



## **EASTERN SHORE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

### **MINUTES OF DISTRICT BOARD MEETING**

**Wednesday, May 12, 2021, 5:00 p.m.**

**USDA Service Center, 22545 Center Parkway, Accomac, VA 23301**

**ATTENDANCE:** The following Directors and Associate Directors were in attendance:

Robin Rich-Coates, Chair

Nick Thomas, Vice-Chair

Jim Evans, Director

Kyle Sturgis, Director

Ursula Deitch, Director

Sands Gayle, Director

Others present were:

Carmie Savage, District Manager

Bill Savage, Conservation Specialist

Julie Head, Education Director

Jenny Templeton, NRCS

Jaclyn Friedman, DCR CDC

Norman Pitt, Conservation Technician

**CALL TO ORDER:** Robin Rich-Coates, Chair, called to order the May 12, 2021 District Board Meeting of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District.

**MINUTES and FINANCIAL REPORTS:** Director Kyle Sturgis made a motion to approve the April 14, 2021 meeting minutes and the April 2021 financial reports as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Jim Evans, carried unanimously.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**A. ESVA Groundwater Committee Draft Minutes- April 20, 2021 meeting:** A copy of the meeting minutes were provided in the Board packets for review.

**B. VA Soil and Water Conservation Board Draft Minutes- April 21, 2021 meeting:**

A copy of the meeting minutes were provided in the Board packets for review. Carmie noted to the Board the recognition and action taken due to the impact of significantly increased lumber costs to FY20/ 21 structural practices and the process that will need to take place in adjusting those costs using FY22 VACS.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

**A. FY21 Cost Share Report:** Carmie Savage presented the following report- Obligated funds for agronomic practices carried over from FY20 to FY21 total \$9,498.00 in Ches Bay funds and \$2,501.40 in OCB funds. One WP-4 poultry project has been completed and paid. FY20 Obligated funds carried over to FY21 for animal waste BMPs now total \$1,613,104.14 in Ches Bay funds and \$230,834.87 in OCB funds. The FY21 VACS

**APPROVED:** \_\_\_\_\_

BOARD CHAIRMAN

**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_

BOARD SECRETARY

## Minutes

May 12, 2021

Allocation totals \$560,561.00 in Ches Bay funds and \$285,682.00 in OCB funds. Interest accrued through April 30, 2021 totals \$1,597.01 towards Ches Bay funds and \$267.98 towards OCB funds. The District has received repayments of Ches Bay cost share dollars for non-compliant no-till contracts totaling \$997.63. VA Soil and Water Conservation Board reallocated and additional \$552,812 in VACS Ches Bay funds and \$145,291 in VACS OCB funds to the Eastern Shore SWCD. FY20 VNRCF TA remaining funds totaling \$449,471.87 were approved by the District Board to be used towards funding shortfalls as needed. After the addition of the reallocated OCB VACS funding there is still a funding shortfall for agronomic practices on the Seaside of \$238,103.92 funded using the approved FY20 VNRCF TA funds. After reported plantings and spotchecks have been conducted, obligated funding towards agronomic requests totals \$723,024.70 in Ches Bay and \$668,189.50 in OCB. New BMPs presented to the Board for approval below total \$1,305.80 in Ches Bay VACS and \$1,155.40 in FY20 VNRCF TA funds. After those new approvals, there is a balance of \$391,637.14 in available funding in Ches Bay VACS and zero in OCB VACS. the remaining balance of the \$449,471.87 available in FY20 VNRCF TA funds is \$211,367.95 with \$204,007.71 approved March 10, 2021 obligated to a Seaside WP-4 project leaving a new balance of unobligated FY20 VNRCF TA funds of \$7,360.24. **Director Sands Gayle made a motion to approve the FY21 Cost Share Report as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Ursula Deitch, carried unanimously.**

Peanut SWCD is in need of some Ches Bay VACS funds. Since the District will not be able to allocate the remaining \$391,637.14 of Ches Bay VACS funds, the Board discussed transferring \$386,500 to other Districts that could use the funding. Jackie Friedman, CDC, has reached out to Peanut SWCD and they may be able to use a big portion of the funds if not all. **Director Jim Evans made a motion to approve the transfer of \$386,500 Ches Bay VACS funds and any associated TA to other Districts as needed. The motion, seconded by Director Kyle Sturgis, carried unanimously.**

The following new cost share requests were presented for Board approval:

Contract:	Instance:	Total Acres:	Funding Source:	Cost Share Requested:
NM-1a 20-21-0089	428576	15.2	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 30.40
	428585	66	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 132.00
	428586	31.4	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 62.80

