

James River Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting
July 20th, 2023

The James River Soil and Water Conservation District held its monthly Board Meeting at the Chesterfield County Central Library on July 20th, 2023

Attendees:

Directors: *Carey Allen, Gregory Powers, Andy Petik, Scott Reiter, Jerry Ford, Laura Thompson*

Associate Directors: *Sierra Seekford, Avis Bennett, Heath Locke*

Agency Partners: *Olivia Leatherwood*

Staff: *Brianna Moring, Anne Devine, Joseph Gerdes*

Absent: *Marlie Creasey-Smith*

Public: *Kimberly Locke, Kyle Sirico, Abby Taylor, Izzy Lee, Trista Grigsby*

Call to order/Invocation:

- Carey called the meeting to order at 6:21 PM.

Chairman's Comments: Sorry for showing up late; the finance committee was meeting. We will be moving the presentation from Trista Grigsby on the USDA Farm to School Grant up to the top of the Agenda.

USDA Farm-to-School Grant:

Trista Grigsby, Urban Ag and Plant and Soil Sciences Teacher presented the USDA Farm to School program to the Board. There are currently 64 schools in Chesterfield that need fruit and vegetables. The program has an educational mission. To participate in this grant, there needs to be a cumulative 25% grant match, which can include money, in-kind services, fringe benefits, and employees working for the program. Our Grant partners include Lowes, Chesterfield Farm Bureau, and Cooperative Extension. The grant application is still in process and is flexible at this point. Brianna said she would reach out to Colonial SWCD, who has participated in this grant program before. We will send this conversation to the Legislative/Outreach Committee for continued review and discussion.

July 20th Board of Directors Meeting Agenda:

- Laura moved to approve the Agenda, Greg seconded: Passed

June Board of Directors Meeting Minutes:

6/15/23 BOD Minutes

- Andy moved to approve the June Board Meeting Minutes, Jerry seconded: Passed

Treasurers Report:

- Andy moved to accept the Treasurer's Report and file it for audit, Greg seconded: Passed

Conservation Report:

- Laura moved to approve VCAP contract 12-24-001, and forward it to the VCAP Steering Committee for final approval, Jerry seconded: Passed

Average Cost List:

- Andy moved to approve the Average Cost List for PY24, Greg seconded: Passed

Chesterfield Funding Agreement:

- Laura moved to approve the Agreement and thanked the previous interns who worked on getting the contribution to \$23,000, Greg seconded: Passed

Annual Plan of Work:

Edits: Add Avis to Finance and Outreach Committees, Add Heath to Agriculture Committee, Add Chesterfield County Fair to August, Add an event for Prince George Directors in October, Add Midlothian Day to October, Add Chesterfest to September.

- Laura moved to approve the PY24 annual Plan of Work as amended: Scott seconded: Passed

PY24 Budget:

Carey has asked to enter a Closed Session to discuss personnel raises for PY24

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion to go into Closed Meeting as provided for in the Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3712 to discuss personnel issues of the James River Soil and Water Conservation District.

Motion: Carey Allen

Second: Laura Thompson

Meeting date: 7/20/23

Motion passed, and the meeting was adjourned into a closed session.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED (EXECUTIVE) MEETING

WHEREAS, the James River Soil and Water Conservation District has convened a closed (executive) meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the James River Soil and Water Conservation District that a closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the James River Soil and Water Conservation District hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the James River Soil and Water Conservation District.

- Carey moved to come out of Executive Session and return to Open Session, Laura seconded: Passed
 - Laura moved to approve the PY24 Budget with an amendment to give 5% raises to the Conservation Specialist and District Manager, Andy seconded: Passed
- Carey stated that the Finance and Personnel Committee will meet to discuss the raise for the Conservation Technician

Partner Reports:

Olivia Leatherwood, Conservation District Coordinator (DCR)

ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

- FY22 and FY23 Audits: For Districts scheduled to be audited this year, expect to hear from Robinson, Farmer, & Cox in late July or early August. RFC plans to do a large majority of audits in August and September as well as December and January. Districts will have an option to do ‘virtual audits’ through an online portal.
- 2023 Clean Water Farm Award Applications: Information will be released soon regarding Clean Water Farm Awards for this year. The Application and Grand Basin Nominee forms have been updated. Local winner information and grand basin nominations are due to me October 2. Signatures and approvals should be obtained by your September board meeting.
- Quarter 1 Disbursements: Admin/Ops disbursement letters will be sent to Districts July 26, while Cost-Share/TA disbursements will go out August 24 pending receipt of EOY items.
- 4th Quarter/End of Year Reports: Due to me July 17 (Att. E, Cash Balance, Profit & Loss, Year-End Cash Balance, and Carryover Reports)
- FY23 Self-Assessment Questionnaire: are due to me on or before July 17. It is NOT required, but is an extremely helpful tool I use when completing grant assessments.
- Attachment D – FY25 Budget Template: Due to Blair Gordon July 17 – must be board approved and signed.
- FY24 Budgets: FY24 Budgets should be approved no later than July board meeting
- FY24 Annual Plan of Work: covering July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024 must be approved in July if it was not approved in June.
- Return of Unobligated FY23 Funds after EOY: Any cost-share/TA funds needing to be returned after the EOY need and invoice from me and must be postmarked by September 15.
- FY23 Annual Report: for July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 should be completed by September 30th.

