

Southern Conservation District
April 16, 2019
Minutes of Special Board Meeting

The Southern Conservation District held a special meeting on April 16, 2019 at the SCD office, 463 Ragland Road, Beckley, WV. Virgel Caldwell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The purpose of the meeting was to review and approve the Emergency Assistance for Revegetation Program.

Supervisors Present

Virgel Caldwell	Dvon Duncan
Ray Lafferty	Randall Patton
Randy Prince	Oscar Vecellio
Curtis Murphy	John Farrell
Dennis Bailey	

Others Present

Gary Redden, NRCS	Becky Floyd, WVCA
Marty Walker, WVCA	Jeremy Salyer, (by video) WVCA

Gary Redden asked to address the board about a request to assist NRCS with High Tunnel for the 2019 World Jamboree being held this July. Puckett Greenhouse has offered to donate a high tunnel for the event if the high tunnel can then be set up somewhere as a demonstration high tunnel for local landowners. Gary stated NRCS cannot accept donations and asked the board if they would be willing to accept the high tunnel and set it up after the 2019 Jamboree somewhere on the district property to use as a demonstration high tunnel. Dvon asked if Puckett Greenhouse would provide a letter to the district on the terms of the donation and if so she felt this would be an excellent opportunity for the district to provide conservation training. Dennis Bailey agreed and asked the board to move forward on this with Gary. The board agreed for Gary to contact Puckett Greenhouse to begin the donation process. Dvon asked Becky to place this on the May board meeting agenda for a board vote.

Marty Walker reviewed the Emergency Assistance for Revegetation Program and asked the board to set sign up dates as soon as possible. Jeremy explained the board will need to accept the program before moving forward with the program. A lengthy discussion was held on concerns of the time frame to advertise and for landowners to complete the seeding which should have already been completed. Marty stated in some cases landowners have already purchased the seed and questioned if the board can vote to make payments retroactive? Jeremy stated the state rules on the program need to be consistent across the state and due to urgency of the program the districts should follow the program rules set by the SCC. Jeremy discussed state dollars will be divided out to districts after they receive the application acreage and cost reports from the conservation specialist for each district. Jeremy stated at this time he knows of three districts that have opted not to participate due to the late timing of the program. Dvon suggested the board supplement the program with district funds if needed.

Dvon Duncan moved to accept and participate in the state Emergency Assistance for Revegetation Program as developed by the State Conservation Committee. Dennis Bailey seconded. Motion carried. Marty suggested dates for the application period. **Dennis Bailey moved to set the application period for April 17-25th excluding April 22 due to the staff assisting with the WVACD farm tour and picnic. Randall Patton seconded. Motion carried.** Marty will prepare a news release announcing the SCD application dates. The deadline for the practice completion and all receipts to be submitted to the district is May 31, 2019. The statewide seed rate is \$60/per acre flat rate with the cap set at 50 acres per farm.

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Becky Floyd requested the board approve sending the letter of request for the program funds as soon as the amount is available from Jennifer Skaggs. **Dennis Bailey moved to approve the letter of request for the Emergency Assistance for Revegetation Program funds as soon as the amount is provided by WVCA. Dvon Duncan seconded. Motion carried.**

A discussion was held on ranking criteria and how applications will be ranked if funding is not available for all applications received. Oscar Vecellio asked if it will be on a first come first serve basis. Jeremy said if this is used it would be for in house use only if needed and advised the board to date each application with time and date of the application sign up. Marty stated she is opposed to the first come first serve basis if the program is not going to be advertised in that manner. Marty questioned if seed tickets can be accepted after today with today's date or later? Marty stated she feels strongly the district should allow receipts dated after the April 10th public announcement and if not that, after the board meeting date of approving the program due to the timing of proper seeding and to be more cooperative to the farmers. Becky read the email from Jennifer Skaggs on this with Jeremy following up on districts cannot make retroactive payments on seed. Seed tickets need to show a purchase date after application approval.

Dennis Bailey moved the district delegate authority to the SCD AgEP Committee to approve applications received once the funding amount is provided by WVCA. Ray Lafferty seconded. Motion carried. Dvon asked Becky to place delegation of authority to SCD AgEP Committee actions on the May 9 board meeting agenda to record any actions that may take place prior to the board meeting.

Marty asked the board to change the April 18 SCD AgEP Committee to May 7 due to sign ups being underway on the 18th. The board agreed to the change.

The meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Virgel Caldwell
Chairman

Dvon Duncan
Secretary