

NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
February 11, 2021
10:00 a.m.

Supervisors Present

Jim Anderson, Hancock County – Vice-Chairman
Chuck Glenn, Hancock County
Britney Hervey-Farris, Brooke County
Steve Paull, Brooke County
Amy Wade, Ohio County
Robert Luchetti, Ohio County
David McCardle, Marshall County, Secretary/Treasurer
Mark Fitzsimmons, Marshall County, Chairman

Associate Supervisors Present

Eric Blend, Ohio County

Others Present

Veronica Gibson, Administrative Specialist, WVCA
Jennifer Kile, Conservation Specialist, WVCA
Kim Fisher, District Operations Manager – West, WVCA
Gene Sauborn, Director of Watershed Projects, WVCA
Ed Martin, Watershed Program Manager – North, WVCA
Aimee Figgatt, Education and Outreach Specialist, WVCA
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS
David Shipman, Soil Technician, NRCS
Kevin Paul, NRCS
Brent Lyons, Forester, WV DOF
Bob Straub, CPA, Hartley & Straub

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, February 11, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. via teleconference.

Pledge of Allegiance – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Approval of Agenda

Amy Wade requested to add the following to the agenda:

- State Legislative Committee Letter
- NP RC&D MOU
- Soil Conservationist Grant Position

Mark Fitzsimmons requested to move the position of the following items on the agenda:

- Move dam monitors before reports
- Move seed packets before AgEP

All changes were approved by unanimous decision of the NPCD board members.

Minutes

Jim Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 2021 board meeting and the February 4, 2021 special meeting as presented. Seconded by Robert Luchetti. Motion passed.

Financial Report

Bob Straub reviewed the district financials for January 2021. **Robert Luchetti made a motion to accept the January 2021 NPCD financials and file for audit. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.** The bank statements will be available at the accountant's office to pick up for David McCardle to review.

Amy Wade asked for clarification of CDO funds.

Mark Fitzsimmons asked Bob Straub the status of the invoice from UOCD for the NRCS shared employee. Bob is working with UOCD to get this completed.

Reports

- District Crew – No report
- Farm Service Agency (FSA) – No report
- WV Division of Forestry (WVDof)
 - Brent Lyons reviewed a written report.
- WV Conservation Agency (WVCA)
 - Kim Fisher reviewed the WVCA monthly written report. Reviewed AgEP meeting dates and other upcoming meeting dates. Each supervisor has a copy of the report.
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
 - Katie Fitzsimmons reviewed a written report. David Shipman completed the rain barrel video as requested.
 - Funding for the NRCS Soil Conservationist grant employee has been extended to September 2022.
- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC) – No report
- Administrative Specialist
 - Veronica Gibson provided the supervisors with her weekly work logs for their review.
 - Discussed what will appear in the upcoming winter newsletter.
 - One Century Farm application was received which was from Hancock County.
- Visitors
 - None
- Committee Reports
 - Education Committee
 - Eric Blend completed the high tunnel series. Let the board know that the Small Farms Conference is free online this year. He and Britney Hervey-Farris are part of the farmer mentorship program.

- High Tunnel Committee
 - Britney Hervey-Farris will donate seeds for early April planting. Eric Blend was asked to do a short video of seed starting to post on Facebook.
- Building Committee
 - It was decided to change the lights in the NRCS office to LED.

Old Business

- Wheeling Creek #3 - Updates
 - No report
- State Farm Recognition
 - Each county supervisor needs to have one farmer selected for the March meeting.

New Business

- Spring Seed Program
 - Aimee Figgatt presented the spring seed program to the board. Each supervisor received information regarding the program in their meeting packet. Currently, there are 29 requests from the northern panhandle for the seed program. The packets will be sent to the district and the district will mail to recipients. **Jim Anderson made a motion to participate in the spring seed program and fund up to 200 participants in the northern panhandle. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**
- Wheeling Creek #3 Contract
 - Gene Sauborn reported that the contract for the repairs to Wheeling Creek #3 have been reviewed by WVCA and NRCS and is back in the hands of the NPCD attorney. Gene would like to schedule a job showing for February 25. Contractors do not need to see the contract before the job showing. Mark Fitzsimmons asked the board to approve the contract before it is received from the NPCD attorney for review. There was a discussion that followed. Some supervisors agreed to approve the contract before reviewing. One supervisor would not approve the contract without reviewing first. David McCardle made a motion to approve the contract before reviewing. Seconded by Robert Luchetti. Discussion. Motion failed. **David McCardle made a motion to advertise a job showing for bids for the repair work to Wheeling Creek #3. Seconded by Robert Luchetti. Motion passed.**
- District Personnel Plan
 - The FY22 district personnel plan was reviewed and approved as presented. **Amy Wade made a motion to approve the FY22 district personnel plan and submit to the State Conservation Committee. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.**
- RC&D Appointment – Ohio County
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to appoint Amy Wade to the NP RC&D Council to replace Cele Duvall. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.** The appointment will expire June 30, 2021.