Minutes  
May 12, 2021

	428590	43.3	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 86.60
	428593	55.3	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 110.60
NM-1a 20-21-0049	429668	27.1	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 54.20
	429681	60.3	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 120.60
	429682	72	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 144.00
	429683	15.1	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 30.20
	429684	8.4	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 16.80
NM-1a 20-21-0170	429028	22.5	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 45.00
	417422	15.7	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 31.40
NM-1a 20-21-0145	429029	13.1	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 26.20
	429112	8.8	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 17.60
	429113	11.1	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 22.20
	429114	12.3	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 24.60
	429115	3.5	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 7.00
	429116	13.9	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 27.80
	429117	27.7	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 55.40
NM-1a 20-21-0035	429742	16.2	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 32.40
	429743	4.8	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 9.60
	429747	6.5	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 13.00
	429748	2.5	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 5.00
	429755	16.9	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 33.80
	429756	22.4	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 44.80
	429737	22.2	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 44.40
	429739	6.7	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 13.40
	429740	1.9	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 3.80

Minutes  
May 12, 2021

	429741	11.4	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 22.80
	429744	14.1	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 28.20
	429745	18.8	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 37.60
	429746	1	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 2.00
	429749	13	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 26.00
	429750	6	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 12.00
	429751	6.5	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 13.00
	429752	1.8	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 3.60
	429753	54.5	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 109.00
	429754	93.9	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 187.80
	429757	60	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 120.00
NM-1a 20-21-0007	429761	30	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 120.00
	429762	53.5	VACS Ches Bay	\$ 214.00
	429759	41	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 164.00
	429760	19.9	'20 VNRCF TA	\$ 79.60
<b>Total VACS CHES BAY funds requested:</b>				<b>\$ 1,305.80</b>
<b>Total '20 VNRCF TA funds requested:</b>				<b>\$ 1,155.40</b>

**Director Nick Thomas made a motion to approve new BMPS as presented with their respective funding sources. The motion, seconded by Director Jim Evans, carried unanimously.**

The following update on the FY21 Most Effective Basin (MEB) Grant- Eastern Shore was presented:

Grant Scope: March 1, 2021- May 31, 2022- Bayside Acres only- first-come, first-served basis, no cap limit, no ranking required. Requires RMP fully developed or under development to receive cost share funds. In FY22, priority will be given to those who participated in FY21. Technical Assistance available: \$ 111,610.00 Total Cost Share funds available: \$ 865,241.00		
ESSWCD-01	WFA-1 Contract: 20-21-0171	<i>\$ (135,942.40) Complete and Paid</i>

Minutes  
May 12, 2021

ESSWCD-02	WFA-1 Contract: 20-21-0174	\$ (20,491.50)
ESSWCD-03	WFA-1 Contract: 20-21-0175	\$ (123,499.00)
<b>Obligated MEB funds as of 4/14/2021:</b>		<b>\$ 279,932.90</b>
<b>Unobligated MEB funds as of 4/14/2021:</b>		<b>\$ 585,308.10</b>

The following update on Obligated Poultry Projects was presented:

<b>Contract:</b>	<b>Instance:</b>	<b>BMP:</b>	<b>Description of Practice:</b>	<b>Estimated 75% Cost Share:</b>	<b>Funding Source:</b>	<b>Status:</b>
20-20-0199 '20Carryover	383632	WP-4	Litter Sheds	\$ 178,693.71	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Project Complete \$ 176,576.63 pd.
20-20-0170 '20Carryover	378612 379658	WP-4 WP-4C	Litter Sheds Composter	\$ 142,624.20 \$105,270.80	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Construction Phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0185 '20Carryover	379662	WP-4	Litter Sheds	\$257,724.45	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Construction Phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0206 '20Carryover	389615	WP-4	Litter Shed	\$71,124.85	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Construction Phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0175 '20Carryover	378741 378757	WP-4 WP-4C	Litter Sheds Composter	\$134,221.39 \$94,390.48	FY20 Carryover OCB (Seaside) VACS	Construction Phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0164 '20Carryover	377886	WP-4	Litter Shed	\$65,532.76	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Construction Phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0203 '20Carryover	387185 387186	WP-4 WP-4C	Litter Shed Composter	\$56,727.23 \$123,354.63	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	In the process of obtaining engineered design.
20-20-0202 '20Carryover	387178 387179	WP-4 WP-4C	Litter Shed Composter	\$56,727.23 \$123,354.63	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	In the process of obtaining engineered design.
20-20-0168	378470	WP-4	Litter Shed	\$87,069.46	FY20 Carryover	Will need to cancel- will

