

May 22, 2024

MINUTES

Watauga Soil & Water Conservation District

971 West King Street, Boone NC 28607

May 22, 2024

Present:

Denny Norris - Chair

Bill Moretz

Todd Combs

Jennifer Hanifan

Chris Hughes

Michelle Kasey

Jessica Janc

David Tucker

Samantha Dame

Denny Norris called meeting to order at 7:59 a.m.

Denny Norris opened the meeting in prayer.

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.

Approval of the minutes- Bill Moretz made a motion to accept, Jenny Hanifan 2nd.

Minutes accepted.

Approval of the agenda- Agenda accepted.

District Report - Mikey Woodie (Given by Michelle Kasey)

New Applications: none

Contracts needing approval:

95-2024-005 Shipley Family LLC. - Livestock feeding area, heavy use area protection, diversion, all season agricultural access, exclusion fencing, filter strip. Bill Moretz made a motion to approve the contract, Chris Hughes 2nd. Contract approved.

95-2024-003 Charles Norris – Livestock feeding area, heavy use area protection, diversion, exclusion fencing. Bill Moretz made a motion to approve; Chris Hughes 2nd. Contract approved.

Contract Updates:

ACSP:

95-2021-003 & 95-2023-004 – Michael Greene – Construction check out next week.

95-2021-004 Chris Kuhn – Contract expires June 30th, 2024.

95-2022-007 Jessica Miller – Needs an extension request. Denny Norris stated that the extension request would be from the Board, not Raleigh. We need to approve a 1-year extension. Chris Hughes made a motion to grant a 1-year extension, Jenny Hanifan 2nd. Extension granted for 1 year.

David Tucker stated that Miller hasn't installed water tanks, the well has not been started, and the fencing and stream crossing has not been started. He stated that NRCS also has projects with Ms. Miller.

95-2024-005 Shipley Family LLC. – Site visit and survey completed by engineers.

95-2024-008 Valleyview Land Company – Contract being finalized.

95-2024-007 Al Zimmerman – Finalizing contract with division, permit process moving forward.

AgWrap Updates:

95-2024-801 Jay Bost – Well and pump installed.

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CCAP Updates:

95-2022-502 Blue Ridge Conservancy – Requesting extension.

Chris Hughes made a motion to extend; Jenny Hanifan 2nd. Extension granted.

95-2023-501 Valle Crucis Park – Looking for contractor. Chris Hughes stated that Brushy Fork Environmental has been approved for Valle Crucis Park.

95-2024-501 New River Conservancy at Green Valley Park – Waiting on private engineer to submit design.

StRAP Updates:

May 22 Funding announcement

General Updates - Mikey Woodie

Trivette water resources development grant funded.

Strategic Plan and Ranking Forms:

Strategic Plan – Bill Moretz emailed a question about StRAP. “Since individuals take way more time would it be prudent to limit the number we can do each year? What if more than the number we can deal with qualify by points, and they make a fuss about not being funded? I guess I am trying to avoid a possible issue.”

A discussion followed with Denny Norris stating that ranking forms are used for this.

Chris Hughes stated that a percentage of StRAP money could be used for Administrative. He stated it could be used to get help for Mikey. He mentioned that we could either, 1) increase staff – Jenny Hanifan is working on this) or 2) adjust the amount that we request from the State.

Denny Norris stated that the State determines the amount of money we get and the ranking sheets determine the projects we accept.

Chris Hughes made a motion to accept the new ranking form. Bill Moretz 2nd.

New ranking form was approved.

Jenny Hanifan asked if Mikey could send out the final Strategic Plan once all the questions in red were answered. Mrs. Hanifan also requested that under the contests in the Strategic Plan, that a speech contest be left in along with the poster contest.

Jenny Hanifan made a motion to keep the Speech Contest in the Strategic Plan; Chris Hughes 2nd. Speech Contest will remain in the Strategic Plan.

David Tucker volunteered to judge the speech contest. Chris Hughes volunteered to donate \$50 toward the prize money for the speech contest.

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Mikey needs supervisor to do spot checks with her on May 29th or May 31st. Chris Hughes volunteered to help on 5/29. Denny Norris volunteered to help whenever Mikey needed someone.

Mikey Woodie attended he Fundamentals of Conservation for Livestock May 6h – May 10th. She is also attending the Fencing seminar in Wilkes on May 23rd.

Blue Ridge RC&D – Jessica Janc Ms. Janc stated that she worked with the Watauga High School team prior to the Envirothon. Ms. Janc gave an update on several projects.

NRCS Report – David Tucker

Mr. Tucker introduced us to his new employee, Samantha Dame. Introductions were made. Ms. Dame gave a short bio and work history.

Mr. Tucker gave update on NRCS programs. \$450,000 for stream restoration project. EQUIP deadline is June 7th.

RC&D Report & Soil & Water Commission Report – Chris Hughes

RC&D currently working on Strategic Plan.

Commission – Chris Hughes no longer on Board – to be removed from agenda.

Chris Hughes – Asked Board if they were interested in having an Annual Farmer's meal. Discussion followed.

Chris Hughes asked if a Thank You note could be sent to the Foundation for the Soils Tent and Enviroscape. Michelle Kasey to send one out.

Division Report – Elise McLaughlin (by Michelle Kasey)

Districts should submit the name(s) of RCW students by May 28th.

Area 2 DIC Meeting is May 30 in Alleghany.

The Soil Health Coalition Field Day is Friday, June 14 (Registration closes June 7), 10:00-3:00. Let me know if you'd like more information.

The CET will be held September 15-19 in Atlantic Beach.

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The Area 2 Fall Meeting is Thursday, October 10. It will be held in Morganton, specific location TBD.

Admin Report: Michelle Kasey

Enviroscape arrived 5/21. Kasey set up Enviroscape for viewing.

Denny Norris asked Kasey if the budget the County manager was presenting to the Board of Commissioners was different than the worksheet send to Finance.

Kasey to research and let the Board know.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:06am.

Next meeting will be June 26, 2024

Minutes submitted by: Michelle Kasey

Denny Norris Signed 6-26-24 Dated
Denny Norris, Chair

