

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board
Electronic Meeting
June 3, 2020**

TIME AND PLACE

The electronic meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board took place via GoToMeeting on June 3, 2020.

VIRGINIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS PARTICIPATING

Charles A. "Chuck" Arnason, Chair	Kat Maybury
Adam Wilson, Vice Chair	Charles Newton
Kristen Saacke Blunk	Dr. Dahlia O'Brien
Arthur Gray Coyner	Cindy Smith
Clyde Cristman, DCR Director, Ex Officio	
David Kriz, NRCS, Ex Officio	

VIRGINIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION BOARD MEMBERS NOT PARTICIPATING

Mario Albritton

DCR STAFF PARTICIPATING

Rochelle Altholtz, Deputy Director for Administration
Russell W. Baxter, Deputy Director of Soil and Water Conservation/Dam Safety and Floodplain Management
Nathan Burrell, Deputy Director for Government and Community Relations
Thomas Smith, Deputy Director for Operations
Darryl M. Glover, Director, Division of Soil and Water Conservation
Wendy Howard Cooper, Director, Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management
Michael Fletcher, Board and Constituent Services Liaison
Christine Watlington, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator
David Bryan, Agricultural Incentives Program Manager
Angela Ball, Conservation District Coordinator
Denny Collins, Conservation District Coordinator
Jaclyn Friedman, Conservation District Coordinator
Kimberly Freiburger, Policy Analyst
Blair Gordon, SWCD District Liaison
Stacy Horton, Conservation District Coordinator
Amy Walker, Eastern Area Regional Manager
Gray O'Dwyer, Office of the Attorney General
Jen Edwards, Conservation Data Technician
Marissa Roland, Agricultural Incentives Program Technician

OTHERS PARTICIPATING

Jennifer Coker, Chowan Basin SWCD
Anne Coates, Thomas Jefferson SWCD
Sharon Conner, Hanover-Caroline SWCD
Lynn Graves, Culpeper SWCD
Adrienne Kotula, James River Association
Martha Moore, Virginia Farm Bureau
Jason Powell, Senate Finance
Kyle Shreve, Virginia Agribusiness Council
Dr. Kendall Tyree, VASWCD
Greg Wichelns, Culpeper SWCD

ESTABLISHMENT OF A QUORUM

With eight (8) members of the Board participating, a quorum was established.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Arnason called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and read the following remarks.

Good morning, I would like to call this virtual meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board to order. As you are aware, our scheduled meetings for March, April, and May were canceled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Generally, public bodies are prohibited from meeting electronically under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). However, emergency language approved by the Governor and General Assembly in April allows us to move forward with certain restrictions that I will outline below.

Before I review those provisions, please let me take a moment to review how this meeting will work. We want to allow for participation by Board members, staff, and members of the public who wish to comment. However, it is essential that we are able to manage the conversation effectively.

I am chairing this meeting today from the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation District offices in Mechanicsville with Christine Watlington and Michael Fletcher. They will assist with presentations, responding to comments, and the overall coordination of the meeting. Dr. Kendall Tyree is also assisting with the meeting.

Please be patient with all of us as we work through this. We understand and appreciate the challenges.

Chapter 1283 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly, also known as the "Caboose Bill," includes language addressing the ability of public bodies to conduct electronic meetings without the need for a quorum being present in a single physical location ("Electronic Meeting").

This language was submitted as an amendment by the Governor and approved by the General Assembly at their April 22, 2020 reconvened Session. The Governor subsequently signed the Caboose Bill and the Bill was effective as of April 24, 2020.

The Caboose Bill allows public bodies to hold Electronic Meetings when the Governor has declared a state of emergency pursuant to §44-146.17 if:

“(i) the nature of the declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe for the public body or governing board to assemble in a single location;

(ii) the purpose of the meeting is to discuss or transact the business statutorily required or necessary to continue operations of the public body...and the discharge of its lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities...” §4-0.01(g).

The Caboose Bill also has language regarding recordings and transcriptions of Electronic Meetings. Please be advised that this meeting is being recorded. This recording will be available to the public through the DCR website. The comments in the chat room will also be preserved as a public record. Official minutes of this meeting will be drafted and posted in accordance with regular procedures.