Minutes  
May 12, 2021

'20Carryover	379660	WP-4C	Composter	\$101,160.39	Ches Bay VACS	not meet 6/30 completion deadline
20-20-0188 '20Carryover	379750	WP-4C	Composter	\$50,000.00 cap	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Cancelled Contract
20-20-0201 '20Carryover	386895	WP-4C	Composter	\$50,000.00 cap	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Cancelled Contract
20-20-0197 '20Carryover	383163 383587	WP-4 WP-4C	Litter Shed Composter	\$85,102.25 \$71,899.58	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Cancelled Contract
20-20-0200 '20Carryover	386767	WP-4	Litter Sheds	\$158,568.00	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	Cancelled contract
20-21-0176 Current FY21	426648	WP-4	Litter Sheds	\$204,007.71	FY21 Project funded by FY20 VNRF TA (Local funds)	In the process of obtaining engineered design
20-21-0177 Current FY21	426653 426655	WP-4 WP-4C	Litter Shed Composter	\$59,346.98 \$20,527.07	FY21 Ches Bay VACS	Cancelled Contract
<b>Total Obligated FY20 Carryover VACS funds towards Poultry Projects:</b>						<b>\$ 2,013,546.04</b>
<b>Total Obligated FY20 VNRCF TA (Local Funds) towards Poultry Projects:</b>						<b>\$ 204,007.71</b>

The following FY20 Poultry projects were requested for Board approval to extend to FY22 program year (third year) due to current shortage of lumber preventing completion by June 30, 2021 deadline:

20-20-0170 '20 Carryover	378612 379658	WP-4 WP-4C	Litter Sheds Composter	\$ 142,624.20 \$105,270.80	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	construction phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0185 '20 Carryover	379662	WP-4	Litter Sheds	\$257,724.45	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	construction phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0206 '20 Carryover	389615	WP-4	Litter Shed	\$71,124.85	FY20 Carryover Ches Bay VACS	construction phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0175 '20 Carryover	378741 378757	WP-4 WP-4C	Litter Sheds Composter	\$134,221.39 \$94,390.48	FY20 Carryover OCB (Seaside) VACS	construction phase- delay on lumber
20-20-0164	377886	WP-4	Litter Shed	\$65,532.76	FY20 Carryover	construction phase- delay on

Minutes  
May 12, 2021

'20 Carryover					Ches Bay VACS	lumber
------------------	--	--	--	--	---------------	--------

**Director Ursula Deitch made a motion to approve extending FY20 contracts to a third program year (FY22) due to the current shortage of lumber preventing the projects from completing by the June 30, 2021 deadline. The motion, seconded by Director Sands Gayle, carried unanimously.**

**B. VCAP Applications Recommended to submit to VCAP Steering Committee:**

Norman Pitt presented the following applications for Board approval to submit to the VCAP Steering Committee:

- Contract 20-21-013: Living Shoreline project designed to stabilize a section of beach along Occhohannock Creek having an estimated total length of 132 +/- lineal feet and Ready Reef sill with 1500 sq. ft. of sand fill and native wetland plantings and 132 +/- linear feet of Envirolock bags. Estimated Cost: \$30,733 with VCAP cost share request capped at \$15,000.
- Contract 20-21-012: Living Shoreline project designed to stabilize a section of residential beach located along Chintoteague Bay. The lot has an estimated total project length of 150 +/- lineal feet. The design consists of 150 +/- lineal feet of living shore and oyster castle and/or sand fill. Estimated Cost: \$22,500 with VCAP cost share request capped at \$15,000.

**Director Kyle Sturgis made a motion to approve Contract 20-21-013 and 20-21-012 as presented to send to the VCAP Steering Committee. The motion, seconded by Director Jim Evans, carried unanimously.**

Norman also updated the board on a previously approved rainwater harvesting project, Contract 20-21-002, that will be resubmitted as it has been updated with VCAP Steering Committee recommendations.

**C. Operations Committee Draft Minutes- April 14, 2021:** The draft minutes from the April 14, 2021 Operations Committee Meeting were presented for Board approval. **Director Ursula Dietch made a motion to approve the Operations Committee Minutes from the April 14, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Nick Thomas, carried unanimously.**

**D. Operations Committee Meeting- Verbal Summary:** The Operations Committee met on May 12, 2021 prior to the District Board meeting. Robin Rich-Coates gave a verbal summary of the meeting to the Board.

