

Minutes

Watauga Soil & Water Conservation District

971 West King Street, Boone NC

July 22, 2015 Meeting # 1

Present

Denny Norris- Chair

Angela Gragg –Vice Chair

Rob Hunt

David Tucker- NRCS

Al Childers

Becky Wallace- NRCS

Rob Baldwin- Area Coordinator

Brian Chatham is on approved leave and Janie Poe had a death in her family and had to take the day off for the funeral.

Agenda- Angela Gragg requested adding 3 contracts that were not approved in the previous minutes. Al Zimmerman, Billy Kennedy and Holly Whitesides

Al Childers made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Angela Gragg seconded; all were in favor

Angela Gragg made a motion to approve the contract for Billy Kennedy contract # 95-2015-008 in the amount of \$7,541.00. Rob Hunt seconded it; all were in favor

Angela Gragg made a motion to approve the contract for Al Zimmerman contract # 95-2015-006 in the amount of \$5,716.00. Rob Hunt seconded; all were in favor.

Al Childers made a motion to approve contract for Holly Whitesides contract # 95-2015-801. Note that the well for this contract is already installed. Contract is being approved after the fact. Rob Hunt seconded; all were in favor.

Al Childers recommended we take all applications this will be helpful back up if someone complains or if extra funds become available.

The Board discussed implementing batching periods for ranking and presenting applications to them at the next monthly meeting after the last batching period.

Angela Gragg made a motion to adopt a batching dates of August 15th, October 15th, and January 15th and include David Tuckers recommendation of after the 3rd batching period, all remaining applications will be ranked and presented to the Board until all money is spent. Rob Hunt seconded; all were in favor

Brian Chatham visits cattlemen, tree growers, etc meetings to promote the programs. Angela Gragg also wants Brian to host informal meetings in areas of the county that are underserved and/or one on one meeting with the farmers.

District Report- Angela Gragg presented the report for Brian Chatham

Jane Ellen Roark request for payment (RFP) for cropland conversion contract # 95-2015-009-10 in the amount of \$4,725.00 Brian visited on 7/17/2015 and the grass is well established. She has some weed issues but after 40 years of tillage, corn and tobacco, weeds will be an issue the first year. Brian discussed management of the weeds with client.

Al Childers made a motion to approve the RFP on contract #95-2015-009-10 in the amount of \$4,725.00. Rob Hunt seconded; all were in favor

Danny Miller contract # 95-2015-010-10 Meeting with contractor to look at road

Dana Millsap contract # 95-2014-005-14 Road has been graded, ditches, and pipe in. Matting should be laid this week and then gravel to be hauled. Everything looks really good

Paul Gragg contract # 95-2015-001-14 The Division needs the approval of Soil & Water Commission before they can approve due to Angela's position as Supervisor of the SWCD. Rob Baldwin stated that this has now been approved.

The 2016 initial Cost Share allocation is \$18,155

CCAP – is waiting on the Division to approve the designs

CET- Is in August. Brian and Janie have both been approved to attend and stay overnight

An application has been received for Billie Jo Main for a well

NRCS Report – David Tucker discussed the accident with the drill in Alleghany and suggested the Board work on a disclaimer for the repair of equipment in situations like this (equipment being damaged while pulled by a tractor). Janie will work on this and have the county attorney review it.

The federal government data breach did not affect District Board Members however it could affect some district employees. Those like Brian who are on our (NRCS) system.

Restructuring is still in progress.

DIC- Al Childers reported from the DIC meeting. The DIC Committee voted on a resolution to buy a rain fall simulator and is looking for money to purchase one

He reported that Julie Henshaw presented a plan on how the Division plans Technical Allocations in the future. Angela Gragg is the new Chair, Al Childers is the Vice- Chair and Janie Poe is the Secretary.

RC&D- Al Childers reported on the latest RC&D meeting. They are recovering now from the issues of the past and making great progress in their projects.

Rob Baldwin- reported on the bird flu. It has stopped spreading for now due to the heat but could start up again in the fall. They are looking at ways of disposal of large numbers of birds and also ways to stop the spread from house to house.

Angela Gragg reported for Janie Poe. Environmental Field Days will be September 10 & 11

Angela Gragg asks the Board to review the Farmland Preservation Advisory Board letter with her suggested addition. The letter is now with the county attorney for review. Denny felt that the letter was good.

Angela Gragg made a motion that the Board concur with the letter with the additional comments. Al Childers seconded; all were in favor.

Denny Norris expressed concern on how much assistance was actually provided by the State level FPP (the NC Agriculture Development & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund) to the local Farmland Preservation Board and also to Janie in arranging the public hearing. Al Childers made a motion to follow up on this and if sufficient assistance was not provided, send a letter to the state. Rob Hunt seconded; all was in favor.

Angela Gragg commended Janie Poe on all the extra work she did to assist the Farmland Preservation Board with this Public Hearing. She also appreciated the support and assistance of the county manager and other county staff. She also would like to suggest that the Farmland Preservation Board Publish the letter after it has been reviewed and approved.


Angela Gragg made a motion to go into closed session to discuss personnel issues. She asks Rob Baldwin to stay in attendance.

Closed Session- Personnel issues were discussed and action to be taken agreed upon by the Board.

Returned to open session. Denny Norris noted that the next meeting will be August 26th, 2015.

With no other business, meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Minutes submitted by Becky Wallace for Janie Poe.

 signed 8-26-15 date

Denny Norris, Chair