- Soil Tester
 - An advertisement will be issued for a full-time temporary soil tester for the summer. The rate of pay will be \$10 per hour plus the reimbursement of mileage. Duties will include soil testing, high tunnel assistance and other. Work will begin in May. A college student pursuing a degree in agriculture is preferred. The position will be advertised in the NPCD newsletter, Facebook page, and webpage.

- Dam Monitors
 - Ed Martin reported on the requirements for dam monitors and emergency action plans by DEP Dam Safety. It has been difficult to find and keep monitors in the northern panhandle. A spreadsheet was provided to each supervisor for review of the status of monitors that are needed. Ed asked that the supervisors help in trying to find monitors for the dams without one. Monitors are needed for some Wheeling Creek and Harmon Creek dams. The city of Weirton holds the easement for the Harmon Creek dams. The city of Weirton should be contacted for help in finding monitors. Mark Fitzsimmons requested the current address of listed monitors that the WVCA has been unable to contact by phone.
 - Ed Martin reported in detail on replacement of trash racks. It was decided that the NPCD will store the materials for the trash racks at the office. The materials will be delivered in May and the job will go out for bid. There was a discussion regarding debris removal of these sites when the water is drawn down for the trash rack repairs. It will be decided if the NPCD crew will remove the debris or if it will be bid out.

- NPCD Auxiliary Scholarship
 - The following change was made to the NPCD Auxiliary scholarship. For requirement #4 “Must have graduated from a northern panhandle high school or home school.”

- NPCD Foundation Lease
 - The NPCD attorney will be contacted for a copy of the lease.

- FY22 CDO Budget
 - Veronica Gibson will provide each supervisor the FY21 CDO budget and expenses to date. The FY22 CDO budget will be completed at the March board meeting.

- Purchase of Promotional Items
 - **Amy Wade made a motion to set a budget of up to \$1,400 to be spent on promotional items before the end of FY21. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.** The items will correspond with the educational event they correspond with.

- Upper Grave Creek Statements of Review
 - Gene Saurborn encouraged the supervisors review the emergency action plans. **Jim Anderson made a motion to table the Upper Grave Creek statements of review. Seconded by Robert Luchetti. Motion passed.** The emergency action plans are in the district office available for review.

- State Legislative Committee
 - Amy Wade proposed to send a letter to all northern panhandle state legislatures and county commissioners. A copy of the letter was given to each supervisor for review. **Amy Wade made a motion to send the letter to the northern panhandler state legislators and county commissioners and each supervisor sign each letter to the legislators and to their county commissioners. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.** Each supervisor was also given a copy of the letter from the attorney general to the state conservation committee regarding opening the state code. Many supervisors feel that opening the state code for change is not a good idea.
- RC&D Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
 - **David McCardle made a motion to sign the NP RC&D MOU as presented. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed.**
- Soil Conservation Grant Position
 - With the extension of the NRCS Soil Conservationist grant employee, the NPCD will advertise the position. The UOCD will be asked for input in the advertisement and to advertise as they like in their district.
- AgEP
 - Payments

Name	Practice	Amount	Cost Share
Dennis Aston	Heavy Use Protection Area	1,500 sq. feet	\$1,980.00

David McCardle made a motion to pay D. Aston for his completed AgEP practice. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.

- Committee Items for FY22 AgEP from February 4 Special Meeting
 - Nutrient Management – Cost share for pasture and hay fields? Currently only pasture fields. **Jim Anderson made a motion to add cost share for nutrient management to include hay fields. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
 - “Limited landowners to only one water system or fence contract per fiscal year” – Discussion to remove this line from the applications. Do not remove.
 - Urban Agriculture – **Jim Anderson made a motion to change the cost share of urban ag to a 50% cost share up to \$750 payment. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed. David McCardle made a motion to add two types of fence to the urban ag practice that will deter small animals. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed.**
 - Water system, fence, lime – Review the cost share rates for changes. **David McCardle made a motion for no change to the cost share for lime and water system. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.** A committee was formed to review cost share for fence. David McCardle, Chuck Glen, Mark Fitzsimmons, Katie Fitzsimmons, and Jennifer Kile were appointed to the committee.

Correspondence

- David McCardle, Secretary/Treasurer, reviewed the following correspondence – 1) The WV Grassland Contest has been postponed for 2021. 2) A letter from the WVU Soils team updating the district on the status of their last donation due to cancellations because of Covid.

Britney Hervey-Farris – Britney advised the board that she was invited to sit on the State Conservation Committee.

NEXT MEETING –The next meeting will be held on Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. **at Brooke Hills Park, Wellsburg.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman

David McCardle, Secretary/Treasurer

Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson