

September 27, 2023

MINUTES

Watauga Soil & Water Conservation District

971 West King Street, Boone NC 28607

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Present:

Denny Norris - Chair

Bill Moretz

Todd Combs

Jennifer Hanifan

Todd Combs

Michelle Kasey

Mikey Woodie

David Williams

Rick McSwain

Jessica Janc

Derrick Goddard

Denny Norris called meeting to order at 8:06 am.

Approval of the minutes- Jennifer Hanifan made a motion to accept, Chris Hughes 2nd. Minutes accepted.

Approval of the agenda- Bill Moretz made a motion to accept, Chris Hughes 2nd. Agenda accepted.

Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder:

In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every board member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict. Does any board member have any conflicts of interest or appearances of conflict with respect to any matters coming before the board today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearances of conflict and refrain from any undue participation in the particular matter involved.

Statement of Professionalism:

Supervisors are reminded of their responsibility to uphold the laws of the United States and North Carolina and their constitutions. Business is to be conducted in a professional manner, free of bias, of interactions that violate policies or individual liberties and that address business issues only. Interactions are to be held with integrity, courtesy, honesty and in compliance with the highest ethical standards.

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District Report - Mikey Woodie

New Applications: None

Contracts needing approval: Waiting on engineer. No word on site visits.

Ag Cost Share:

95-2021-003 & 95-2023-004 Michael Greene – Ag Road completed last week. Concrete for feed pad poured Tuesday.

95-2021-004 Chris Kuhn – Extension granted – cooperators has broken ankle.

95-2022-007 Jessica Miller – Waiting on well driller.

ACSP – Updates:

95-2023-001 Scott and Dawn Jensen – Engineer could not approve spring development install due to electrical lines. Cooperator relocating lines.

95-2023-003 Ronnie Joe Brown – Seeking new well contractor

95-2023-006 Bart & Robina Walker – Working with landowners to finalize design. Need help with tank Placement.

AgWrap updates:

95-2022-801 Genevieve Mente – Well drilled 8/11/23. Waiting on pump to be installed.

95-2023-801 Daniel Brown – Construction to begin 2nd week of October.

CCAP updates:

95-2022-502 Blue Ridge Conservancy – Waiting on preliminary design from engineer. AHO location.

95-2023-501 Valle Crucis Park – Have received preliminary design on stormwater wetland, backyard rain garden and grassed swales.

StRAP

Construction on Elk Creek Section 3 underway.

Construction to begin on Elk Creek section 1 to begin late October.

Stone Mountain Branch – Received only 2 bids – both over budget. Reworking project to reduce size and complexity.

General Updates:

Michael Greene has agreed to accept the Farm Family of the Year award. Dinner is November 9th.

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Drone has arrived! Mikey Woodie studying for test. Jessica Janc has just taken advanced class and volunteered to help Mikey Woodie if needed.

Program Review with the Division September 27th & 28th with Rick McSwain and John Beck.

Blue Ridge Environmental Consulting – Derrick Goddard

Mr. Goddard discussed the EQUIP program that has funds. The Project on Todd-Willett miller Road. The Landowner partners and gets 100% funded by USDA except Admin parts. The Division of Water Resources applies for matching funds. He wants permission to apply. Applications are due in December. Project is \$186258.00 which also covers design and permitting. Board will need to approve Resolution to partner. Project will cover well, stream crossing, exclusion fencing, water tanks.

Chris Hughes asked if it would be an increased workload for staff.

Derrick Goddard stated that no, it would be a turn-key project.

Denny Norris – We encourage our staff to check on the project and learn.

Derrick Goddard – Mikey Woodie is copied on all parts of the project.

Chris Hughes made a motion to sign Resolution. Bill Moretz 2nd. Motion approved.

Blue Ridge RC&D Jessica Janc - Preliminary design for Jensen restoration. No update on Watauga access or Valle Crucis.

Live stake giveaway will be early Fall. The funder is US Fish & Wildlife and they would like to have workshops.

NRCS David Tucker – No report

RC&D Chris Hughes – Thanked Jessica for volunteering at Field Day. Stated that StRAP will be getting \$20 million in funding this year. Watauga County is at the lower end of the funds. We need to identify a stream project. Discussion followed about removing stream debris and streambank restoration.

Hughes stated that the Annual Meeting Date and information will be coming out soon.

Division Report Rick McSwain – McSwain gave updates on 9/26/23 DIC meeting. There was an update on StRAP and the High Rock Lake project. There was a discussion about the closing of the Paper Mills in NC with suggestions being made

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as to how to use the byproduct. There are Resolutions from areas 7 & 1 – these were discussed. The CET was successful. There were regional breakouts and lots of training opportunities to take advantage of.

David Williams gave a short report on the proposed budget increases for the programs stating that the budget should be final by October 2nd. He also spoke on funds from the USDA for Farmland Preservation Easements. Mikey Woodie asked about Ag Cost Share Allocations. Mr. Williams stated that should be discussed at the November Commission meeting. Mr. Williams stated that Rick McSwain is continuing to cover Area 2 while also covering Areas 8 & 3, 36 counties.

Mr. Williams stated that Watauga County will be hosting the Commission meeting on November 14th & 15th. Chris Hughes has reserved the Watauga County Commissioners room for both meetings. Buffett dinner on 11/14 at the Daniel Boone Inn at 4:30 with an estimate of 30 people.

Chris Hughes asked Michelle Kasey to update the County's website regarding the meeting dates. A discussion about the next Board meeting the morning of November 15th was held and it was decided that the meeting would be held as usual and wrapped up prior to the NC Soil & Water Commission meeting at 9am. A discussion followed on tours, presentations and lunch for the commission.

Admin Report:


Michelle Kasey

New logo' d tablecloth was ordered from 4Imprint.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:24am.

Next meeting will be October 25, 2023

Minutes submitted by: Michelle Kasey


Denny Norris, Chair

Signed 10-25-23

Dated