

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District

March 21, 2024, 7:00pm Regular Board Meeting, Approved Minutes

The Greenbrier Valley Board of Supervisors met on Thursday, March 21, 2024, at 7:00pm, in the conference room of the Lewisburg, USDA service center.

Those in attendance:

Supervisors:

Gary Sawyers, Chairman
Gary Truex
Timothy VanReenen
Jerry Clifton
Carolyn Miller
Avery Atkins

Guests:

Sally Shepherd, Capital Conservation District, Supervisor

Others Present:

Dorian Perez, NRCS
Barry Level, GVCD
Jeremy Salyer, WVCA
Jacob Lavender, WVCA
Morgan Dial, WVCA
Angela Feamster-Sawyers, WVCA

With a quorum present, Chairman Sawyers called the meeting to order at 7:04pm and welcomed everyone.

Approval of Minutes

Timothy VanReenen moved to approve the minutes of the February 15, 2024, regular board meeting. Carolyn Miller seconded; motion carried.

Guest

Capital Conservation District Supervisor Sally Shepherd was present and spoke to the board of supervisors about the process, uses, and benefits of biochar.

Administrative Specialist Report

Angela Feamster- Sawyers reviewed the highlights of her report, which is attached.

Cooperating Agency Reports

- NRCS –Dorian Perez, reviewed the highlights of his report, which is attached. Following some discussion, the board of supervisors agreed to schedule the Local Working Group meeting for May 29, 2024, at 9:00 a.m.
-
- FSA –
- Forestry
- WVCA – Jeremy Salyer, reviewed the highlights of his report, which is attached.
- Other

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

Financial Reports

- General and CDO Funds Report

Timothy VanReenen moved to accept the general and CDO funds report, and file for audit. Jerry Clifton seconded; motion carried.

- January and February, WVCA Restricted Funds Report

Carolyn Miller moved to approve January and February's WVCA restricted funds report and file for audit. Timothy VanReenen Seconded; motion carried.

- Payment of all bills, per payables list
**Gary Truex moved to pay all general fund bills, per payables list as presented.
Jerry Clifton Seconded; motion carried.**

Gary Truex moved to approve and send the following letter of request:

LOR

LOR ID: 15117
Purpose: FY24 Q2 CD Employee Reimbursement
Amount: 12703.28
AGR: 1024-09

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Gary Truex moved to accept the quote from Hollifield and Associates of \$3,500.00 per engagement period and to send a letter to initiate a five-year agreement for agreed-upon procedures. Jerry Clifton seconded; motion carried.

Education Outreach/Events Committee

Nothing to report.

Agricultural Enhancement Program Committee

Timothy VanReenen moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following contracts:

Contracts for Approval

LIME

David Workman - \$255.00

Mike Rose - \$300.00

Charlie Long - \$2,668.50

➤ **Total - \$3,223.50**

Alternative Watering System (AWS)

Doug Lewis - \$1,564.80

Myron Vaughn - AWS - \$998.52

➤ **Total - \$2,563.32**

Gary Truex seconded; motion carried.

Timothy VanReenen moved on behalf of the committee that Gary Truex be designated as the acting authority of approval for AgEP approvals, amendments, cancellations, and payments for the remainder of FY24. Jerry Clifton seconded; motion carried.

Grassland Committee

Nothing to report.

Building/Equipment Committee

Monthly Equipment Report – The board of Supervisors reviewed Eugene Wickline’s monthly equipment report, which is attached.

On behalf of the committee, Gary Truex moved that the district donate the cooling trailer to Monica Holliday for Hart's Run Scout Day Camp from July 7-12, 2024. Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

Watershed

O&M Work Order

Jerry Clifton moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following O&M work orders for Southern Conservation District work crew:

- Howards Creek Dam – Mow & Weed Eat- \$4,250.00
- Marlin Run Dam – Mow & Weed Eat - \$2,900.00

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

319 Committee

Jerry Clifton moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following contracts:

- **Indian Creek III:**
 - Anderson, Teresa- Septic pumping 50% up to \$300
 - Anderson, Teresa- Septic Replacement 75% up to \$5,000
 - Shiflet, Bill- Septic pumping 50% up to \$300
 - Shiflet, Bill- Septic Replacement 75% up to \$5,000

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Morgan Dial explained that although the contract for Rem Perkins will be for \$52,000.00, however, there was a discrepancy in the percentage calculations with the separation of state and federal funding. Morgan recommended a supervisor

be delegated with authority to approve and sign the contract once the percentages are divided correctly.