- The committee began working on the draft FY22 Operational Budget, comparing it to the FY21 Budget and reviewed incoming funding sources for the new program year. The committee also recommended including 5% salary raises for

## Minutes

May 12, 2021

full-time employees be included in the draft FY22 budget. It will be discussed and reviewed further during the next Operations Committee meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup>.

- The committee also began working on the Attachment D- FY21 Budget Template. This template will be reviewed and discussed further during the next Operations Committee meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup>.
- During the last Operations Committee meeting, the committee asked Carmie to gather information in regards to leasing a copier vs. purchasing a copier. The current lease expires in June. Carmie brought a comparison provided by Glen Ferry, Affordable Business Solutions, back to the committee for review. Leasing the copier for 60 months at \$172.85 per month totals \$10,371.00 over the lease period. Purchasing the copier would cost \$8,723.98. The same monthly maintenance agreement would continue whether leased or purchased. The committee recommended for Board approval the purchase of the upgraded copier for \$8,723.98 from the Money Market Account designated funds for District operations keeping the monthly maintenance agreement. **Director Jim Evans made a motion to approve the purchase of the upgraded copier at \$8,723.98 from the Money Market Account designated funded, keeping the monthly maintenance agreement as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Kyle Sturgis, carried unanimously.**
- The June District Board meeting was scheduled for June 9<sup>th</sup> but has been rescheduled for June 16<sup>th</sup>. The Operations Committee will meet again at 4:00 p.m. prior to the June 16<sup>th</sup> District Board meeting.

**E. Letter from Adam Wilson, DCR Audit Subcommittee, regarding overall Audit results for those Districts just audited through June 30, 2020:** A copier of the letter was provided in the meeting packet.

**F. ESSWCD Associate Director interest- Chip Turlington:** Chip Turlington has expressed interest in serving as an Associate Director on the District Board and becoming more involved with the District. **Director Ursula Deitch made a motion to approve the appointment of Chip Turlington as an Associate Director to the District Board effective immediately. The motion, seconded by Director Nick Thomas, carried unanimously.**

## **STAFF REPORTS:**

**District Manager Report:** Carmie Savage, District Manager, included a written report in the meeting packet and it is on file in the District office. She summarized her report to the Board.

**FY21 Cost Share:**

**Agronomic Update:**



## Minutes

May 12, 2021

- All spreadsheets and tracking has been updated to reflect all passed practices after spot check verifications. Processing payments for NM-1a, NM-4, all Cover Crop as reported. Due to one private NMP planner cancelling all contracts, she has shifted all funding due to the cancellations.
- **Cancellation of NMP Contract by Ag Con LLC:** Carmie updated the Board on the cancellation of all but one NMP contract for plans written by Ag Con LLC, Ed Joyner. Ed feels he is not comfortable with signing off on the verification statement and assuming that liability. All contracts for NM-1a to be written by Ed Joyner had to be cancelled. He only said he would bill for one contract. The nmps will be written so growers will meet the requirement but they will not be paid for through VACS.
- **Whole Farm Approach Pilot Program (WFA-1):** All WFA-1 practices have been entered into Tracking and are currently up-to-date. One contract has been paid in full. Two more waiting on sidedress on corn applications before the contracts are considered complete.
- **RMP-2s:** Tracking is up-to-date to reflect approved RM-2 practices. Once the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter allocation is disbursed from DCR, Carmie will be paying out those contracts.

**Poultry:**

- **FY20 Carryover Poultry Project Updates:** The current status of all FY20 and FY21 contracts are in the Cost Share report under New Business. Five contracts that have approved designs, acquired all permitting, completed bid solicitations and pre construction meetings but are waiting on lumber due to shortage are being brought to the board for carryover to a third program year. Two additional projects are in the design stage with their engineer and unless everything else is completed and waiting for lumber, they will have to be cancelled by June 30. One project still has not moved forward and will need to be added to the list of cancellations.
- The increase in lumber costs due to the current lumber shortage have impacted projects across the state and has been recognized by the VA Soil & Water Conservation Board as a n issue. On April 21, 2021, the Board approved adjusting the estimated costs of FY20 and FY21 projects that have not been completed to reflect the increases based on the FY22 approved average cost list. The District will have to have an approved average cost list by June 30<sup>th</sup> for FY22. Typically, we have adopted NRCS' current average cost list but Carmie is in the processing of working with other Districts in central VA to gather input on the cost lists they have adopted with hopes they will share their information for our review and consideration. Jenny Templeton and Carmie will compare what they have to the most current NRCS average cost list along with costs estimates we have from contractors and see which realistically compares to the costs we are seeing here. Once the average cost list selected has been

