

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

The James River Soil and Water Conservation District held its monthly Board Meeting at the Prince George Human Services Building on April 20th, 2023

Attendees:

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

Associate Directors: *Sierra Seekford, Marlie Creasey-Smith, Heath Locke, Avis Bennett*

Agency Partners: *Olivia Leatherwood*

Staff: *Joseph Gerdes, Anne Devine*

Absent: *Brianna Morring*

Public: *Kimberly Locke*

Call to order/Invocation: Carey called the meeting to order at 6:12 PM.

Chairman's Comments: This meeting should be a quick one with this short Agenda

April 20th Board of Directors Meeting Agenda:

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

March Board of Directors Meeting Minutes:

3/16/23 BOD Minutes

Edit minutes to change Heathe to Heath

- Andy moved to approve the March Board Meeting Minutes, Greg seconded: Passed

Treasurers Report:

Greg asked about the cost and an update for the drill

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

Conservation Report:

- Jerry moved to approve VACS contracts 12-23-0021 and 12-23-0024, Andy seconded: Passed
- Laura moved to approve VCAP contracts 12-23-008, 12-23-009, and 12-23-013 and forward them to the VCAP Steering Committee for final approval, Scott seconded: Passed

VACS Transfer to DCR

- Andy moved to table the VACS Transfer until the May Board Meeting, Laura seconded: Passed

Partner Reports:

Olivia Leatherwood, Conservation District Coordinator (DCR)

ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

- **3rd Quarter Reports:** are due Monday, April 17 – Attachment E, Cash Balance, and P&L.
- **Attachment D – FY25 Budget Template:** training is scheduled for May 9 in-person at the Drury Hotel in Glen Allen. Registration information is forthcoming from the VASWCD.
- **FY24 Budget Preparations:** FY24 Budgets should be approved by your Board by June 30. Finance committee meetings are a great time to review the *Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations*.
- **Annual Plan of Work & Strategic Plan Review/Development:** FY24 Annual Plans of Work should be ready for board approval in June so that they are in place for the new fiscal year.
- **SWCD Director Elections:**
General election is November 7, 2023. **The filing deadline is 7:00pm on Tuesday, June 20, 2023.** There are new campaign finances reporting requirements and an exemption form. It is a multistep process. Directors need to talk to their local registrar for specific details. Even if you talked to your registrar a month ago, you should follow up because there is now greater understanding of the new process. Below are helpful links:
 - Instructions for Potential Candidates
 - Candidate Bulletin for Local & Constitutional Offices
 - Candidate Forms
 - Certificate of Candidate Qualifications:
https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formwarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/SBE_501_4-rev7-18.pdf
 - Declaration of Candidacy:
https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formwarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/SBE_505_520_Declaration_of_Candidacy_Rev1_15.pdf
 - Petition of Qualified Voters:
https://www.elections.virginia.gov/media/formwarehouse/campaign-finance/2018/candidates/Petition-of-Qualified-Voters-SBE-506_521_letter.pdf
 - *Directors are not required to submit the Statement of Economic Interests (confirmed with Ethics Council Jan 23)*
 - *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).*

All questions should be addressed to your local registrar's office.

AG COST SHARE

- **Carryover Practices:** Encourage BMP Participants to complete their projects in time for payment prior to the close of the fiscal year to minimize carryover into FY24. **Please review pages II-41-44 in the VACS Manual** regarding carryover procedures as well as the Logi report (“Cost-Share Program Carryover Report for BMPs To Be Completed, Canceled, or Carried Over into FY24”). Practices nearing completion but requiring a 4th year carryover are due for review to Sara Bottenfield by **May 15**.
- **Transfer of Responsibility:** When completing Transfers of Responsibility, the Transfer form and W-9 for the new participant should be attached to the contract or instance in Tracking, then send an email to DCR Data Services (Jen Edwards) and/or SWCD Liaison (Blair Gordon) with the contract or instance number to request the participant change (Guidelines pg. II-50 and 51). The forms contain Personally Identifiable Information (PII), and this method is more secure than

sending the forms by email. Also remember that the Transfer form must be used for all Transfers of Responsibility, whether the practice is complete or under construction and even if the transfer is between an individual and their farm/business.

- **Tracking/Conservation Application Suite (CAS) Accounts:** Tracking/CAS accounts cannot be shared. Security is closely monitored due to storing PII and all users agree not to share their password or use anyone else's as a condition of having access to the system.
- **Update Contact Info in CAS:** Carl Thiel-Goin has asked District staff who have changed Districts or changed emails to update their information under "My Account" in Tracking.
- **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.

DATES TO REMEMBER

April

- April 12 – VASWCD: HR Trends for 2023, Virtual – see VASWCD website for registration information
- April 21 – Average Cost List & Secondary Considerations Info Session, virtual at 9:30am, [Register Here](#)
- April 23 – Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Board Meeting, 10:00am, Pocahontas State Park
- April 28 – Suggestions for Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) due to Sara Bottenfield (sara.bottenfield@dcr.virginia.gov)

May

- May 9 – Admin/Director Training, includes Attachment D Budget Template Training, Drury Plaza Hotel
- May 15 – Deadline to submit 4th year carryovers to Sara Bottenfield
- May 16 – Stream Identification, James City County Library, 9:00am - 4:30pm
- May 25 – VSWCB Meeting, Department of Forestry Headquarters, Charlottesville

June

- June 7- VACS Update Session, Virtual (1:00-4:00)
- June 7 – VASWCD Admin/Ops Committee Meeting: Att. D Training Follow Up, Virtual
- June 15 – VACS Update Session, Virtual (9:00-12:00)
- June 20 – Filing Deadline, Last day to file election documents with local registrar

Ariel Coleman, (Acting) District Conservationist (NRCS)

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

- Awaiting preapproval status for 3 EQIP-IRA applications (1 livestock and 2 wildlife applications).
- Currently working on obligating 6 preapproval applications for high tunnels.
- 2 EQIP applications were preapproved (1 wildlife and 1 forestry).

