



EASTERN SHORE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES OF DISTRICT BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, September 21, 2022, 5:00 p.m.
USDA Service Center, 22545 Center Parkway, Accomac, VA 23301

ATTENDANCE:

The following Board members, Staff and Partners were in attendance:

Nick Thomas- Chair, Ursula Deitch- Director, Jim Evans- Director, Sands Gayle- Director, Sally Williams- Director, Carmie Savage- District Manager, Bill Savage- Conservation Specialist, Palmer Smith- Conservation Technician, Julie Head- Education Director, Ben Young- NRCS Soils Conservationist, and Olivia Leatherwood- DCR.

The following Board Members and Staff were unable to attend:

Kyle Sturgis- Director, Rick Hall- Associate Director, Edwin Long- Associate Director, Hunter Blake- Associate Director, Robbie Lewis- Associate Director, Matt Hickman- Associate Director, Chip Turlington- Associate Director and Bill Shockley- Associate Director

CALL TO ORDER: Nick Thomas- Chair, called to order the September 21, 2022 District Board Meeting of the Eastern Shore Soil and Water Conservation District.

MINUTES and FINANCIAL REPORTS: Director Ursula Deitch made a motion to approve the August 17, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Sally Williams, carried unanimously. Director Ursula Deitch made a motion to approve the August financial reports as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Jim Evans, carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. n/a

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Youth Conservation Camp: The District sponsored two campers to Youth Conservation Camp at VA Tech under the "Fred Holland Memorial Youth Conservation Camp Sponsorship". The two campers, Olivia Holland and Harley McNure, created a Powerpoint presentation of their experience in which Olivia presented to the Board. Chair Nick Thomas presented a \$75 check for each to go towards their traveling expenses.

B. FY23 Cost Share Report- Carmie Savage: One WP-4 Poultry project was completed and paid since the August Board meeting leaving a balance of obligated '20 VACS funds for Poultry projects of \$245,044.12 in Ches Bay and \$0 in OCB along with a remaining

APPROVED: _____ **SIGNED:** _____
BOARD CHAIRMAN BOARD SECRETARY

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balance of \$168,847.83 in obligated FY22 Ches Bay Transfer funds. The FY23 VACS allocation totals \$1,945,741.00 in Ches Bay VACS and \$1,051,251.00 in OCB VACS. Interest earned through August 31 totals \$145.37 in Ches Bay leaving a new balance of \$1,945,886.37 in Ches Bay VACS. FY23 Cost Share Signup from July 15 – August 17 resulted in the largest cost share signup to date totaling over 4.7 million in requests. Carmie presented the ranked Ches Bay VACS cost share requests totaling \$313,148.75 and the ranked OCB VACS cost share requests totaling \$341,591.60 for approval. **Director Sands Gayle made a motion to approve the FY23 VACS Cost Share requests as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Ursula Deitch, carried unanimously.** Carmie presented the FY23 WFA Cost Share requests totaling \$ 4,101,457.05 for approval. **Director Ursula Deitch made a motion to approve the FY23 WFA Cost Share requests as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Jim Evans, carried unanimously.** Carmie explained that the WFA requests are to be funded by the FY23 VACS allocation and any additional funds needed are guaranteed by DCR. After the approvals of the Ches Bay and OCB VACS requests there is a balance of unallocated VACS totaling \$ 1,632,737.62 in Ches Bay VACS and \$ 709,659.40 in OCB VACS. **Director Jim Evans made a motion to approve the transfer of unallocated VACS funds to WFA as needed. The motion, seconded by Director Sally Williams, carried unanimously.** Carmie also noted that the requests will reduce once actual plantings are reported. **Director Sands Gayle made a motion to approve the FY23 Costs Share report as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Sally Williams, carried unanimously.**

C. FY23 VCAP Report- Bill Savage: There are currently three VCAP living shore line potential projects that Bill and Palmer conducted site visits with SEAS on 8/23. All three of those are moving forward. Another potential living shore line project was previously inspected by SEAS on June 1st. Bill and Palmer conducted a site visit on 8/26 and found that the project would not qualify for VCAP due to the excessive fetch. There are three more potential living shoreline projects that Bill and Palmer have initial site visits scheduled for 9/28. **Director Sally Williams made a motion to approve the FY23 VCAP Report as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Ursula Deitch, carried unanimously.**

D. FY23 Office Rent Agreement: The signed rental agreement for the District office space for the period of September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2023 for an annual total of \$15,000 was presented to the Board for approval. **Director Ursula Deitch made a motion to approve the FY23 Office Rent Agreement as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Sally Williams, carried unanimously.**

E. Eastern Shore SWCD Awards Banquet/ Award Nominees: The District's Awards Banquet is scheduled for Wednesday October 26th at 6:00 p.m. in the Great Hall at ESCC. A slate of award nominees was presented to the Board for approval. Due to a potential conflict of interest, Jim Evans exited the meeting. The award nominees were presented as follows:

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- a. Clean Water Farm Award: Jim Evans
- b. Conservation Farmer Award: Mark Newman
- c. Conservation Wildlife Award: David Rew (nominated by NRCS)
- d. Conservation Forestry Award: Bill Dougherty (nominated by VDOF)
- e. Conservation Educator Award: Phil Goetkin
- f. Conservation Stewardship Award: John Malbon (VCAP)

Director Ursula Deitch made a motion to approve the slate of award nominees as presented. The motion, seconded by Director Sally Williams, carried unanimously.

CORRESPONDENCE AND PRESS:

A. n/a

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 presented her report to the Board.

FY 2023 Cost Share:

- **Agronomic:** DATA ENTRY, DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY , DATA ENTRY Over 4.6 million dollars worth of data entry!!!! Cost Share requests and details were presented during New Business.
- **Poultry Update:** Updates on practices were given during the FY23 Cost Share Report. One more poultry project completed and paid. Three more underway.

Accounting: Daily accounting procedures and payroll ongoing.

Local Funding FY23 Allocations: Requested the first half allocation from Northampton County (\$5,449.00). The District's funding on from Accomack County will not be released until the audit has been conducted. They require an annual audit and DCR requires every other year. The District will be audited this fall.

Office Rental Agreement: Drafted new rental agreement for September 1, 2022 - August 31, 2023 found under New Business.

District Website: Updating the District's website to keep it up-to-date as time allows.

Webinars/ Conference Calls:

- 8/18/22- Northampton County New Teacher Breakfast at Shore Breeze Farms
- 9/20-21/22- Attended the Farm Field Days in Accomack and Northampton Counties
- 9/30/22- Plan to participate in a virtual Attachment E training

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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 presented his report to the Board.

BMP - Cost Share:

- Completed: FY 23 Cost share sign up in tracking.
- Mailed seed samples for germination tests, as requested.

Groundwater Committee Meeting:

- Bill was unable to attend the 7/20 meeting do to the Accomack Farm Tour event.
- The next scheduled meeting is 10/18.

VESLT Reports:

- None this month

VCAP: Explained in detail in the VCAP monthly report under New Business.

Events:

- Delivered the Soils Trailer to the NCPS New Teacher Breakfast event at Shore Breeze Farms on 8/18
- Delivered and set up the Soils trailer to Kiptopeke Elementary for an open house event on 9/1 and picked it up on 9/2.
- Attended the Accomack & Northampton Farm tours on September 20th and 21st

Conservation Technician Report: Palmer Smith, Conservation Technician, included a written report in the meeting packet and it is on file in the District office. She presented her report to the Board.

BMP - Cost Share:

- Finished putting cost share sign-ups in tracking program

Trainings and meetings:

- 8/25/22- Power User training in tracking

VCAP:

- 8/23/22- 3 site visits: Machipongo, Wise Point, & Onancock
- 8/26/22- Crystal Beach site visit

Misc.:

- 8/18/22- NCPS New teacher breakfast at Shore Breeze
- 9/20 & /21- Northampton & Accomack County Farm Tours

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 presented her report to the Board.

VSU Mobile Education Unit – Working with VSU to have their mobile classroom visit the shore on October 18 and 19. We are also going to have an opportunity to have farmers

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visit. A new grant deliverable was included in Fiscal Year 2023 that requires us to do an outreach to underserved agricultural groups. This will meet that requirement once the required advertising is done.

New Roots Youth Garden – serving on the programming committee to help determine what lessons will be taught to kids.

4th Grade – Accawmacke Elementary – working with the 4th grade teacher at AES to put together some hands on lessons utilizing resources such as Project Learning Tree, Project Wild, Project Wet, Ag In The Classroom, and Access Nature. These lessons will pretty much be their science instruction for the year.