## Minutes

May 12, 2021

presented to the TRC at the June 15<sup>th</sup> meeting and then to the Board for approval on June 16<sup>th</sup>, it will be sent in to DCR along with the secondary considerations the TRC recommends and the Board adopts. Then the current contracts that are waiting on lumber can be readjusted to reflect new estimates derived from using the newly approved list. The increase in cost share will then be brought to the Board for approval and will need to be funded using the FY22 VACS allocation for the new program year. Tax Credits are also be updating from a max of \$17,500 to \$25,000 to help with the increase in out-of-pocket expenses. Districts have been informed not to issue any until the new law that goes into effect July 1<sup>st</sup>. It is retroactive to January 1, 2021. Carmie has completed one contract that will need to be adjusted when the new rate goes into effect.

**Operations Committee:** Prepared meeting minutes from the last Operations Committee meeting on 4/14 that was presented for approval under New Business. Carmie has been working on the FY22 Budget, FY23 Attachment D, and gathering information for the copier lease vs. purchase to present to the Operations Committee at the 5/12 meeting. Meeting agendas have been emailed to committee members.

**District Audit:** The District's Exit Audit was conducted on 3/9/21 with auditing firm, Robin Rich-Coates, Jaclyn Friedman, DCR for the period of July 1, 2018- June 30, 2020 (FY19 & FY20). Result: No findings. A copy of the final audited financial report from the auditors was presented to the Board during the Board meeting for review.

**Endowment Committee:** Due to the lack of applications for the virtual VA Academy of Natural Resources Camp, the final Ednwoman Committee meeting for FY21 has been cancelled.

**ESVA Cover Crop Workshop:** District partnered with Extension on 4/20 and held a Cover Crop Workshop at the Painter AREC. Carmie presented updates and announced the FY22 sign-up period. District funded the breakfast from the "Partner Workshop" line item in the Operational budget.

**Local Working Group:** Have worked with Jenny Templeton to compile questionnaire to gather input on how well USDA NRCS programs address natural resource concerns. Carmie emailed it out to the Local Working Group to also gather their input on 4/15 and then Jenny has compiled all responses. A copy is attached to her NRCS report and has been mailed out to the Local Working Group.

**Arbor Day:** On Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, Julie, Stan Osmolenski- Kiptopeke State Park, and Carmie hosted the Northampton event at the Eastville Courthouse Green. They gave away many seedlings and potted plants from both Hortco and Snyder Nursery. It was one of the busiest Arbor Day events to date. ANEC hosted the

## Minutes

May 12, 2021

Accomack site at the Eastern Shore Community College and reported the same record attendance. ANEC purchased the all of the seedlings and potted plants from Hortco using their Tree Line Grant and the District purchased potted plants from Snyder Nursery using Arbor Day budgeted funds. VA Department of Forestry also partnered in the events but was unable to attend due to fire calls that morning.

**Trainings/ Virtual Meetings:**

- 4/20: Attended Cover Crop Workshop- Painter AREC
- 4/21: Participated in VA Soil & Water Conservation Board virtual meeting
- 5/4: Participated in the Admin/Ops Attachment D Template Training virtually

**Conservation Specialist Report:** Bill Savage, Conservation Specialist, included a written report in the meeting packet and it is on file in the District office. He summarized his report to the Board.

**BMP - Cost Share:**

- Ongoing: FY21 No-Till pre-qualification spot checks in Accomack County.
- Ongoing: Assisting Carmie in Tracking as needed.

**VCAP Site Visits & Inspections:**

- On April 29<sup>th</sup> Norman Pitt, Aaron Wendt from SEAS and Bill met with a landowner and visited two potential Living Shoreline projects. They also conducted the 1<sup>st</sup> spot check on Living Shoreline Contract: 20-20-04.
- On May 4<sup>th</sup> Bill conducted the 1<sup>st</sup> spot check on Living Shoreline Contract: 20-20-02.

**Cover Crop Workshop – April 20<sup>th</sup> at the AREC:**

- Carmie gave an update on the VACS program to date.
- A field tour was provided to compare different cover crops and methods of kill down.
- One practice of note was to roll the cover crop in advance of the sprayer to maximize effectiveness of the chemical.

**Arbor Day Preparations – April 29th:**

- Bill assisted Carmie to sort and load trees at the Dept. of Forestry.
- He assisted Julie to pick up additional plants and shrubs from Snyder's Nursery in Nassawadox and deliver them to Eastville for the event.

**VESLT Reports:**

- One monitoring report was received this month.