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

- Received 6 applications for CSP-IRA sign up.
- Working on ranking the 6 CSP-IRA applications received due by May 26.

Conservation Technical Assistance/Updates

- Dinwiddie Service Center will undergo 7 FSA compliance reviews (1 Chesterfield, 4 Dinwiddie, 2 Prince George)
- A Direct Hire Soil Conservationist Pathways Recent Graduate has been interviewed and selection was made.

Earth Team Volunteer Program

- If you know anyone, (high school age or older) that would like to volunteer pass their info along to me!

VA NRCS Operational/Personnel Changes

- COVID operation status- All three counties in LOW category. Doors are open, masks are not required.

Staff Reports:

Brianna Moring- District Manager

Completed Tasks:

- RVA VCAP: I have sent over two invoices requesting funds to start VCAP in the City.
- Sent additional email with The Bagshaw Scholarship: Extended to May 12th
- Designed signage for events (Two tabletop banners: Do you own a horse and Are you a Farmer) (One large floor banner with main programs) (Back banner with logo and We work with the people who work the land, Let's work together!)
- Updated website with Richmond VCAP
- Created Richmond Site Visit Request Form to share with CRLC

Ongoing Tasks:

- Attending VNRLI in Marion: Hungry Mother State Park
- Promoting Spring Rain Barrel Workshops (May 27th & June 24th @ 10 AM)
- Working with Richmond and CRLC to finalize VCAP
- Working on Envirothon (CTC @ Hull & Clover Hill)
- Working with Area VI on the Area Envirothon (Shirts, Smithfield, Trophies, Ribbons, Gifts)
- Maintaining Drill Invoices
- Maintaining contact with DCR and other partner agencies

Meetings:

- 4/12 Admin/Ops HR Training
- 4/18-21 Out of Office for VNRLI (Hungry Mother State Park)
- 4/18 Farm Day
- 4/25 VACDE Policy Book Review
- 4/26 Area VI Envirothon
- 5/9 Admin/Ops HR and Att D
- 5/27 Rain Barrel Workshop

Information Request for Scott:

- FDIC Insured Bank Accounts
 - Our Accounts are FDIC Insured up to \$250,000 and also insured under the Virginia Security for Public Deposits for amounts greater than \$250,000. Since our bank accounts are under public funds, we have this additional coverage.

VASWCD Scholarships:

- Laura moved to forward the VASWCD Scholarship Application to the VASWCD for final consideration, Greg seconded: Passed

Joseph Gerdes- Conservation Specialist

VCAP:

- Completed fourteen site visits in Chesterfield.
- Did infiltration test for *Contract #12-23-0014 (RG)*
- *Contract #12-23-011 (VSC-DS)* changed to Conservation Landscaping based on Steering Committee recommendations. Now *Contract #12-23-012 (CL-3)* and resubmitted.

AGRICULTURE:

- Field Work
 - Met with Ashby Stinson who has cattle on Chesterfield/Powhatan line. Looking for help with weed pressure and ways to improve his management.

- Met with Josh Fitzhugh who operates his father's farm off Old Gun Rd. in North Chesterfield. They have ~25 head cattle and about 40 acres of pasture and hay. There are a lot of wetland areas and springs/seeps on the property and opportunities for exclusion-fencing projects.
- *Contract #12-22-0014 (WQ-12 – Roof Runoff Management)*: Verification completed on 3/22. Gutter and outlet system meet the design specs. DCR required that exclusion fencing be installed at the end of outlet pipe and disturbed area reseeded. Finishing the As-Builts documentation.
- *Contract #12-21-0025: (Equine Manure Management & Loafing)* Checked in on the progress of manure shed construction. Trusses and crossbeams are up, still need to do roof and gutters/downspouts. Pastures/loafing areas established and growing well. Heavy-use area finished.
- Updating NMPs and recommending other agronomic practices to interested producers.
- Drill Report: 2 rentals so far, about 14 acres.

Misc:

- Farm Day – April 18th

Anne Devine- Conservation Technician

VCAP:

- Scheduled and completed 14 VCAP site visits in Chesterfield.
- Contract #12-23-011 (VCS-DS) revised and resubmitted as a Conservation Landscaping practice (new Contract #12-23-012, CL-3) following Steering Committee recommendations.
- Ongoing scheduling of site visits and communicating with possible applicants
- Ongoing compiling of application materials

Agriculture:

- Contract #12-22-0014 (WQ-12- Roof Runoff Management) verification in Prince George with Joe and Raleigh Coleman from DCR completed on 3/22
- Contract #12-21-0025 (Equine Manure Management & Loafing) at Waterford's Lee progress check. The manure shed is making great progress, with only the roof and gutters/downspouts still needing installment.
- Met with Josh Fitzhugh alongside Sierra and Joe in North Chesterfield regarding stream exclusion practices on his father's farm.

Outreach/Events:

- VASWCD Educational Foundation College Scholarship application submitted by Lillianne McMinn for review.
- WSA's 12th Annual Conference 3/25
- Farm Day 4/18
- Envirothon 4/26

Committee Reports:

Legislative/Outreach:

First Chesterfield Earth Day

- Thanks to everyone who volunteered!

Virtual Earth Day Event: Facebook 4/22 at 3 PM

- Promote VCAP
- Conservation

- Bird Habitat

Adjournment:

- Laura moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:14 PM, Jerry seconded: Passed

Respectfully submitted,

Brianna Moring, Secretary

Carey Allen, Chair