The Caboose Bill does not allow the Board to hold an Electronic Meeting to discuss or transact business for *any purpose*. Rather, they may do so as long as the agenda items that the public body plans to take up are: (a) statutorily required or (b) necessary to continue operations and discharge lawful purposes, duties and responsibilities.

You will note that the original agenda was amended to comply with this language.

It is the Board’s responsibility to determine whether “the nature of the declared emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe for the public body or governing board to assemble in a single location.”

At the conclusion of my remarks, I will ask for a motion for the board to make this determination. If that motion fails, this electronic meeting will end at that point.

The Caboose Bill requires compliance with the provisions of § 2.2-3708.2. Therefore, in accordance with § 2.2-3708.2.D.2, public bodies must include a telephone number that may be used to notify the public body of any interruption in the telephonic or video broadcast of the meeting.

In the event that a disruption occurs, participants should contact Mr. Fletcher by phone or text at 804-317-8934.

Additionally, if there is an interruption in the broadcast, the meeting must be suspended until public access is restored.

Those provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act not addressed by the Caboose Bill remain in effect.

Before we continue with the business portion of the meeting, I will ask Mr. Fletcher to call the roll for Board members and anticipated staff. Other participants will be recorded through the chat window. If you are participating by phone and your name is not called, please call or text Mr. Fletcher at 804-317-8934.

In addition, if at any time you lose connection and are unable to reconnect, please contact Mr. Fletcher at the same number.

I will now turn to Mr. Fletcher for the calling of the roll:

PRESENT

Chuck Arnason

Adam Wilson

Kristen Saacke Blunk

Gray Coyner

Kat Maybury

Charles Newton

Dahlia O'Brien

Cindy Smith

NOT PRESENT

Mario Albritton

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Wilson moved the following:

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board certifies that the nature of the declared COVID-19 emergency makes it impracticable or unsafe for the Board to assemble in a single location and further that the agenda items to be taken up at this meeting are necessary to continue operations and discharge lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities of the Board.

Ms. Saacke Blunk seconded.

The roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

A quorum was declared present.

Chairman Arnason continued:

I want to explain further how we will handle participation by board members, staff, and the public. Everyone, except the individual presenting materials for an agenda item, will be muted. Once the presentation is completed, the board members, and only board members, will be unmuted for discussion. Michael and Christine will assist me with ensuring board members are recognized when they have questions or comments. As needed, staff will be unmuted to address questions or concerns. Members of the public will be able to ask questions and provide input by utilizing the chat box function only. As time allows, we will respond to those questions and comments.

We will now proceed with the business of the Board as outlined in the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM DECEMBER 11, 2019

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Wilson moved that the minutes from the December 11, 2019 meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board be approved as submitted. Dr. O'Brien seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – *Clyde E. Cristman, DCR Director*

Director Cristman gave the following report:

Key Legislation from the General Assembly

- Dam safety (Hb1569 and SB343)
 - Includes the owning of an impounding structure in the real estate buyer beware provisions
 - Advises people buying property to do research regarding the impounding structure ownership (through the homeowners association they may have to join or through the individual piece of property they are interested in)
 - Senate version of the bill introduced by Senator Locke on behalf of the Housing Commission; the commission continues to be interested in certain dam safety issues.
- Chesapeake Bay TMDL Implementation (Hb1422 and SB704)
 - The "Bay" bill
 - If Virginia does not meet its agricultural goals set out in the Chesapeake Bay Phase III WIP, then no sooner than July 1, 2026 :
 - Nutrient management plans are required to be maintained and implemented by all operators of 50 or more acres of cropland in the Bay watershed; and
 - Landowners (of land in the Bay watershed) on which 20 or more cows are pastured must install and maintain stream exclusion practices
- Short-term requirements
 - Establishment of a stakeholder advisory group to develop process to assist producers with obtaining nutrient management plans and stream exclusion practices including funding needs and obstacles
 - No later than July 1, 2021, a portable stream fencing practice must be included in the VACS Program; the Department is already researching such practices and will propose options to the AgBMP Technical Advisory Committee this year
 - No later than December 31, 2020, this Board shall establish the methodology for identifying perennial streams

- The method can't require field verification
- Board members were provided in an email a memo from Secretary Strickler to myself outlining considerations regarding the process
- Everyone was also provided a copy of the results from the Rockingham pilot project
 - This project utilized existing satellite imagery to determine perennial streams
 - Considerable additional funding would be needed to expand the use of this method throughout the Bay watershed, but it is a possibility for meeting this requirement.