Carolyn Miller moved that Jerry Clifton be delegated authority to approve and sign the following contract once the figures are divided accurately between state and federal funds.

Spring Creek II:

- Perkins, Rem- Agricultural BMPs using Federal Funds up to amount of \$31,201.83 and State Funds up to amount of \$7,800.46. Total amount of \$52,003.05.

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Payment Approval

Jerry Clifton moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following payment:

Second Creek VI:

- SGS- Water Quality Monitoring for the amount \$333.10

Carolyn Miller seconded; motion carried.

*Due to the nature of the next payment for approval, Avery Atkins left the meeting. *

Second Creek

Jerry Clifton moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following payment:

- Atkins, Avery- Exclusion fencing using state funds for the amount \$5,295.50

Carolyn Miller seconded; motion carried.

*Avery Atkins returned to the meeting. *

Anthony Creek

Jerry Clifton moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following payment:

- LD Hanna for Anthony Creek stream restoration project tree harvest not to exceed \$19,525.00.

Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

319 Financial Report

Jerry Clifton advised that the Meadow River/Mill Creek stream restoration previously approved state funds for seeds and trees of the amount not to exceed \$1,700 will no longer be needed.

Jerry Clifton reported the following action between board meetings:

-Acting with delegated authority, Gary Truex approved an additional \$200.00 in federal funds to purchase seed for the Anthony Creek Stream Restoration project. This is in addition to the \$300.00 approved at the regular board meeting on February 15, 2024, bringing the total to \$500.00 for seeding the tree harvest area.

Following some discussion, it was decided that Gary Truex would participate in 319 position interviews.

Other Business

Annual Partnership Plan of Work Meeting – *Note: This item was discussed earlier on the agenda, in collaboration with NRCS.*

Timothy VanReenen moved to approve the updated district policy manual. Gary Truex seconded; motion carried.

Chairman Sawyers reviewed the following dates to remember:

March 22, 2024: Central Area Meeting at GVCD

April 2, 2024: Eastern Area Meeting at MCD

April 8, 2024: Quarterly Meeting at LaQuinta Morgantown

April 9, 2024: State Conservation Committee Meeting

April 23, 2024: SCD and GVCD Land Judging contest

With no further business the meeting was adjourned by consensus at 9:03pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gary Sawyers
Chairman



Gary Truex
Secretary/ Treasurer

GS/GT/as

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District's Administrative Specialist Report March 21, 2024

- Reminder: GVCD will host the Central Area Meeting tomorrow at 10:00am.
- A refund from SGS for the amount \$1023.10 due to an overpayment on the account has been received. The check was deposited into the co-administered account on February 29, 2024.
- Local O&M sponsorship agreements for FY25 have been prepared and are ready to be sent out.
- Eugene Wickline purchased a customer comment box for the district. It included a lock and key and was cheaper than what he could've made one for. My goal is to have the comment cards ready, and the box installed next week.
- The Following Funds have been received since my last report:
LOR: 15111 FY23 Audit Reimbursement- \$3,500.00
LOR: 15114 NPS1737 Anthony Creek- \$60,000.00
➤ Total \$63,500.00.

Dates to remember:

March 22, 2024: Central Area Meeting at GVCD

April 2, 2024: Eastern Area Meeting at MCD

April 8, 2024: Quarterly Meeting at LaQuinta Morgantown

April 9, 2024: State Conservation Committee Meeting

April 23, 2024: SCD and GVCD Land Judging contest

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District Greenbrier Valley Work Unit DC Report

3/21/2024

Wanda is down with a sinus infection and will not be able to attend.

Brandon is in transit to the office but said he might pop in for questions. He has attended two Board meetings this week.

