

James River Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Meeting
August 17th, 2023

The James River Soil and Water Conservation District held its monthly Board Meeting at the Scott Memorial Park Pavilion on August 17th, 2023

Attendees:

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

Associate Directors: *Avis Bennett*

Agency Partners: *Olivia Leatherwood*

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

Absent: *Marlie Creasey-Smith, Sierra Seekford, Heath Locke*

Public: *Logan Andrews*

Call to order/Invocation:

- Carey called the meeting to order at 7:23 PM.

Chairman's Comments: The Annual Report has been passed around, please take a look at it when you get a chance.

August 17th Board of Directors Meeting Agenda:

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

July Board of Directors Meeting Minutes:

7/20/23 BOD Minutes

Amendment to include a correction to the USDA Farm to School grant program information. Participating organizations need to cumulatively contribute 25% of grant funding.

- Laura moved to approve the July Board Meeting Minutes, Greg seconded: Passed

Treasurers Report:

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

Conservation Report:

- Laura moved to approve VCAP contracts 12-24-007, 12-24-008, and 12-24-009, and forward them to the VCAP Steering Committee for final approval, Jerry seconded: Passed

DCR Grant Assessments:

- The Grant Assessments were reviewed by the Board.

Partner Reports:

Olivia Leatherwood, Conservation District Coordinator (DCR)

ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

- COIA Training for Directors: The Code of Virginia requires locally elected officials to complete COIA training once every two years. Most Directors completed this between July and December of 2021. The training can be accessed at <https://ethicswebinar.dls.virginia.gov/>. Each module is specific to your role so select “Local Elected Officials or EDAs/IDAs” in order to complete the correct training. Please remember there is no completion certificate for this training, so my suggestion is to take a screenshot of your completion message. I’ve been informed that returning Directors will have an opportunity to complete this training at Annual Meeting in December.
- 2023 Clean Water Farm Award Applications: A memo from Director Wells was released on July 28 with information regarding this year’s Clean Water Farm Awards. Local winner information and grand basin nominations are due to me October 2. Signatures and approvals should be obtained by your September board meeting. New forms can be found at the following links: CWFA Application; Grand Basin Award Application.

AG COST SHARE

- 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.
- Quarter 1 Cost-Share Disbursements: Letters will be sent to Districts on August 24. Please let me know of your anticipated need for the first disbursement.

GRANT DELIVERABLES

- FY23 Annual Report: for July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023 should be completed by September 30th
- 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

August

- Aug 22-24 – VACDE Annual Summer Training, Graves Mountain Lodge
- Aug 29 – Regional VACS/Conservation Planning Training: Livestock; Thomas Jefferson SWCD

Other Dates

- Sept 15 – Return of Cost-Share funds to DCR due

- Sept 25 – VSWCB Meeting – Audit Subcommittee 9:00, Full Board 10:00, Bear Creek Lake State Park · Sept 26 – Regional VACS/Conservation Planning Training: Crops; Peanut SWCD, Register Here
- Sept 30 – Deadline for EOL Verifications for 2023 Reimbursement
- October 2 – Local CWFA winner applications and grand basin nominations due to DCR
- December 3-6 – VASWCD Annual Meeting, Norfolk Marriott

Staff Reports:

Brianna Moring- District Manager

Completed Tasks:

- Created the PY23 Annual Report
- Fulfilled all invoices and bills for August payments (including Archive Social)

Ongoing Tasks:

- Finalizing VACDE Graves Summer Training
- Planning for our Audit of PY22 and PY23 (12/14)
- Maintaining Drill Invoices
- Maintaining contact with DCR and other partner agencies

Meetings:

- 7/27 Meeting with RVA Sustainability
- 8/1 VCAP presentation for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation VoiCeS class
- 8/17 Farmers Cookout
- 8/18 DEI Committee Meeting
- 8/22-8/24 VACDE Graves Mountain Training
- 8/29 Chesterfield Fair Coverage

Anne Devine- Conservation Technician

VCAP:

- Created BMP digital reference pages for each practice for use during site visits to better communication.
- Infiltration test completed in Chesterfield for a pending dry well application.
- Completed 8 site visits in Chesterfield, 6 of which, independently.
- Created site visit profiles in OneNote for PY23-24
- Ongoing scheduling of site visits and communicating with contractors and possible applicants
- Ongoing research and compiling of application materials

VACS:

- VA Soil Health Coalition's Soil Health Training Webinar Series
 - Why Organic Matters 8/8
 - Biological Nutrient Management 8/17

MISC:

- Meeting with VCAP Coordinators 8/8
- Purchased and picked up PY23 Annual Plan reports.
- Farmers Cookout 8/17
- CBLP Webinar: A Deep Dive into Aquatic Invasive Species 8/17

- Chesterfield Fair 8/30
- Graves VACDE Annual Training 8/22-24

Joseph Gerdes- Conservation Specialist

VCAP:

- Completed three site visits in Chesterfield
- Helped with infiltration tests for two participants/potential applicants.

Agriculture:

- Completed site visit for Mr. Washington off Courthouse Rd. in Prince George. Worried about vegetation/lilies take over in his pond. Has three horses with access to pond, but he is not involved in any boarding or production business and will not qualify for VACS.
- Signing up and ranking cover crops and NMP acreage.
- Reviewing PY23 files and conservation plans for completion/audit preparation.
- Operator for Engel Farms is writing RMPs for Flowerdew and Upper Brandon, will need to do Technical Review Committee when they are written.

Misc:

- Graves Mountain Lodge Training – *August 22-24th*
- Chesterfield Fair Booth – *Monday August 28th*

Committee Reports:

Finance: (Donation) Greg motioned to donate \$500 for the reprinting of the Capital Region Native Plant Guide, Laura seconded: Passed (**USDA Farm to School Grant**) Greg moved to pledge \$1,000 to support the program and agreed to host one event and provide food for said event if the Grant is awarded, Laura seconded: Passed (**Conservation Teacher of the Year Award**) Greg moved to nominate Mr. Zulauf for the K-5 category, and nominate Mrs. Johnson for the 6-12 category, Jerry seconded: Passed

Legislative/Outreach: Laura asked about purchasing paper and markers for the Conservation Poster Contest. On August 28th we will have space at the fair in the Art Expo space to have students create posters for the Contest. The district will reimburse her for supply costs. The District also needs to purchase additional Fair tickets for volunteers staffing the booth. Brianna will purchase an additional 20 tickets at \$8 per ticket.

Adjournment:

- Scott moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM, Andy seconded: Passed

Respectfully submitted,

Brianna Moring, Secretary

Carey Allen, Chair