **Petition of Qualified Voters (**[**8 1/2 x 11 Letter Size**](https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/Petition-of-Qualified-Voters-SBE-506_521_letter.pdf)**or**[**8 1/2 x 14 Legal Size**](https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/Petition-of-Qualified-Voters-SBE-506_521_legal.pdf)**)** (<https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formswarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/Petition-of-Qualified-Voters-SBE-506_521_letter.pdf>
* *SWCD Directors are not required to submit the Statement of Economic Interests (confirmed with the Ethics Council Jan 2023).*
* *The number of petition signatures required is 25, see page 12 of the bulletin. Recommend at least 30. The petition must be printed two sided! (Front and back)*
* *Contact your local General Registrar if you have any questions.*

**Virginia Ag Cost Share (VACS):**

*Cost-Share Obligations and Transfers:* As the General Assembly begins to discuss and amend the budget introduced by the Governor, legislators and this administration are asking frequent questions about how much of the funding provided to Districts for cost-share has been obligated. As of January 1, 2023, the Bay Districts have obligated approximately 44% of these funds, while Southern Rivers Districts have obligated about 64%. These percentages do not include amounts requested for the WFA practices, and we have made that clear. While FY2023 provided an unprecedented level of cost-share funding, the amount of funds that have been obligated is causing concerns. DCR currently has a list of Districts that need funding both in the Bay watershed and outside of the Bay watershed. If your District is unable to obligate the cost-share funds provided, it is time to consider either transferring money to another District or releasing the allocation back to DCR. I am ready to assist with either of these processes if needed.

*Reminder:* There are a number of BMPs such as cover crop and animal waste that require nutrient management plans (see pages 1-4 of the VACS manual). Current NMPs must be on file with the District before these practices can be issued cost share or tax credits (page II-18). Remember, practices such as cover crops cannot be carried over. If a plan cannot be obtained before June 30 then the cover crop practice must be cancelled. DCR Nutrient Management Specialists are available and willing to write plans, but they cannot be expected to fulfill last minute requests. Another option is to refer producers to DCR’s Direct Pay Program that pays private plan writers to provide plans.

**General Assembly:**

Your Association provides weekly reports of legislative items of interest via “all district” email.

**Dates:**

Feb 23, VACS training for Conservation Planner Certification, webinar, register in advance: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYod-qrrzMjHNSNW77ZwqJIT1VZH8NU0G2A>

Non-technical staff and directors are welcome to participate.

**3-USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Report –** Kelly Burke, NRCS District Conservationist written February 2023 report was provided. (Copy filed with minutes)

Program Updates/ Deadlines:

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

* EQIP Ranking Deadline: 3/3/2023
* EQIP Preapprovals: 3/13/2023
* EQIP-CIC Ranking Deadline: 3/31/2023
* CSP Classic Ranking Deadline: 5/26/2023
* Final EQIP Obligations: 8/15/2023

Enviromental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP):

14 EQIP Contracts:

* 3-Amherst Co
* 4-Appomattox, Co
* 14-Campbell Co

1 EQIP CIC Contract:

* 1-Campbell Co

45 EQIP Applications

* 13-Amherst Co
* 11-Appomattox, Co
* 17-Campbell Co

3 EQIP CIC Applications

* 1-Appomattox Co
* 2-Campbell Co

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)-

30 CSP-GCI (Grassland Conservation Initiative) Contracts:

* 10- Appomattox Co
* 20-Campbell Co

24 CSP Contracts:

* 5-Amherst Co
* 5-Appomattox Co
* 14-Campbell Co

2 CSP Applications:

* 2-Campbell Co

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

* None at this time.

Conservation Reserve Programs/ Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CRP/CREP)

* 36 Crep contracts
* 7 General CRP contracts
* 0 Continuous CRP contracts
* 12 CREP expiring 2023
* 6 General CRP expiring 2023

All trainings are on file.

**4-Virginia Department of Forestry Report –** BJ Butler, Area Forester – February 2023 report was not provided.

**5-Virginia Cooperative Extension Report –** Bruce Jones, Appomattox VCE Agent gave the February 2023 report. (Copy filed with minutes).

1. Backyard Poultry – March 8th – Charlotte County Extension Office – 10-12

2. Commercial Pesticide Recertification – March 7 – Lynchburg (CVCC-Merrit Hall)

3. Blueberry Pruning Workshop – March 20 – Hat Creek – 10am

4. Central VA Cattle Conference – March 24 – Knoll Crest Farm – Red House

5. Youth Cattle Working Area Contest – March 30 – Red Oak, VA

6. VDOT Commercial Pesticide Recertification – April 3 – Lynchburg

7. Central VA Crops Expo – August 18 – Hat Creek

During the first week of May the Youth with have Livestock at the Lynchburg Livestock Market.

**6-RELSWCD District Manager/Sr. Ag BMP Conservation Specialist Report:** Jonathan Wooldridge gave the February 2023 report (copy filed with minutes).