Follow Ups from Last Month's Meeting

- I was on leave during the February meeting.
- Howard Creek Weir.
 - Email from Nanette Kimble, WV State Office with appointment Letter for the Howard Creek Weir investigation team.
 - Leslie Sears, NRCS, Beckley
 - Chris Ritz, NRCS Fort Worth, TX
 - Erin O'Leary, NRCS Morgantown
 - Richar Norris, NRCS, Cookeville, TN
 - Abby McQueen, Trout Unlimited, Davis, WV

Technical Assistance

Howard Creek and Meadow River Preliminary Investigation Feasibility Report (PIFR)

Brandon asked that I share the following from our Watersheds Section: Regarding the two GVCD PIFRs, both Howard Creek and Meadow River are now up at NHQ to be reviewed.

Next steps would be for them to review them, we address changes if there are any, have a conversation with White Sulphur Springs, Town of Rainelle, and GVCD to determine who would like to be the listed sponsor for the planning phase for the environmental document, then gather documents for requesting planning funds and send to the agreed upon sponsor for signatures.

Planning Status

Overdue Plans due to Engineering design, Section 7 Consultation (FWS), Section 106, etc. Jon has set the policy that Engineering designs will be complete within 1 year of contract obligation. My staff has been tasked to complete at least 1 engineering design per quarter, ~~which will be going up to 1 per month in FY 2024.~~

Gary T asked about the '1 per month' after I had lined through it on my working copy. I explained that I had lined through it because I couldn't hold my staff to that standard when, including myself, there are 3 planning staff members to deal with developing new contracts, practice certification, and contract management.

FO	Engineering	Section 7	Section 106	Other
Buckeye	11	3		
Lewisburg	28/18*	1	10	

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District Greenbrier Valley Work Unit DC Report

3/21/2024

* Presently, I had Skyley pull all my folders for clients having livestock watering system and micro-irrigation to see if a plan was in the folder and then to see if they were on the tracker. 28 didn't have designs, of those, 18 needed to be put onto the new tracker. The next step is assuring the engineers haven't already done the design, then put it on the tracker.

* I've gotten a lot of compliments from the engineering staff on Jessica's work as a soil con tech, so as her proficiency goes up, I expect the engineering backlog to drop. Her priority of work is: CRP/CREP and then FA Programs starting with the oldest contracts.

* My Soil Cons and I will continue to be required to submit designs, but our time is constrained by staffing shortages.

Local Working Group

Reminder that the State Office is requesting that the meeting be between April 15th to June 12th.

I recommend we push out as late as possible. Angie and I started talking about this after last year's LWG and want to do a good job getting as much feedback as possible.

- Angie had a good idea of including a request for feedback with the invitation, letting the recipient know that they could submit the feedback in lieu of attendance as the Board Supervisors were interested in their feedback.

Financial Assistance Programs

FY 2024 Signup 1, we have 18 total applications that are pre-approved and/or approved.

- 4 CSP contracts were obligated (approved for funding).
- 1 EQIP contract for Maple Syrup was obligated.
- 13 are in development, 2 of which have been signed. 3 are stream work, 4 for high tunnel contracts, the rest are grazing and forestry.

FY 2024 Signup 2

- 83 total applications including Signup 1 Deferrals and Signup 2 applicants, not broken down into the following fund pools.
- Status of funding:
 - CSP
 - CPA-DIA-CEMA
 - On-Farm Energy
 - Quail
 - GWW
 - NWQI

Union Applications and Contracts

- 16 EQIP Round 1 preapprovals
- 20 Round 2 EQIP and CSP applications in the above listed funding pools.

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District Greenbrier Valley Work Unit DC Report

3/21/2024

Upcoming Deadlines –

- March 29 is the deadline for 3rd Quarter Performance evaluations. We've completed three and have one that will be done tomorrow.
- March 29th deadline for Contract Reviews: calling clients to discuss what they have due this year.
- April 5th is the obligation deadline for the applications selected for funding.
- April 12th is the Assessment deadline for Signup 1 deferrals and Signup 2 applicants.

Office Administration

Field Office Priorities

- Assessments.
- Obligations.
- Contract Reviews.

Upcoming Events

- Wanda wanted me to inform the Board that she is working on the Farmer's Day booth.

Special Projects

- Monroe: Farmer's Day. We have attended this annually.
- Lewisburg: State Fair. My goal is that each of my planners pulls a shift at the table/booth, this year.
- Pocahontas: Autumn Harvest Day, September. I'll have the Buckeye office look into how NRCS can participate as an outreach event.