**Vehicle Maintenance:**

## Minutes

May 12, 2021

- The District Van was taken to Eastern Shore Auto Body on April 26<sup>th</sup> to replace the old radio that had quit working.

**Ag Stewardship:** On May 13<sup>th</sup>, Bill will be meeting with Darryl Marshall, VDACS, and the landowner to visit a founded complaint to see what has been done to the site to address the issues found.

**Training:**

- Bill will be attending the (virtual) Economic Development Plan Update on May 13th. prior to the Ag Stewardship meeting.

**Conservation Technician Report:** Norman Pitt, Conservation Technician, included a written report in the meeting packet and it is on file in the District office. He summarized his report to the Board.

**Poultry:**

- Called, received calls and conducting site visits/survey assistance with several poultry producers, concerning contractors and site engineering for building the litter sheds.

**VCAP:**

- On 04/20 - 04/29, Conducted three V-Cap site visits of potential living shoreline projects in order to determine the site rating and their eligibility to be accepted into the program as potential projects, if funding is available. On 04/29, two site visits and 1 annual inspection were conducted. In attendance was Aaron Wendt, Environmental Specialist, DCR Shoreline Erosion Advisory Service (SEAS), Bill Savage, and myself. The site visits were conducted to give Mr. Wendt an opportunity to meet staff, and understand the assistance we need in moving forward VCAP program in a field setting.
- Prepared and reviewed several VCAP applications to be the submitted to the Board for approval to move forward with submitting to the VCAP steering committee.
- Currently Norman is still assisting in administrating of V-Cap program, meeting potential clients and giving technical advice concerning BMPs, programs rules, and regulations.

**ESVA Ground Water Committee VIRTUAL Meeting:** :The following is a summary of the meeting I attended virtually on April 20, 2021:

- There was no public comment period
- Committee Chairman Paul Muhly spoke about the need to request Accomack County to increase the board funding. The present funding is \$61,000.00, the board agreed. Mr. Grayson Chessser added that it is too late to make the request at this time seeing that budget has already been voted

Minutes  
May 12, 2021

on and approved. However, he suggested that members of the board contact their local BOS official for their district.

- Mr. McMillan had two Presentations for the Board, the first was entitled “Groundwater Recharge.” The presentation was based on the old data and demonstrated how the Eastern Shore of Virginia groundwater is believed to be recharge according the existing data. The question was how that no-till vs plowing affects the recharging of the aquifer. The information will be made available once the new data collection is finished.
- Mr. McMillan’s second presentation was entitled “Maximizing Your Impact.” The presentation was based on old local recorded data and DEQ records. The data included the location and well construction information of all existing wells, the DEQ data dates back to 1983. The data will used to determine the amount of groundwater withdrawal by a particular well or a group of wells in particular areas. It is unclear if this will conducted by using an area zip code or by watersheds.
- During the committee comment period, several members voiced their concerns, concerning the lack of use of the Columbia Aquifer:
  - The first being Mr. John Coker, his concern was that the general public and local drillers aren’t informed that the water quality in Columbia Aquifer ( Surficial Aquifer) is good enough for human consumption and other vital used. In addition, suggested that the committee find better ways to inform the public.
  - The second being Mr. Grayson Chesser who voiced his concern on the need for more monitoring of groundwater and suggested that the committee contact the Board of Supervisor and DEQ asking for more funding for the installing of additional monitoring wells and data collecting.

**Education Director Report:** Julie Head, Education Director, included a written report in the meeting packet and it is on file in the District office. She summarized her report to the Board.

#### **Education Outreach**

- YMCA program on 5/7 – fish printing on dish towels for Mother’s Day
- Cheriton Teen Youth Group – They are planting trees as a community service project at Cheriton Town Park. Julie met with them on 4/29 to discuss the basics beyond how to select the right trees for the right spot and how to care for them. She met with them again on 5/6 to plant the seedlings and reinforce the need for after care.
- Presented right tree, right place to home school group on 4/28 in preparation for Arbor Day.
- Accomack Elementary School (Vinnie) – butterfly life cycle

#### **Environmental Literacy Plan Template**

- First meeting was held on 4/22 to identify grades where we already have programming. Next step is to finish identifying the gaps and try to come up with programs for those grades.

Minutes  
May 12, 2021

### **Farm Camp for Kids at the Barrier Islands Center, July 22-23, 2021**

- Partnering with 4-H and the Barrier Islands to do a two day ag camp. Ages 1<sup>st</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade. We will be dyeing wool and weaving, making bread, making butter and ice cream, seeing how a cow is milked, making corn husk dolls, etc.....