Key budget items

- Unprecedented shortfalls
- Forecasting a \$3 billion shortfall over the biennium
- Governor's amendments in response to COVID unallocated certain funding pending future General Assembly action including:
 - \$3.84 million from the deposit to the Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund
 - \$15 million deposited in the Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Fund for District-owned or Department-owned dam repair and upgrades
- As you will see and hear later in the agenda, the Department was very conservative in allocating funding this year
 - This approach has been taken with the hope that further budget cuts will not be necessary o Administrative and operations funding remains stable and is the same as last year
 - Cost-share funding:
 - Only \$35 million is being allocated for the cost-share program
 - This remains at the 70-30 split as required by budget language
 - Technical assistance funding: □ Efforts to include stable, base funding for technical assistance were finally successful for FY2021
 - This is reflected in the cost-share and technical assistance allocations and reflects the recommendations of the Allocation Subcommittee
 - This new base technical assistance is the vast majority of technical assistance provided to Districts (\$4.55 of the total \$5.85 million)
 - Technical assistance funding associated with anticipated recordation revenue (\$1.3 million) has also been allocated

Director Cristman noted that the General Assembly would reconvene later in the year once the revenue picture becomes clearer.

AUDIT SUBCOMMITTEE REPORT – *Adam Wilson, Audit Subcommittee Chair*

Mr. Wilson gave a report from the Audit Subcommittee.

The Subcommittee reviewed the recent District audits. A general letter of regarding the findings of this audit cycle will be sent to all Districts. Mountain Castles SWCD will be sent a letter outlining the concerns raised by the auditors and informing the SWCD of the need to address the concerns prior to their next regularly scheduled audit.

The Audit Subcommittee will tentatively meet again in September.

DAM SAFETY AND FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT DIVISION

Approval of Projects Funded by the Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund - Wendy Howard Cooper, Director, Division of Dam Safety and Floodplain Management

Ms. Howard Cooper presented the following update regarding the 2020 Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund Grant Projects.

Approval of 2020 Dam Safety, Flood Prevention and Protection Assistance Fund Grant Projects

§ 10.1-603.18. Administration of the Fund.

The Authority shall administer and manage the Fund, and establish the interest rates and the repayment terms of such loans as provided in this article, in accordance with a memorandum of agreement with the Director. The Director shall, after consultation with all interested parties, develop a guidance document governing project eligibility and project priority criteria, and the Director, upon approval from the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, shall direct the distribution of loans and grants from the Fund to local governments and private entities. In order to carry out the administration and management of the Fund, the Authority may employ officers, employees, agents, advisers and consultants, including without limitation, attorneys, financial advisors, engineers, and other technical advisors and public accountants, and determine their duties and compensation without the approval of any other agency or instrumentality. The Authority may disburse from the Fund reasonable costs and expenses incurred in the administration and management of the Fund and may establish and collect a reasonable fee for its management services. However, any such fee shall not exceed one-eighth of one percent of any bond par, loan or grant amount.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved the following:

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approves the eighty-six (86) grant applications, with an approval amount of \$308,168.00, as recommended by the Department. Approval of these grants is conditioned on the following:

1. All grants are made on a reimbursement basis and will be governed by a Grant Agreement developed in consultation with the Virginia Resources Authority. All applicants will be given a period of 90 days to enter into a Grant Agreement following the Agreement being sent. The Department of Conservation and Recreation (Department) is authorized to further extend this date in its discretion and following consultation with VRA.
2. All grant agreements will require that projects be completed within 12 months of the date of execution of the Agreement. Upon receipt of a written request for a project extension with a specified completion date by the Grantee to the Department with a copy to VRA, the Department is authorized to consider such request and may amend the terms of the Agreement and allow a specified extension upon the Department's and the Authority's written approval. Extension requests must be received by the Department not later than 90 days prior to the expiration of the original agreement or grant funds are subject to rescission at the Departments discretion. No extensions shall exceed an additional year without specific Board approval.

