

*James River Soil and Water Conservation District*  
**Board of Directors Meeting**  
**May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

The James River Soil and Water Conservation District held its monthly Board Meeting at the Chesterfield Central Library on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Attendees:**

Directors: *Carey Allen, Scott Reiter, Greg Powers, Laura Thompson, Avis Bennett*

Associate Directors:

Agency Partners: *Olivia Leatherwood, Andrew Faison*

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

Absent: *Marlie Creasey-Smith, Sierra Seekford, Heath Locke, Jacqueline Gooden-Seay, Andy Petik*

Public: *Izzy Thompson*

**Call to order/Invocation:**

- Carey called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM.

Chairman's Comments: We have the room until 7:30 tonight, so we plan to move quickly through the Agenda. Please keep Andy in your prayers. Scott commented on Andy's situation; he recently fell and was hospitalized. He is out now and going to physical therapy; I don't know when he will be able to join the meetings again.

**May 16<sup>th</sup> Board of Directors Meeting Agenda:**

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

**April Board of Directors Meeting Minutes**

4/18/24 BOD Minutes

- Scott moved to approve the Minutes, Greg seconded: Passed

**Treasurers Report:**

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

**Strategic Plan Review:**

- The Board reviewed the Strategic Plan

**Conservation Report:**

- Scott moved to approve VACS contracts 12-24-0004, 12-24-0007, 12-24-0011, and 12-24-0027, Laura seconded: Passed

- Scott moved to approve VACS carryovers for contracts 12-23-0020, 12-24-0033, and 12-24-0023, Greg seconded: Passed
- Laura moved to approve VCAP contract 12-24-022 and forward it to the VCAP Steering Committee for final approval, Greg seconded: Passed
- Greg moved to approve the application for SUPP for VCAP contract 12-24-022, Scott seconded: Passed

### **VACS Transfers:**

- Greg moved to transfer \$32,000 OCB VACS and \$2,997.52 in associated TA to both Chowan Basin SWCD and Southside SWCD, Laura seconded: Passed
- Greg moved to transfer \$104,449.78 CB VACS and \$9,784.08 in associated TA back to DCR, Scott seconded: Passed
  - Laura noted she wished we could spend more of our CB VACS funds by including small farms in the program

### **Delegated Signing Authority**

- Greg moved to delegate Carey Allen as Signing Authority for DCR Grant Agreements, Avis seconded: Passed

### **Partner Reports:**

#### **Olivia Leatherwood, Conservation District Coordinator (DCR)**

##### **ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS**

- FY24 Grant Deliverables: All FY24 deliverables for both the Administrative & Operational Grant and Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Grant must be satisfied by 06/30/2024.
  - Transfers to reach 90% must be submitted to DCR by June 15. (NEW DATE)
- FY25 Grant Agreements: will be delayed. Please consider delegating authority to your District Chair to sign when agreements become available. There are quite a few changes coming to agreements and deliverables.
- FY25 Annual Plan of Work: should be board approved by June 30, 2024.
- FY25 Budget Preparations: Finance/Budget committees should begin preparations for FY25 budgets for district board discussions. FY25 budgets should be board approved by June 30, 2024.
- New Director Orientation: DCR is partnering with the VASWCD to provide Director Orientation in two phases. Phase I and II must be completed by June 30, 2024. Phase I is an online course available on the VASWCD website (<https://vaswcd.org/leadership-course/>), you must complete the Final Quiz for credit. A virtual meeting for Phase II will be held on June 4th at 9:00am and you can register here.
- VCE Director Appointments expire December 31, 2024: DCR has notified VCE leadership, and the process will be the same as previous years. Appointments will go before the VSWCB in September, so August will likely be the last month for Districts to act. Please submit Form 14 and draft minutes of the appointment.

##### **AG COST SHARE**

- PY25 VACS Update Sessions: Update sessions will be held virtually on Thursday, June 13 from 9:00-12:00 and Tuesday, June 18 from 1:00-4:00. Staff with access to CAS only need to attend one session to satisfy the grant deliverable.
- FY24 End-of-Year VACS Items:

- Present the LOGI Cost-Share Program Carryover Report for BMPs to Be Completed, Canceled, or Carried Over Into FY25 and take Board action as necessary
- Complete and submit EOY Cost-Share Reports (Carryover, Cash On Hand) to your CDC on or before July 15, 2024
- VACS Contracts: Reminder to obtain ALL signatures on VACS Contract Parts I, II, and III, including completed contracts and carryovers before payment is made. Per the VSWCB Policy and Procedures on SWCD Cost-Share and TA Funding Allocations (FY24): “Failure to obtain the appropriate signatures on a VACS contract in its entirety will result in the amount provided in VACS cost-share funding for the practice, including the associated technical assistance funding, being withheld from the District’s cost-share and technical assistance allocation for the next fiscal year by the Department.”
- Conservation Plan Signatures: Plans must be signed by ALL parties: the plan writer, a member of the District Board, and the participant. The BMP that is receiving cost-share MUST be in the plan that is being approved and signed.
- Follow Up on Random BMP Verifications: Please continue to work with participants who have maintenance needs. Remember to update the Verification Module as repairs are completed.
- 90% VACS Obligations: Districts unable to obligate 90% of their FY24 cost share allocation can either transfer allocation to another district or return allocation with proportional TA to DCR before June 15, 2024.
- FY25 Secondary Considerations & Average Cost Lists: Must be submitted to DCR for review and approval BEFORE approving cost-share applications. Please submit them to Sara Bottenfield, DCR-DSWC Ag Incentives Program Manager and copy me.
- End of Lifespan (EOL) Verifications: for 2024, 2025, and 2026 are loaded into CAS. These are due September 30 of the year they expire.