### **Visitor Display at Kiptopeke State Park**

- Providing technical/educational assistance on a soils display at their new visitor's center. Our logo will be included as part of the display. Since there were no scholarship applicants, funds from the Endowment were redirected to this effort.

### **Arbor Day**

- Julie, Carmie and Ranger Stan worked the Arbor Day Event at the Eastville Courthouse Green on May 1<sup>st</sup> and it was a big success. Julie and Bill gathered plants from Snyder Nursery the day before to add to the plant give-aways provided by ANEC.

### **Other.**

- Completing the documentation to renew my teaching credential. Julie does not plan on leaving but it is a BIG selling point when she works with teachers and administrators.

### **Upcoming**

- 5/11 – VACDE board meeting
- 5/15 – NCPS family day
- 5/22 – rain barrels - rescheduled

## **PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:**

**Department of Conservation & Recreation Update:** Jaclyn Friedman, DCR CDC, included a written report in the meeting packet and it is on file in the District office. She summarized her report to the Board.

### **Administrative and Operational Items:**

- **FY21 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Disbursement letters** sent May 7, 2021
- **Attachment D – FY23 Budget Template** is due from each district no later than July 15 - Budget Template- Att D could affect future allocations as the VSWCB committed to reviewing the Base TA allocation every two years.
- **FY22 Budget Preparations-** Finance Committee meetings are a perfect venue to review the *Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations* (7/20 version) if that requirement has not been completed. FY22 budgets need to be SWCD board approved by 6/30.
- **Audits:** Those district that were audited have received individual reports. A general management letter was sent 4/21/21 to all districts with two items

Minutes

May 12, 2021

identified as recurring issues. Please review the guidance on the following issues as included in the *Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations*:

1. The unnecessary paying of sales tax still requires attention
2. The proper presentation of treasurer's reports at District board meetings

**DCR Certified Conservation Planner Re-certification Extension:** On 4/21/21 the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board approved a one-time extension for conservation planners whose certificates will expire in 2021.

**Ag Cost Share:**

**Unprecedented VACS Allocations proposed for FY22- over \$73.77 M and \$9.75 M of TA**

- **Encourage Completion of Projects:** Encourage BMP participants to complete their projects in time for payment prior to June 30 and to reduce carry over. See pages II-31-33 in the 20 VACS manual for practices eligible to be carried over from one program year to the next and the new carryover process. **Carryovers** need SWCD Board approval by 6/30.
- **DATA QA/QC REPORTS:** as you work through the final quarter of the year, be sure to run the QA/QC reports in Logi.
- **SECONDARY CONSIDERATIONS FOR PY22:** Must be submitted and approved by DCR, David Bryan and by your District board before any FY22 contracts are approved. New for FY22, please also submit your average cost list to DCR in case a one-time, mid-year change in average cost list occurs (refer to information below).
- **Approval of Process to Address Increase in Materials VSWCB**  
**Motion APPROVED 4/21/21**

In response to the unanticipated and significant increase in the cost of certain materials during FY21, starting in FY22 the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board authorizes SWCDs to provide additional cost-share funding to producers to offset the increased cost of materials by allowing for a one-time, mid-year average cost list update under the following conditions:

1. Only contracts from FY2020 and FY2021 that are not yet paid and are placed into Carryover status going into FY2022 are eligible;
2. The carryover contracts must be for the following types of practices:
  - a. SL-6N and SL-6W practices;
  - b. WP-2N and WP-2W practices;
  - c. WP-4, WP-4B, WP-4C, WP-4F, WP-4FP, WP-4LC, WP-4LL and WP-4SF practices; and
  - d. SL-7 practice.
3. Upon the District's adoption of a new, increased average cost list for FY22, the District will be eligible to utilize the new FY2022 average cost list to make revised cost estimates (i.e. Estimated Instance Cost and Estimated Cost Share Payments) for the impacted carryover FY20 and FY21 contracts.
5. The District is not authorized to provide additional FY21 VACS Program funds to contracts that exceed the Estimated Instance Cost developed in accordance with the District's approved FY2021 average cost list.

## Minutes

May 12, 2021

6. All FY21 VACS Program funds that remain unobligated at the end of the fiscal year shall be returned to the Department, along with the proportional amount of technical assistance funds.