3. In the event that any of the above applicants fail to execute a Grant Agreement with VRA within 90 days of such an Agreement being sent to the applicant, the Department, in consultation with VRA, is authorized to rescind those grant funds and allocate in subsequent grant rounds.

The Department is authorized to communicate this approval to the Virginia Resources Authority (VRA) so that VRA's review of applications may proceed. The Department is also authorized to take any action necessary to proceed with the closing and administration of grants subsequent to VRA's approval of the application.

Mr. Wilson seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DIVISION

Lake Barcroft Watershed Improvement District's FY2021 Budget – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the proposed budget for the Lake Barcroft Watershed Improvement District.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Lake Barcroft Watershed Improvement District FY2021 budget as submitted by the Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District and presented by the Department. Mr. Wilson seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

Approval of the Board's Fiscal Year 2021 Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) BMP Manual – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington noted that copies of the revisions to the BMP manual were mailed to the Board members in preparation for the March meeting that was subsequently canceled. Comments were received and changes were sent to Board members in preparation for this meeting.

Ms. Watlington reviewed the changes.

Guidelines:

- VACS will eliminate all individual practice caps. Instead, all participants will be eligible for a maximum participant cap (established in PY20) of \$100,000.
- The Variance Process will be expanded to include numerous other Animal Waste and Stream Protection practices that were not eligible in PY20.
- DCR will begin allowing two-party checks again, but only for lending institutions.
- DCR will allow an Assignment of Payment form to be used for participants that have a DEQ Ag Loan through the Virginia Resource Authority.
- In accordance with the VACS Programmatic Review, the Bid Process will be updated to be used whenever the cost of any one component of a VACS contract is estimated to equal or exceed a billable expense of \$30,000. When a District Board approves a project where the new Bid Process applies, the District staff will utilize a new status in Tracking ("*Conditionally Approved Pending Bids*") and send a new form letter to the participant stating that the contract has been conditionally approved pending completion of the Bid Process. Once the bids are turned into the District, the project can be switched to *Approved* by District staff and a final approval letter can be sent.
- Extreme Act of Nature (EAN) language for dealing with practices that have been damaged or destroyed by floods, hurricanes, tornados, etc., will be clarified but not substantially changed from previous years. Producers will still have the opportunity to receive additional cost-share to fix the issue in exchange for a new lifespan.
- EAN language for cover crops will also be updated. Districts Boards will be allowed to extend SL-8B Cover Crop standard planting dates for 14 days due to an EAN. The Board can approve county-wide extensions if any only if there is a disaster declaration from the Governor or Farm Service Agency. In the absence of such broad declarations, the Board may provide a HUC-level declaration if any only if the disaster can be documented by a local credible source such as the Virginia Cooperative Extension agent or AREC **AND** a professionally recognized climatology expert which clearly references the EAN situation. In the case of droughts, this could include the United States Drought Monitor, State Climatology Office or the Palmer Drought Severity Index. Early planting dates may not be extended. All performance criteria must still be met. For other cover crop practices (e.g. SL-8H, NM-7 and WQ-4), extensions can only be made by the Director of DCR in consultation with the Soil and Water Conservation Board.