#### **DATES TO REMEMBER**

- May 8 – Education Foundation Golf Tournament, The Hollows Golf Course, Information Here
- May 15 – Deadline to notify Sara Bottenfield of carryovers into a 4th program year.
- May 15 – Perennial Stream ID Course, Charlottesville, VA
- May 27 – Memorial Day Holiday, State offices closed
- June 4 – Phase II Director Virtual Training, 9:00 am; Register Here
- June 13 – PY25 VACS Update #1, 9:00-12:00, virtual, required for all CAS users
- June 18 – PY25 VACS Update #2, 1:00-4:00, virtual, required for all CAS users
- June 19 – Juneteenth Holiday, State offices closed · June 20 – VASWCD Quarterly Board Meeting; 9:00 am, virtual; Register Here
- June 26 – VSWCB Meeting, VA Farm Bureau Federation, Richmond

#### **Andrew Faison, District Conservationist (NRCS)**

- Contracting funded contracts from last year 2 high tunnels in Chesterfield
- Lots of forestry and prescribed burning and heavy use areas for cattle operations
- We are always taking rolling applications
- We can review the Local Workgroup at the next Board Meeting
- I have a summer intern who can help with any Ag events

#### **Staff Reports:**

##### **Brianna Morring- District Manager**

##### **Completed Tasks:**

- Held Rain Barrel Workshop at the Central Library on a weeknight. It went well, and it was nice to offer a different time option for people

- Met with Marlie to discuss office space at Beulah Recreation Center in Chesterfield
- Met with Richmond Sustainability and CRLC to discuss VCAP
- Paying out VACS contracts
- SEP IRA Checks sent to Edward Jones
- Fulfilled all invoices and bills for April payments

#### **Ongoing Tasks:**

- Met teacher at Rain Barrel Workshop and will be going to Midlothian Middle School on 5/22 to do a rain barrel education session with a mini Envirothon for 8th graders
- Reached out to neighboring districts about partnering on purchasing Rain Barrels for the next round of workshops
- Maintaining drill invoices
- Maintaining contact with DCR and other partner agencies

#### **Meetings:**

- 4/22 VACDE Board Meeting @ TJSWCD Office
- 4/24 Rain Barrel Workshop and Cleaning
- 5/3 Meeting with Marlie @ Beulah Recreation Center
- 5/7 Meeting with Crater PDC
- 5/9 Meeting with CRLC and RVA Sustainability
- 5/16 May Board Meeting
- 5/19-5/20 State Envirothon @ Radford University
- 5/22 Education @ Midlothian Middle School

### **Joe Gerdes- Conservation Specialist**

#### **VCAP:**

- Anne & I verified Contracts #12-23-008 (CL-3) & #12-24-002 (RG) in Chesterfield

#### **AGRICULTURE:**

- Writing cover crop check requests and delivering checks to farmers
- Updating tracking and running end of year reports/making sure all financial reports are correct
- Gave a presentation on SWCD programs at VSU on May 8<sup>th</sup> – about 9 people attended.

#### **Miscellaneous**

- VACDE Board Meeting – 4/22 in Charlottesville
- Rain Barrell Workshop 4/24 at Chesterfield Fairgrounds
- Attended Prince George Comprehensive Planning Sub-Meeting on Environmental & Natural Resources – May 15<sup>th</sup>

### **Anne Devine- Conservation Technician**

#### **VCAP:**

- Completed nine site visits total, all in Chesterfield.
- Completed practice verification for Contract #12-24-001 & 002 (rain gardens with conservation landscaping with Joe)
- Created site visit profiles in OneNote for PY24 and updated past files to reflect current progress.
  - Three approved practices are scheduled to be installed in the next month (two rain gardens and one previously delayed conservation landscaping practice)
- Ongoing managing of site visit requests and scheduling of site visits.
  - Created a Site Visit Tracker spreadsheet to better organize and analyze data, including common reasons for program ineligibility.
- Ongoing research, compiling of application materials, and communicating with contractors/applicants.

- Creating VCAP training materials/guides
- Scheduled upcoming VCAP spot checks

MISC:

- Held meetings with Ashley Moulton of CRLC to continue VCAP training and give assistance.
- Rain Barrel Cleaning and Workshop 3/22-23 & 4/24
- Office rain garden maintenance with Joe
- 'Our Karst Landscape and Water Quality' Symposium by Shenandoah Valley SWCD 6/4
- Soils and Water Table Talk with Dan Schwartz, NVSWCD 6/11

## **Committee Reports:**

**Personnel:** Brianna will perform personnel reviews prior to the end of the year.

**Legislative/Outreach:** We received 15 responses to the small farm survey, excluding the ones Joe was able to obtain from the SFOP event. I am talking with Parks and Rec about the Grant and am waiting to hear back the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. The Chesterfield Board of Supervisors approved \$23,000 for our PY25 budget from Chesterfield.

## **Staff/Director Comments:**

**Greg:** 2 Board of Supervisors members asked about the septic grant program that we can apply for through DEQ

## **Adjournment:**

- Scott moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 PM, Laura seconded: Passed

Respectfully submitted,

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**Brianna Moring, Secretary**

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**Carey Allen, Chair**