Staffing Updates

- Shawna Weatherholtz' last day is March 29th, she will be leaving Quail Forever to take a Soil Con position in Kyser.
- Dave Moore is on detail as the WV State Business Tools Coordinator.
- After the Continuing Resolution was approved, Brandon pushed to hire two ACES employees: a field support for Monroe and a Civil Engineer Tech/Soil Con Tech for Lewisburg. We're waiting to see if the hires are pushed through and accepted.

Questions for the Board Supervisors

- Recommendations for the Local Working Group meeting?
May 29th is the tentative date, 9 am to 11 pm.
- Board Supervisor "Ride-a-longs." I'd like to ask if any of the supervisors would be interested in accompanying me or one of my staff for site inventory, planning, practice design, or practice

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District Greenbrier Valley Work Unit DC Report

3/21/2024

certification. This is an effort to try to provide the supervisors an understanding of how your NRCS staff is servicing your district. I can only speak for Greenbrier and Pocahontas.

Questions from the Board Supervisors

- How many more investigation teams will be required for the removal of the weir? This has already been done. It has been a point of contention for several years.
- When is the investigation team coming to the weir? The Board was told they would be invited to attend and to discuss with the team.
- What is the point of the LWG meeting? It seems like a lot of work for little return. We conduct the meeting, collect the information, and submit it to NRCS State Technical Committee, but never get feedback on how the meeting and our time investment translate to changes in how NRCS is funding conservation in the District.
- The Supervisors asked if there was any feedback from the SHPO and THPO regarding Cultural Resources reviews being returned so people can start work.

Any questions may be directed to the undersigned at doria.perez@usda.gov or (304) 290-2318.

DORIAN PEREZ Digitally signed by DORIAN PEREZ
Date: 2024.03.21 21:00:27 -04'00'

District Conservationist

Distribution:

Jon Bourdon, State Conservationist (STC)
Jeff Barr, State Conservationist (STC), Acting
Brandon Duckworth, Assistant State Conservationist – Field Operations (ASTC-FO)
Burton 'Matt' Murphy, Area Resource Conservationist (ARC)
Julie Stutler, NRCS Outreach Coordinator
Greenbrier Valley Board of Supervisors (c/o Angie Sawyers)
Wanda Smith, Monroe District Conservationist
NRCS Field Office Staff: Lewisburg and Buckeye Service Centers

LOCAL PRIORITIES FOR MAJOR LAND USES

Top three resource concerns for **Cropland** (includes **Hayland**).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Top three resource concerns for **Pastureland**.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Top three resource concerns for **Forest**.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Top three resource concerns for land use selected by the LWG (_____)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The cost share programs include:

- Ag Enhancement Program (GVCD),
- 319 Program (WVCA),
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP, NRCS),
- Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA, NRCS),
- Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP, NRCS)
- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP, NRCS/Farmland Protection),
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP, FSA),
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP, FSA).



March 2024 WVCA Report

Request to Conservation Districts

The WVCA is encouraging Conservation Districts to review and update your District Policy Manuals. In addition to your policy manual you are encouraged to review your CD Employee Manual (if you have one) and your CD Plan of Work. If you are already doing these reviews, please disregard this request.

District Personnel Plan

District Personnel Plans are due to the SCC in March. Failure to meet the deadline may cause a delay in approving the District's personnel plan and the release of state funds for those positions.

Conservation District Operation (CDO) Grant Funds

Districts are asked to prepare your CDO budget report. The budget is to be submitted to Fiscal Services and your Area Director by March 30, so it can be presented to SCC in April.

Conservation Farm Tour

It is time for districts to be thinking about the conservation farm families to be awarded. CDs should have their district farm selection to their Area Directors by May 31.

Timelines:

- **May 31** - County and District judging.
- **July** - Area judging.
- **August** - Statewide judging.
- **October** – Presentation of Area and State awards at WV Conservation Partnership Annual Conference. County and District winners at local Conservation District annual banquets.

O&M Agreements:

CD's are encouraged to continue to work with local sponsors for O&M funding. The change will be that these agreements will not be matched dollar for dollar as they were in the past. The WVCA will be allocating funds on a watershed basis moving forward to help with O&M costs.