Glossary:

- Under Agricultural Production, a clarifier will be added regarding equine producers: "*For purposes of the VACS program, commercial equine operations such as breeding, boarding and training facilities are eligible for funding if they meet the necessary acreage and income requirement for each of the past five years.*"
- VACS will define Live Stream or Live Water broadly in order to give District staff flexibility to help producers in the field. The Glossary will state: "*Live Stream or Live Water (for the purpose of the Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share Program only): A creek, stream, river or other water feature which has surface flow, or creates a surface flow, for a substantial portion of the year.*"
- Specialty Crop will be defined for use in various VACS specifications: "*Vegetables, tree crops, perennial vine crops, ornamentals, horticultural crops, tobacco, hemp, turf and other similar crops.*"

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Newton moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Fiscal Year 2021 Virginia Agricultural Cost-Share (VACS) BMP Manual as submitted by staff. Mr. Coyner seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

Approval of the Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington reviewed the recommended Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations. She noted the following:

- This was sent to District administrative staff for review on April 21 and requested comments by May 4. The Department did receive and respond to comments submitted after May 4.
- Comments were received from 2 Districts (Piedmont and Tidewater) and the Guide was revised to reflect those comments.
- The updates to this version came from a collection of suggestions and edits identified through the audit process, SWCDs annual review of the guide, and Department staff reviews. In addition to some minor formatting changes and updates to all of the website links in the handbook, the following edits and additions have been made:
 - Many of the edits are recommendations from a draft Guide that was shared with the Board last May.
 - Language has been edited to reflect results of this year's audit, specifically the payment of sales tax.
 - Language has been amended to reflect statutory changes (such as FOIA requirements – local official training and the need to develop and approve committee meetings).
 - Revisions to reflect actual audit process which does not change the requirements for Districts.
 - Clarifying language has been added; duplicative language has been removed.
 - Biggest change is the requirement for Districts to adopt a policy related to gift card usage.
 - The policy must address certain questions but is not a significant change in operations.
 - A director with check signing authority should reconcile the credit card statement before it is paid.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations as submitted by staff. Mr. Wilson seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

Approval of Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operations Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2021 – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington reviewed the draft Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operations Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2021. She noted the following:

- Funding allocations remain the same as the previous year.
- \$400,000 remains for remote dam monitoring equipment.
- Recommending simplifying some of the training requirements to allow the Department more flexibility in training priorities, especially in light of funding projections.
- Included language from existing grant agreements regarding the timeframe for the repayment of funds due to budget reduction needs.
- Removed the reference to development of budget-based needs assessment; this is dependent on funding being provided for administration and operations.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Wilson moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Administration and Operations Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2021 as presented by staff. Mr. Coyner seconded and the roll call vote was as follow:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

Approval of Administration and Operations Grant Agreement for FY2021 – Christine Watlington

- Similar to FY2020.
- Budget template will become a 2-year grant deliverable based on Allocation Subcommittee's recommendation and Board motion approved in December.
 - Districts will be provided template early Spring.
 - Department will work with Peer Review Committee to ensure all necessary components to determine funding needs are included.
 - Will work with the Association to provide training opportunities on the template next spring at the next Admin and Ops training event.
- Removed requirement to provide CDCs with certain personnel records.
- Included addressing any "failing" grant deliverable assessments as part of the grant agreement.

- Added for clarification; this is already an existing requirement.
- Revised the requirement for new directors to receive New Director Orientation in recognition of public health emergency.
 - Directors will now have until December 31, 2020 to receive both parts of Director Orientation.
- Removed requirement for District Director attendance at Annual meeting and spring meetings
 - This was removed for this year in recognition of the public health emergency.
 - The Association may want to discuss this further for next year's grant agreements.
- Removed requirement for Directors to take COIA training.
 - This requirement is now law and is the director's responsibility.
 - Department does not track.
- Revised the requirement related to FOIA officers.
 - Individual must take training when first designated as the FOIA officer and then as the Department provides training.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Administration and Operations Grant Agreement as presented by staff. Mr. Newton seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

Approval of Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2021 – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington reviewed the draft Board Policy on Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Funding Allocations for Fiscal Year 2021. She noted the following:

- As Director Cristman mentioned, projected numbers are very conservative.
 - \$35 million total VACS program allocation.
 - Maintains 70-30 split between the Chesapeake Bay watershed and areas outside of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
 - Includes \$4.55 provided in base technical assistance funding.
 - This complements recommendation from Allocation Subcommittee and was approved by the Board in December.
- Utilizes the new 2020 Nonpoint Source Assessment to determine priority watersheds and HUCs.
 - There were some changes to those priorities.
 - This is noticeable on the map where some areas have changed colors.