Northampton High School – working with their new Environmental Science teacher to help her develop hands-on programming specific to the shore.

Master Naturalist Training – Julie is participating this fall. It is 10 weeks on Thursdays and focuses specifically on resources and issues of the Eastern Shore.

Upcoming Dates

- a. 9/16 – Metompkin Elementary School Back to School STEM night
- b. 9/19 – Area VI Envirothon Meeting
- c. 9/20 – Accomack Farm Tour
- d. 9/21 – Northampton Farm Tour
- e. 9/24 – Otter Fest – Accawmacke Elementary
- f. 9/30 – VACDE Board Meeting
- g. 10/7 – AES – 4th Grade – Amanda Ellis – soil painting
- h. 10/8 – Eastern Shore Ag Fair
- i. 10/11 – Homeschool Programming – camouflage
- j. 10/25 – 10/26 – VSU Mobile Classroom

PARTNER AGENCY REPORTS:

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

ADMINISTRATION & OPERATIONS

Annual Report: due to DCR by September 30th

Dedicated Reserves: Remember board action is necessary to dedicate, for specific purposes, any amount above twelve months of routine operating funds (undesignated reserve funds).

Attachment E Training: Blair Gordon will be conducting a basic Attachment E training on September 30th at 10:00 am. The session will be recorded for those who cannot attend. This course may be a good refresher for veteran staff.

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- **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Training for Elected Directors:** Please remember it is time to retake FOIA training for most elected Directors. Training is due two years after the last time you completed it. Please be advised DCR/CDCs do not keep track of FOIA training for elected directors. The training is available online at the FOIA Council website (be sure it's for Locally Elected Officials). The FOIA Council is also hosting several live webinar FOIA trainings, and attendance at the live virtual training sessions will be tracked with the virtual presentation software so the FOIA Council can provide a completion certificate for those attending the virtual training sessions. The link to register: <https://event.webinarjam.com/register/16/9p2qmhp>

- o Local Elected Officials Virtual Training Webinars: September 13 @ 2:00 pm, October 12 @ 10:00 am

- **SWCD Audits:** Robinson, Farmer, & Cox will be contacting SWCDs soon to schedule Oct/Nov audits. SWCDs to be audited: Appomattox River, Chowan Basin, Eastern Shore, Virginia Dare

- **Quarterly Reports due Monday, October 17:** Att. E, Balance Sheet, and P&L. Please use the "official" excel version of attachment E throughout the course of the year.

- **Agricultural Stewardship Act (ASA) District Policy/Point of Contact:** Please be sure to review your District's policy for handling ASA complaints. If you have changes to your existing ASA policy, complete the form and return it to Darrell Marshall. If there are no changes to the point of contact or to the policy, an email to Darrell is sufficient. If your District would like training for new and existing staff or directors, let ASA staff know.

AG COST SHARE

- **Transfer of FY23 Funds to Carryover Practices:** need to be District Board approved by September 30. VSWCB authorized Districts to provide additional cost-share funding to offset the increased cost of materials under certain conditions using District Board approved FY23 Average Cost List. Only contracts not yet paid and approved for Carryover status going into FY2023 are eligible; only the following practices are eligible: SL-6N, SL-6W, WP-2N, WP2W; WP-4, WP-4B, WP-4C, WP-4F, WP-4FP, WP-4LC, WP-4LL, WP-4SF and SL-7.

- o Please submit a spreadsheet of any approved transfers to me

- o Contracts where District is paying over the cap or if District is paying higher than the automatically calculated estimated cost-share payment should be sent to Jen Edwards

- **Clean Water Farm Award Nominations:** are due October 1st . Each district may give one local award per jurisdiction. For local awards, please send me the name of the individual/entity receiving the award (exactly as it should appear on the certificate). Nominations for the Chowan River Basin and Coastal Basin are due to me on or before 10/1/22.

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- **CY22 Random Verifications:** Districts have been contacted to schedule random verifications.
- **End of Lifespan Verifications:** Bay Districts will be reimbursed for CY22 EOL Verifications. EOL BMPs verified by November 30 will be reimbursed \$200 per verification. EOL BMPs are those BMPs under contract whose lifespan expires on 12/31/22 and unless field verified will fall out of the Bay model. An additional incentive of \$50 each will be added for verifying EOL BMPs that fall out of lifespan in 2023 and 2024 if completed by the November 30 deadline.