AGEP Timeline:

- **March** - State AgEP committee meeting to finalize upcoming FY AgEP
- **April** - Presentation of upcoming FY AgEP to SCC
- **May/June/July** – CDs to finalize upcoming FY program, update AgEP agreement addendums, take action to approve LORs
- **June 15** – Deadline for CDs submit final practice list to WVCA (CDs can submit final list any time after SCC approval of practice list)

WV State Fair Sign Ups

The schedule for state fair volunteers is now available under the WVCA admin webpage. If you would like to schedule a time frame to work at the fair, please contact your Administrative Specialist.



March 2024 Board Report from Heather Duncan, WVACD Executive Director

April Quarterly Meeting

The April Quarterly Meeting will be held on Monday, April 8 at the La Quinta in Morgantown. Rooms can be reserved by calling the hotel directly (1-304-241-4501) using the booking code: 040824WVA

or

Using the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/289rhk2k> . The room rate is \$99 plus any taxes and fees. The room block ends March 10 so please book your room prior to that date. The following day will be the SCC meeting which will be held on the WVU campus.

July Quarterly Meeting

Please send speaker and topic ideas to hduncan@wvca.us as you think of them. Especially if there is something that you think other supervisors would benefit, especially in regard to supervisor training.

The dates for the July quarterly meeting are July 15-16 at the Clarion Harpers Ferry (Jefferson County).

NACD Annual Meeting & Other NACD News

The Spring NACD Fly In will be held March 20, 2024. Please let me know if you plan to attend! There are 2 webinars on March 12 and 14 at 3 pm. More info can be found here: <https://www.nacdnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/NACD-2024-DC-Fly-In-Schedule-2-1.pdf>

The Urban and Community Grant has been announced. It is due April 1 Visit <https://www.nacdnet.org/about-nacd/what-we-do/urban-and-community/> for more information.

Points to takeaway from the NACD Annual Meeting:

- Working Lands Climate Corps was announced.
- Gary Blair was elected as President-Elect
- There are 4 NGLI cohorts this year
- WV received the 100% membership award this year
- There was an underlying theme of remembering that we are all here for more than ourselves and personal gain.

Here is a link to [Wayne's NACD report](#). This was also sent out in an email March 1, 2024.

WVACD Scholarships due MARCH 4

The WVACD Scholarship is due in the WVACD office on Monday, March 4. Late submissions will not be accepted.

WVACD Grant Reporting Period Ending

For those with a WVACD outreach grant, the reporting quarter of Jan-March will end soon. Please have your reports to hduncan@wvca.us AND wvacd@wvca.us by April 5th if possible. Many grants will have a lot to spend in the next quarter.

WV Envirothon Updates

The WV Envirothon will be held April 18-19 at Cedar Lakes. The cost for registration of a 5 student, 2 teacher team (considered a full team) staying for one night is \$455.00. There is an option this year to stay one extra night which would bring the cost for the team to \$566. The late registration fee for teams (registered post March 1) is \$75 compared to the early registration fee (registered prior to March 1) of \$50. The average is \$65 per person this year.

If your district will be hosting a training day, please contact Davin White (dwhite@wvca.us) so that he may put it on the Envirothon website.

Other

Congratulations to Andy Deichert who was awarded the 2024 Engineer of the Year for WV and NRCS.

High Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has been found in a mixed backyard flock in Kanawha Co. Please remember to stay vigilant and to practice best safety practices.

The latest NASS census is available. More information can be found here: [2022-Census-of-Agriculture-USDA-NASS.pdf \(southeastagnet.com\)](#)

State Fair signups are available. Please check with your AS for available time slots. You can also check with Clyde Bailey for more information.

Please send any district events and announcements to me (hduncan@wvca.us) so that I can place them in our online calendar and also include on the Facebook page and other outreach avenues.

Do not forget about the www.wvacd.org website as it contains a lot of information and answers to commonly asked questions.

Upcoming Dates

March 20, 2024: NACD Fly In at Washington DC

April 2, 2024: Eastern Area Meeting at MCD

March 22, 2024: Central Area Meeting at GVCD

April 8, 2024: Quarterly Meeting at LaQuinta Morgantown

April 9, 2024: State Conservation Committee Meeting at 270 Mylan Park LN, Morgantown, WV, West Virginia