- Language was revised to reflect changes to the VACS Manual including list of priority practices; practices eligible for variances (or combination of practices eligible for variances).

Ms. Watlington noted that the numbers provided were added following the final action on the budget; references to specific chapters and items were also updated to reflect the final budget.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved the following:

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approves the Policy and Procedures on Soil and Water Conservation District Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Funding Allocations (Fiscal Year 2021).

Three Rivers Soil and Water Conservation District is authorized to utilize FY2021 cost-share allocation to supplement the funding provided for the *Whole Farm Approach Pilot Project*, if needed.

Mr. Wilson seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

Approval of Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Grant Agreement – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington reviewed the draft Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Grant Agreement. She noted the following:

- The agreement is similar to FY2020.
- Revised deliverable related to implementing VACS in accordance with BMP Manual.
 - More closely tying the administration of VACS to the guidelines provided in the Manual.
 - There have been several issues related to Engineering Job Approval Authority (practices not designed according to standards.)
 - This costs producers money to fix.
 - Costs time and energy for District employees and Department staff to fix.
 - Can reduce the likelihood of a producer implementing additional practices.
 - Administrative reviews.
 - Completed by the Conservation District Coordinators each year.
 - Ensures adequate record-keeping for files.
 - Helps Districts prepare for audits and ensures Districts are following guidelines established in Manual.
 - Deliverable reflects findings from the Programmatic review completed late last fall .
 - Bid process implementation is a recurring issue.

- Guidance in the Manual has been revised to address inconsistent application across the state.
 - Enacts the recommendation from the Programmatic Review to increase consistency and standardize the process.
- Revised standards for secondary considerations.
 - Prior to approving any cost-share applications, Districts must either:
 - Have submitted secondary considerations to the Department and received approval; or
 - Informed the Department that they would use the approved considerations from FY2020.
- Added requirement to ensure data is entered into the Tracking Module within 15 days after the end of every quarter to accurately reflect Board approvals, cancelations, carryovers and participant funding requests.
 - The Department frequently receives information requests about how much funding Districts have obligated and what the ongoing funding needs for VACS are.
 - It is critical for the Department to have this information in timely manner.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the Cost-Share and Technical Assistance Grant Agreement as presented by staff. Ms. Saacke Blunk seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

For the next item of business, Chairman Arnason turned the chair over to Mr. Wilson.

Redistribution of funding for approved projects funded by the Soil and Water Conservation District Dam Maintenance, Repair, and Rehabilitation Fund – Christine Watlington

The Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District (District) received approval from the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board for funding through the Soil and Water Conservation District Dam Maintenance, Repair, and Rehabilitation Fund (Fund) for the following projects:

SDR19013	SDR18023	SDR19010
SDR19012	SDR19011	SDR18019
SDR18020	SDR18016	SDR18017
SDR17017		

A total of \$191,000 has been allocated to these projects from the Fund - \$116,000 for design of the projects and \$75,000 for construction of certain projects. The District, with the concurrence of the Department, is requesting \$30,000 be transferred from the funds allocated for construction of these projects to the funds allocated for the project engineering and design. There will be a cost-savings for the District to have designs

completed for all 10 projects; having completed, final designs will also allow the District and the Department to have more definitive construction cost estimates for these projects.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved the following:

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approves the redistribution of funding for the following projects at Piedmont Soil and Water Conservation District:

SDR19013	SDR18023	SDR19010
SDR19012	SDR19011	SDR18019
SDR18020	SDR18016	SDR18017
SDR17017		

The Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approves transferring \$30,000 from the funding provided for project construction to funding providing for project engineering and designs. The total allocation of \$191,000 for all 10 projects remains the same. Dr. O'Brien seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

ABSTAIN: Arnason

The motion carried.

Chairman Arnason resumed the chair.

District Director Appointments and Recommendations – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the District Director Appointments and Recommendations. She noted that Mr. Wilson would need to abstain from the action regarding his position.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Coyner moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the following as presented by staff:

Appomattox River

Resignation of Mr. Mike Mays, of Dinwiddie County, effective 12/31/2019, elected director position (term of office expires 1/1/2020).