DATES TO REMEMBER

September

- **Sept 2** – At Large Director forms due to DCR
- **Sept 9** – Return of Funds due to DCR
- **Sept 15** – VASWCD Quarterly Meeting, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, Drury Hotel, Glen Allen, VA
- **Sept 26** – VSWCB Audit Subcommittee Meeting, 9:00 am, VDOF Charlottesville; VSWCB Meeting 10:30 am, VDOF Charlottesville
- **Sept 29** – VA Ag BMP & Cost Share Program course, 9:00 am
- **Sept 30** – Basic Attachment E Training, 10:00-11:00 am, Offered by Blair Gordon, Zoom link to follow
- **Sept 30** – Annual Report due to DCR October
- **Oct 1** – Clean Water Farm Award Nominations due to DCR
- **Oct 5-6** – DCR Conservation Planner Certification final course in Orange, register directly with Carl Thiel-Goin
- **Oct 17** – 1 st Quarter Reports Due
- **Oct 18** – Full TAC, DOF, Charlottesville
- **Oct 18-19** – VA Rare, Threatened & Endangered Species Protection & Cultural & Historic Resources Protection webinars; 1.5 days, more info to come (required CPC course) November
- **Nov 30** – CY22 End of Lifespan Verifications completion date December
- **Dec 4-6** – VASWCD Annual Meeting, Hotel Roanoke
- **Dec 7** – VSWCB Meeting, Hotel Roanoke

Acomack Field Office NRCS Report: Jenny Templeton, NRCS District Conservationist, included a written report in the meeting packet and it is on file in the District office. Ben Young, NRCS Soil Conservationist, presented it to the Board

Program Updates/Deadlines:

FY23 EQIP/CSP/ACEP application deadline: November 4, 2022

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• **FY22 programs:**

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)

Obligated:

Poultry: 3 (Heavy Use Area Protection—concrete pads)

Organic: 1 (High tunnel)

Black Duck: 1 (shallow water impoundment)

Preapproved:

Black Duck: 1 (shallow water impoundment)

Terrestrial Habitat: 3 (pollinator habitat planting)

Cancellations:

Black Duck: 2 (shallow water impoundments)

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

Preapproved:

Forestry: 1 (Longleaf pine planting)

Eligible renewals for FY2023:

Cropland: 2

Forestry: 1

Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP)

Ongoing restoration work on 1 WRE (Wetland Reserve Easement) in Northampton County

Wetland Easements annual monitoring completed

State Conservationist to visit Accomac Field Office:

- Monday, Sept 19
- Meet partners (District board and staff, Extension, VESLT, DU) – lunch at office
- Morning & afternoon field visits to showcase conservation projects
 - o Chincoteague NWR
 - o Eastern Shore AREC
 - o Blair CRP pollinator habitat planting

Ben thanked those that attended.

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Upcoming Training Opportunities in the Area (JEDs, Webinars, Field Days):

- Statewide in-field soil health Dig & Demo trainings
- Cultural Diversity Day Oct 20, 2022
 - o Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders: Building Legacies Through Agriculture, Education, and Leadership – Online—Microsoft Teams
- Conservation Planner Part II
 - o Online—Microsoft Teams: 9/25 & 9/27
 - o In-field: Thurs, Nov 3

VA NRCS Operational/Personnel Updates:

- COVID operation status
 - o No masks are required, but employees, customers and visitors are welcome to continue wearing a mask if they choose.
 - o Service Centers may eliminate the requirement for customers to have an appointment to visit and unlock main doors.

- Jenny will be acting Area Resource Conservationist for Area IV beginning 4/11/2022 until position is filled. Ben will be acting Accomac DC during this time. ARC has been hired; start date Sept 26.

VA Cooperative Extension: Ursula Deitch, Northampton County Extension Agent gave a verbal report to the Board.

Farm Tour Days:

Both Farm Tour Days in Northampton and Accomack Counties were successful.

Eastern Shore Agricultural Fair:

Now working on the Eastern Shore Agricultural Fair: Saturday, October 8th, 2022 from 10am -2pm to be held at the Old Machipongo Middle School in Machipongo, VA

The September 21, 2022 Board meeting was adjourned.

Meeting minutes were recorded by Carmie M. Savage

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