- **TRANSFER of PY21 CB VACS:** Now is the time to assess if you want to transfer a portion of unobligated VACS allocation to another District or request a transfer in. 90% of your allocation **MUST BE** obligated by 6/30 or all unobligated cost share and proportional TA funds must be returned to DCR. Contact your CDC if interested.
- **NEW AG TAX CREDITS:** The cap for the 25% agricultural tax credit will be raised from \$17,500 to \$25,000. An enhanced tax credit for BMPs installed on land where there is a certified RMP will be eligible for a 50% tax credit up to a \$50,000 cap. These tax credits will be based upon true out-of-pocket costs **AFTER** cost-share and should be a huge help in addressing the challenges of market-based price increases that many Districts are dealing with. Please note that once the law goes into effect on July 1st, it will be retroactive to January 1, 2021 and thus will impact many current VACS contracts including some that are already complete. DCR has requested that **NO** further Tax credits be issued until after July 1, 2021. DCR will share further details about the changes at the upcoming June VACS Update sessions on June 2nd and 8th and AgBMP Tracking-related impacts at the July Tracking Updates on July 13th and 22nd.

#### 1) FY21 GRANT AGREEMENT DELIVERABLES:

- Review Annual Plan of Work at least twice annually and document in board meeting minutes. Has your SWCD completed your second review and recorded it in the board meeting minutes.
- Review Long-term plan/strategic plan at least annually during a scheduled meeting of the District Board and documented in board meeting minutes. Document in your board meeting minutes. Desktop Procedures for District Fiscal Operations annually by the District Board or Finance Committee and documented in official minutes.
- Employee Evaluations: Set dates for year-end employee evaluations

#### 2) UPCOMING TRAINING AND IMPORTANT DATES:

- **May 4:** Admin/Ops Topic: **Attachment D Budget Template** 1:00PM-2:00PM  
This session will cover admin/ops topics including a review of the Attachment D budget template process required of your local SWCD board by July 15. Register for the zoom meeting at <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZEkc-hqjwgHtN-Y1jFyHpzB2glWaXJ19zu>
- **May 20:** VA Soil and Water Conservation Board 10:00 AM-1:00 PM Join meeting from your computer <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/597571061> or dial on your phone 1-(571) 317-3112 Access Code: 597-571-061
- **June 2:** 2022 VACS Updates webinar 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm (Ag SWCD staff **MUST** attend one: 2<sup>nd</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> )
- **June 8:** 2022 VACS Updates webinar 9:00 am – Noon (Ag SWCD staff **MUST** attend one: 2<sup>nd</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> )



## Minutes

May 12, 2021

- **June 30:** Secondary Considerations due to DCR, David Bryan
- **Conservation Selling Skills:** required course for DCR Conservation Planner Certification. Only offered every other year. Must participate in all 3 parts to meet the requirement of DCR CPC. More details and registration coming
  - Tuesday, July 6, 2021 – 9AM-11AM – Conservation Selling Skills Part I
  - Thursday, July 8, 2021 – 9AM-11AM – Conservation Selling Skills Part II
  - Tuesday, July 13, 2021 – 9AM-11AM – Conservation Selling Skills Part III
- **July 13:** VACS Tracking Program Updates webinar 9am-Noon (Ag SWCD staff to attend one: 13<sup>th</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup>)
- **July 22:** VACS Tracking Program Updates webinar 1:00-4:00 pm (Ag SWCD staff to attend one: 13<sup>th</sup> or 22<sup>nd</sup>)

**NRCS District Conservationist:** Jenny Templeton, NRCS Acting District Conservationist, included a written report in the meeting packet and it is on file in the District office. She summarized her report to the Board.

**Programs:**

The following EQIP applications were approved for funding:

- Black Duck Program: 2
- Organic/ Hoop House:1
- Poultry: 1
- Livestock: 1

**CSP:** CSP application deadline was 4/30/21. Ranking deadline will be mid-June.

**Local Working Group:** The responses from the Local Working Group have been compiled with additions Jenny added that she had heard from farmers. She attached a copy of the compiled responses to her report. She will submit them to the State Office by the deadline.

**Staffing:**

- Acting DC: Jenny Templeton
  - State is actively hiring full-time DC position
- Soil Conservationist: accepted position, awaiting onboarding. Jenny noted she feels he will be the ground running.
- Intern: Kelly Crum: starts 5/24/21. Jenny asked to keep her in mind as she wants her to get the full experience the Shore has to offer.

**USDA Operational COVID Restrictions:** NRCS is now able to attend/ present at small gatherings

- Customer engagement visits to small, local outdoor events with less than 50 participants, such as farmer's markets or trade group events, are authorized. Overnight travel is not authorized. Masks must be worn, and physical distancing must be maintained while attending these events.

**The April 14, 2021 Board meeting was adjourned.**

Minutes

May 12, 2021

*Meeting minutes were recorded by Carmie M. Savage*