

MINUTES

Watauga Soil & Water Conservation District

971 West King Street, Boone NC 28607

April 22, 2026

Present:

Denny Norris, Chair
Nate Coppenbarger
Bill Moretz
David Tucker

Michelle Kasey
Brian Bonville
Samantha Dame
Elise McLaughlin
Gina Hodges

1. Denny Norris called meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.
2. Denny Norris opened the meeting in prayer.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Approval of the minutes
Bill Moretz made a motion to approve the minutes; Nate Coppenbarger 2nd Motion. Minutes approved.
6. Approval of the agenda
Nate Coppenbarger made a motion to approve agenda with changes. Bill Moretz 2nd the motion. Agenda approved.

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7. District Report: Brian Bonville

New Applications: IISI – David Scott – Feeding pad area. Bonville to draw up contract.

Contracts needing approval: None

Contract Updates:

A. ACSP:

95-2023-003 Ronnie Joe Brown – Well installed. Drinkers and fence being constructed.

95-2024-003 Charles Norris – Have not heard from Cooperator.

95-2024-006 Valley View Land Company – Construction complete. Waiting on JAA approval.

95-2024-007 Al Zimmerman – Monitoring construction. Bonville to call.

95-2025-001 Will Kulczyk – Needs to cloth and gravel the Ag Road.

95-2025-002 Holland Whitesides – Began 4/21, met with engineer. Grading road.

95-2025-003 Larry Kitchens – Waiting on preliminary project design from engineer.

95-2025-004 Diane Deal – To begin construction soon.

95-2023-004 Greene – Need signed engineer document (JAA of Completion) before RFP.

95-2026-001 Moretz – Waiting on engineer designs for livestock exclusions and spring tank repair.

95-2026-002 Whitesides – Supplement on 2025 contract. Repair on supplement.

95-2026-003 Kulczyk – Supplement. Monitoring construction.

B. AgWrap updates:

95-2026-801 & 802 Daniel Brown - Repair on spring tank that failed during Helene. 802 – New spring tank.

C. CAP updates:

95-2022-502 Blue Ridge Conservancy – permitting complete. Waiting on construction date.

95-2024-501 New River Conservancy (at Green Valley Park) – waiting on engineer approval.

95-2025-501 Kellwoods 1 Townhomes POA – Waiting on pre-build meeting.

D. StRAP:

2022 Funds – Reallocated to 2024.

2024 Funds – Waiting on sealed plans from engineer and to schedule construction meeting. Temple Project.

2026 Funds – All sites have been submitted to State. State will let us know by the end of May 2026.

E. EWP Updates: submitted sites for Federal review.

8. NRCS Samantha Dame

Ms. Dame stated that the applications were being entered into the National Portal and the turnaround should be around two weeks.

Ms. Dame also stated that NRCS has farmland easements available.

The first round of EQUIP – 12 applications. The ranking changed. The deadline is 5/15/26. Also, the RPP pilot program is having a hard time getting eligible Cooperators.

9. RC&D Report – no report

10. Bonville stated that spot checks are due June 1, 2026 and asked the Board for volunteers. It is required for a Supervisor to assist the Technician with spot checks. Nate Coppenbarger volunteered to go with Bonville. Denny Norris volunteered to ride along to any in the Todd area. Elise McLaughlin stated that up to two supervisors could ride along, if three supervisors are present, it is considered a meeting. Bill Moretz stated that we need to give people notice before going to their property. He also stated that the Board does not have to approve spot checks.

Bonville also stated that Amin Davis stated that the WRDG grant for the Temple Project an extension is needed.

Bonville stated that he needs the Commission to approve a change of signatory for the DEQ Temple WRDG Project. Tucker told Bonville to email asking Deron how to handle it. Bonville stated that it needs to be done by May 15.

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Bonville also reminded the Board he would be attending the Mountains Fundamentals of Conservation Training in Waynesville, NC on May 11-15.

Bonville also mentioned the State Farm Preservation Meeting in August in Cherokee. Denny stated that the Board would send Kasey if the Farmland Preservation needed her to go.

Bonville state that the Beaver Dam area has 35 waterpoints that need to be updated.

11. Division Report – Elise McLaughlin

The next Local Workgroup Meeting will be virtual on Teams June 1st, 2026.

RCW Camp – there has been a lot of interest this year. Ms. McLaughlin stated that she was happy that Watauga County was willing to send more than one kid. If there are extra spots she will let us know by May 1, 2026.

The State Envirothon is this week in Cedar Rock Park in Burlington, NC.

Envirothon School is coming up June 9-11 and is only \$100.

Bryan Evans will be holding Advanced Supervisor Training on 7/14/26 in Ruthorford, NC.

There will be a Block Grants, USDA, training webinar on May 18, 2026. Rachael Smith is leading this training.

Bonville stated that Watauga County Cooperative Extension had contacted 500 farmers about the block grants and that he and Gina Hodges are also contacting farmers about these grants.

Samantha Glass stated that the deadline for the block grant for timber loss is June 15th.

Soil & Water will be responsible for the culverts, roads and bridges part of the block grants.

Bonville stated that there needs to be clarification on the rules.

McLaughlin stated that the Fall meeting will be October 15th in Hickory. More details to follow.

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McLaughlin also stated that Kristina Fischer has created a document with rules on what gets shared in open session vs. closed session meetings.

Bonville told the Board he is taking off 4/30 and May 1 for vacation. He is also giving a talk on perennials and grasses outside of work.

12.Admin Report: Michelle Kasey

Kasey and Bonville had a booth at the Buildfest Saturday, April 18th at Watauga High School. They made Seed Bombs with the kids.

Kasey will be attending/volunteering at the State Envirothon April 24th & 25th.

Kasey also stated that she had contacted the RCW applicant and her parents.

Bonville stated that he had a Creek clean up and bank planting scheduled with 2 Rivers Community 4th grade class on 4/15/26.

Bonville and Hodges attended the New River Symposium on 4/9/26.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:11am.

Next meeting will be May 27, 2026.

Minutes submitted by: Michelle Kasey


Denny Norris, Chair

Signed

5 - 27 - 26

Dated