**Projects:**

Been a busy month here at Robert E. Lee SWCD. The weather and supply issues has slowed down field work. 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 new projects for the new program year. Helping out with soil testing questions. Working on Nutrient Management Plans for producers.

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Contract** | **Instance** | **Co.** | **Est. Cost** | **CS amt.** | **Comp/Date** | **Fund** | **Practice** |
| 10-23-00043 | 522317 | AM/CB | $140,819.75 | $157,619.75  Includes:  $16,800 Buffer Payment | June 30, 2024 | PY23  CB  VACS | SL-6W/  110 |

**Motion was made to approve Contract 10-23-0043 Approved (Schmitt, Perrow passed 8/0).**

**Watershed Dams:**

Watershed dams are doing well and in good shape. Checking on the dams as the rainfall events happen.

**Spot Checks:**

9-21-2022: 7 spot checks in Appomattox and Campbell. Had two contracts that needed gravel tending around water troughs (complete), 1 needing fence tending to get cows out of the buffer and stream crossing rebuilt. Have been in contact with the landowner of the steam crossing and the rebuilding is still working with NRCS addressing that stream crossing issue.

**Discussion was made to extend the review of NRCS’s update until March 23, 2023 in reference to the above spot check. Due to NRCS was not able to attend the February 23, 2023 meeting.**

Meeting Information is on file.

Hours/Mileage:

130hrs worked

1186 miles traveled

**7-RELSWCD Education Specialist Report-**Katelin Savage provided the February 2023 report(copy filed with minutes).

February Activities:

* Feb 7th: Education Committee Meeting
* Feb. 15th: Envirothon Meeting: We met with other staff in Area V to discuss the progress of the Envirothon planning. We have 8 teams registered for the Area V competition.
* Feb. 22: Appomattox Library Storytime: Soil sundaes with the preschool class (25 kids)

Upcoming Activities:

* Feb. 24th: Envirothon Workshop
* Feb. 27th: Scholarship table at ACHS
* Mar 1st: Area V meeting
* Mar 2nd: AES Science Fair

Updates: We have continued to work on planning the Envirothon, Area V meeting, and the Farmer’s Breakfast Event. I have scheduled dates to assist with Woods and Wildlife camp this summer. I dropped off scholarship packets at the CVCC satellite centers in our district as well as STEM academy and CVGS. I have set up dates to run a station for Amherst’s Trout in a Classroom field trip in April. I am also communicating with local scout troops about the patches we offer through the district. Lastly, I have started working on the application for the teacher grants.

Notes: Tuition for Woods and Wildlife camp has increased to $300 dollars this year. We will be sponsoring two campers this year.

**8. RELSWCD Office Administrator Report –** Cindy Miller gave the February 2023 report (copy filed with minutes).

Monthly duties are kept up to date.

* **Working with Nathan Simpson on Email conversion, which is not complete.**
* **Assisted Katelin with activities as needed.**
* **Worked on Area V Envirothon Workshop and Competition with the help of Katelin and Jonathan.**
* **Envirothon Workshop is Friday Feb 24, 2023 8 to 3 at Longwood.**
* **Area V meeting at the Spring House Restaurant on March 1, 2023 10-3 at the Spring House Restaurant.**
* **Farmer’s Breakfast event scheduled for March 9, 2023 at 9:00 am at the Spring House Restaurant. Speakers have been secured, Invites emailed and mailed. Ads have been submitted to local papers and flyers have been posted.**
* **FOIA training has been completed.**
* **Assisted Katelin with lining up Education Activities.**
* **Scheduled Annual inspection of vehicles, with oil change and tire rotation**

**Meetings information is on file.**

**Our next Board of Directors meeting will be on Thursday, March 23, 2023 at 6 p.m.**

**8. Timberlake WID –** February 2023, Charles Falwell and J. Kim Steinhorst reviewed the updated budget in detail and asked for the Board of Directors approval to submit the Budget the Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Board Meeting on March 25, 2023. Motion was made to approved the Timberlake WID FY2023 Budget and to forward the budget for approval by the Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Board. Approved (Perrow, Schmitt passed 6/2).

**REPORT OF COMMITTEES : None**

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**- Trailer quotes for purchase of 22’ Trailer for the Underground Classroom project. Information was provided showing attempt to received a third quote for a customized trailer for the Underground Classroom project. After review, **Motion was made to Approve Leonard quote for purchase and show attempt was made to receive a third quote. Approved (Perrow, Barrett passed 8/0).**

**NEW BUSINESS-** Dustin Woodall, Part time Conservation Technician introduced himself to the Board of Directors and reviewed what he has accomplished since starting his position.

**PUBLIC COMMENT –** None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS –** Eric Bowman- Amherst Co Extention Agent was introduced to the Staff and Board of Directors by Jeff Floyd.

**ADJOURNMENT -** The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 6:53 p.m. **Approved (Perrow, Angulo passed 8/0)**

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Jeff Floyd, Chairman Cindy Miller, Office Administrator