MINUTES
Watauga Soil & Water Conservation District
971 West King Street, Boone NC 28607
September 23, 2026
Present:

Denny Norris, Chair	**Michelle Kasey**	**Jenny Hanifan**
Nate Coppenbarger	**Brian Bonville**	**Gina Hodges**
Bill Moretz	**Samantha Glass**	**Elise McLaughlin**
David Tucker		

1. **Denny Norris called meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.**
2. **Jennifer Hanifan 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**
   David Tucker made a motion to approve the minutes; Jennifer Hanifan 2nd the Motion. Minutes approved.
6. **Approval of the agenda**
   Jennifer Hanifan made a motion to approve agenda with changes. Nate Coppenbarger 2nd the motion. Agenda approved.
7. **District Report: Brian Bonville**

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New Applications: None
Contracts needing approval: None

Contract Updates:

A. ACSP:

95-2023-003 Ronnie Joe Brown – Monitoring construction of fencing to be done by Fall.

95-2024-003 Charles Norris – Bonville to do contract and get signatures.

95-2024-006 Valley View Land Company – Waiting on receipts to submit RFP.

95-2026-006 Valley View Land Company – Supplement. Waiting on receipts.

95-2024-007 Al Zimmerman – Pre-build meeting complete.

95-2025-001 Will Kulczyk – Monitoring construction should be complete this fall.

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

95-2025-003 Larry Kitchens – Prebuild meeting scheduled for 9/25/26.

95-2026-005 Larry Kitchens – Prebuild meeting scheduled for 9/25/26.

95-2025-004 Diane Deal – Construction began last week.

95-2026-001 Moretz – Drafting design and conservation plan with Andrew Cox.

B. AgWrap updates:

95-2026-801 Daniel Brown - Robert Moore designed plans.

95-2026-802 Daniel Brown - Rescheduling visit with Andrew Cox.

C. CCAP updates:

95-2022-502 Blue Ridge Conservancy – Construction complete. Closeout meeting 9/21/26. Need to attend Commission meeting virtually with Supervisory for post-approval. Meeting 11/18/65.

95-2024-501 New River Conservancy (at Green Valley Park) – waiting on topographic maps. Need to do a post-approval at the 11/18/2026 Commission meeting.

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95-2025-501 Kellwoods 1 Townhomes POA – Pre-build visit 9/11/26. Monitoring construction.

D. StRAP:

2022 Funds – Reallocated to 2024.

2024 Funds – Request extension. New River Conservancy selected a contractor. Construction target Spring 2027.

2026 Funds – Need to finalize bidding paperwork. Need to do RFQ.

E. Rankings: StRAP Bonville submitted a list of projects to the Board. Batch period is in October.

8. EWP Updates: Gina Hodges

We are currently under contract with both Consultants. They are doing site visits and getting permits. Ms. Hodges has asked NRCS for additional Technical Assistance funds on 9/22/26. She was told that they will look at the request after 10/1 the beginning of the new fiscal year.

Ms. Hodges stated that some homeowners have declined additional help having completed the work themselves. She stated that there are 37 sites total for EWP.

9. NRCS Samantha Glass

EQUIP and CSP deadlines are October 30th. This year, NC Impact 2.0 state rankings will be different. There will be a November program rollout meeting. Funding allocations will be similar to last year. Deferral letters went out to homeowners. This year, homeowners must contact the office if they want to remain in the que. There will be no payments made in the next two weeks to homeowners while the State does a fiscal year rollover.

10. RC&D Report – Jonathan Hartsell No report.

11. Division Report – Elise McLaughlin

There are advisory committees that need volunteers. Supervisors can have input on the cost share programs by serving.

There is a new approved Bio-char BMP for farmers that wish to pursue this.

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The CET is October 4-8 in Greensboro, NC.
The Fall Meeting is October 15th, 2026.
The Annual Meeting will be held January 10-12, 2027 in Greensboro, NC.
Reappointments are due if the Board hasn't done them. Watauga has done theirs.
Soil & Water has a new Director, Tim Baumgartner.

12. Administrative update – Michelle Kasey

The Watauga County Environmental Field days were 9/15 & 9/16.
Kasey helped with the Alleghany field day on 9/3/26 and the Ashe field day on 9/8/26.
Farm City Banquet is November 5, 2026. Board needs to pick a Farm Family of the Year. After some discussion, it was decided to award it to Ronnie Joe Brown. Jennifer Hanifan made a motion, Bill Moretz 2nd the motion. Kasey and Bonville will begin the process of ordering the plaque and photos for Mr. Brown.
Kasey told the Board it was time to begin advertising for the annual contests. She asked the Board if they wanted to promote the speech contest. The Board stated that we should promote it even if there were no teachers interested. The contest period is from October 1 – December 1, 2026.

Other updates: Bonville
Bonville taught Soils 101 at the Wilkes High School Field Day on 9/17/26.
Bonville tabled at Meet your Local Government at the Ag Center on 9/20/26.

Denny Norris asked Bonville if the town ever had a meeting on invasives. Bonville replied that they had, but he didn't attend. He knew they banned barberry. Mr. Norris told Bonville to talk to Jim Hamilton, Extension Director to see if they could partner on something. Maybe do some press releases to educate people on not planting invasives. Mr. Norris would like Bonville to talk to the Commissioners about the County doing an educational event.

Bonville stated that he had been invited to a meeting with the High Country Council of Governments about river monitoring. Discussion followed.

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Bonville stated that he was partnering with Extension on 10/13/26 to do a workshop with Blue Ridge Women in Ag on BioChar and safe wood waste disposal in back of the Ag Building. The Extension has 2 biochar units that rent for $25/week. Bonville is also talking to the County Waste Management about potentially getting funding for a large biochar unit instead of the incinerator they are planning on acquiring. Bonville is talking with the Long-Term Recovery group about funding. David Tucker stated that RC&D has a curtain burner that is a pull behind unit that is housed in Mitchell County.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:17 am.
Next meeting will be October 28, 2026.
Minutes submitted by: Michelle Kasey

Denny Norris Signed 10-28-26 Dated

Denny Norris, Chair

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