AG COST SHARE

- FY23 End of Year VACS Items:
- QA/QC Reports are being run weekly
- Complete and submit EOY Cost-Share Reports (Carryover, Cash On-Hand Balance, Att. E) by July 17.
- FY24 Secondary Considerations and FY24 Average Cost List: both documents must be approved by the SWCD Board of Directors and secondary considerations must be approved by DCR prior to allocating any FY24 cost-share. Please remember to submit these to Sara Bottenfield, DCR Ag Incentives Program Manager.
- End of Lifespan (EOL) Verifications: Reminder EOL verifications are loaded in CAS through 2025. Practices expiring at the end of 2023 are due by September 30, 2023 in order to receive compensation for work done. Each verification completed will receive \$200, and any 2024 and 2025 verifications completed will receive an early bonus of \$50.

GRANT DELIVERABLES

- Dedicated Reserves: On page 14 of the 2022 Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations is guidance regarding Reserve Fund balances: “Public funds...are provided to districts not for

savings, but strictly for the performance of conservation.” Board action is necessary to dedicate for specific purposes any amount above twelve months of routine operating funds (undesignated reserve funds). Once the books are closed for FY23, this action should be placed on District board meeting agendas. This should happen before September 30 in Quarter 1 of FY24 so that necessary transfers can be made on the Q1 Attachment E Report.

- Outreach Event: Begin planning for the required outreach event. Conditions for this deliverable are outlined in Attachment C and Attachment F of the Admin/Ops grant agreement.

DATES TO REMEMBER

July

- July 4 – State Holiday – Independence Day, State Government offices closed
- July 11 – VASWCD Water Cooler Chat, 1:30, Register Here
- July 17 – End of Year Reports and Attachment D due to DCR
- July 19 – Tracking Program Updates & continued VACS Updates, Virtual (9:30-11:30am), Join Here, Password: 6J0y4KCDun
- July 26 – Tracking Program Updates & continued VACS Updates, Virtual (1:00-3:00pm), Join Here, Password: b0SCwvzEnX

Other Dates

- Aug 22-24 – VACDE Annual Summer Training, Graves Mountain Lodge
- Sept 30 – Deadline for EOL Verifications for 2023 Reimbursement
- October 2 – Local CWFA winner applications and grand basin nominations due to DCR
- October 17-18 – VA Rare, Threatened, & Endangered Species/VA Cultural & Historic Resources Protection course

Staff Reports:

Brianna Moring- District Manager

Completed Tasks:

- Attended a site visit at Brambly Park with CRLC and Blair from the VASWCD
- Submitted PY23 Q4 and EOY Att E to DCR
- Submitted completed PY25 Attachment D
- Completed Budget for PY24
- Wrote scholarship check for Lillianne McMinn; she is unable to join us tonight due to a surgery
- Purchased and picked up Farmers Cookout invites
- Sent out a Graves Summer Training Registration for the VACDE

Ongoing Tasks:

- Started PY24 documents and updated office files and folders
- Working on PY23 Annual Report
- Planning VACDE Graves Summer Training
- Maintaining Drill Invoices
- Maintaining contact with DCR and other partner agencies

Meetings:

- 6/21 VASWCD Board Meeting
- 6/23 Rain Barrel Cleaning
- 6/24 Rain Barrel Workshop
- 6/28 Graves Planning Meeting
- 6/28 Richmond City Governmental Operations Committee Meeting

- 7/11 Admin/Ops Water Cooler Chat
- 7/27 Annual Meeting Planning Meeting
- 7/27 Meeting with RVA Sustainability
- 8/17 Farmers Cookout
- 7/25 My Birthday! Taking the day off
- 8/3-8/10 Vacation

Anne Devine- Conservation Technician

VCAP:

- Submitted Spot Check forms for *Contracts #12-17-008, #12-17-009, and #12-17-011*
- Verified past VCAP contract materials in preparation for audits.
- Infiltration test completed for *Contract #12-24-006*
- Four site visits were completed in Chesterfield.
- Created a site visit booking page to make scheduling easier for applicants.
 - Seven site visits already scheduled for August
- Ongoing scheduling of site visits and communicating with contractors and possible applicants
- Ongoing compiling of application materials and technical assistance research

VACS:

- Ag Multi-Agency Training 7/18
- VA Soil Health Coalition's Soil Health Training Webinar Series
 - Why Organic Matters 8/8
 - Biological Nutrient Management 8/17

Outreach/Meetings:

- Rain Barrel Workshop- barrel cleaning 6/23
- Steering Committee Meeting 6/30
- VCAP Program Year Update Webinar 7/11
- VACS Tracking Program Update 7/19
- CBLP Webinar: A Deep Dive into Aquatic Invasive Species 8/17
- Graves VACDE Annual Training 8/22-24

Joseph Gerdes- Conservation Specialist

VCAP:

- Completed three site visits in Chesterfield

AGRICULTURE:

- Finished End-of-Year and Carryover Reports. Sent to DCR
- Forwarded Secondary Considerations to DCR
- Working on amendments to NRCS Average Cost-List
- Reviewing mailing list for Farmers Cookout Invites

MISC:

- Youth Conservation Camp – July 10th – July 16th
- Graves Mountain Lodge Training – August 22-24th

Committee Reports:

Legislative/Outreach: I am looking for help staffing the fair booth on 8/28-8/30

Adjournment:

- Carey moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:01 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Brianna Moring, Secretary

Carey Allen, Chair