Halifax

Resignation of Mr. Kevin Fisher, effective 3/12/2020, at-large extension director position (term of office expires 1/1/2021).

Appointment of Ms. Rebekah Slabach, VCE Agent, Halifax County, effective 3/12/2020, to fill the unexpired at-large extension director position (term of office expires 1/1/2021).

James River

Resignation of Mr. Jerry Ford, of Prince George County, effective 5/18/2020, at-large director position (term of office expires 1/1/2023).

Appointment of Mr. Jerry Ford, of Prince George County, effective 6/3/2020, to fill the unexpired elected director term of Mr. Donald Bagshaw (term of office expires 1/1/2024).

Northern Neck

Appointment of Mr. Louis Gregory "Greg" Basye, of Northumberland County, effective 3/26/2020, to fill the unexpired at-large director term of Mr. James Minor (term of office expires 1/1/2023).

Prince William

Resignation of Ms. Paige Thacker, VCE Agent, Prince William County, effective 4/13/2020, at-large extension director position (term of office expires 1/1/2021).

Appointment of Mr. Thomas Bolles, VCE Agent, Prince William County, effective 4/13/2020, to fill the unexpired at-large extension director term of Ms. Paige Thacker (term of office expires 1/1/2021).

Tri-County/City

Appointment of Mr. Ray Sims, of Spotsylvania County, effective 3/26/2020, to fill the unexpired at-large director term of Mr. Richard Street (term of office expires 1/1/2023).

Mr. Wilson seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

The motion carried.

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Newton moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approve the following actions as presented by staff.

Holston River

Resignation of Mr. Henry Snodgrass, of Washington County, effective 2/29/2020, elected director position (term of office expires 1/1/2024).

Appointment of Mr. Adam Wilson, of Washington County, effective 3/26/2020, to fill the unexpired elected director term of Mr. Henry Snodgrass (term of office expires 1/1/2024).

Ms. Saacke Blunk seconded and the roll call vote was as follows:

Motion carries with Mr. Wilson abstaining.

AYE: Arnason, Saacke Blunk, Coyner, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien, Smith

NO: None

ABSTAIN: Wilson

The motion carried.

Recommendation for Board membership (Area 2 and Area 3) – Christine Watlington

Ms. Watlington presented the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts recommendations for Board member appointments. VASWCD recommended the following:

Area II Arthur Gray Coyner (District Director)
 P.O. Box 5
 Upperville, VA 20185

Joseph W. Thompson (District Director)

106 Burnet Way
Charlottesville, VA 22902

Area III Cindy Smith (District Director and Farmer)
9482 Golansville Road
Ruther Glen, VA 22546

Pamela Anne Mason (District Director)
Virginia Institute of Marine Science
PO Box 1346
Gloucester Point, VA 23062

BOARD ACTION

Mr. Wilson moved that the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board accept the nominations of the Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and directs staff to forward these nominations to the Secretary of the Commonwealth for consideration for appointment.

Chairman Arnason requested that the Board members nominated abstain from the vote.

Mr. Newton seconded and the roll call was as follows:

AYE: Arnason, Wilson, Saacke Blunk, Maybury, Newton, O'Brien

NO: None

ABSTAIN: Coyner, Smith

The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Arnason opened the meeting for comments from the Board.

Ms. Saacke Blunk expressed appreciation to those who made the meeting possible. She noted there were challenges in referring to documents and asked that those be noted for future meetings.

Director Cristman advised that the meeting went more smoothly than others he has attended. He reminded the Board that for in-person meetings staff provides a tabbed notebook with materials. He noted that the only changes in the documents presented at the meeting and the copies the Board received were the input of final budget numbers and updates to the references to specific budget chapters and items.

Chairman Arnason thanked Dr. Tyree for providing the Association office for the management of the meeting.

NEXT MEETING

There was no projected date for a fall meeting. Staff will advise.

The intent is to have the regular meeting in December following the Association Annual Meeting.

ADJOURN

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted.