

The **Tygarts Valley Conservation District** Board of Supervisors held a Regular Board Meeting on April 21, 2025, commencing at 9:00 am at the Philippi District Office, and via TEAMS.

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**Supervisors Present:** Donnie Tenney (chairman), James Nester, Donald Adams, Mateal Poling, Delbert Vandevander, James Dean, Tom Short

**WVCA:** Darian Carson, Ben Heavner, Jim Roy, Erin Krieger, Don Whetzel, Amber Higgins, Cindy Shreve (virtual), Heather Duncan (virtual)

**NRCS:** Robert Shomo, Tyler Putzulu, Jessica Ball, Kelly Grose

**WVACD:** Heather Duncan (virtual)

**Extension:** Jody Carpenter, Brittany Leggett

**Visitors:** Robert Kuhn, Gene Hovatter

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The meeting was called to order by Chairman Donnie Tenney. Nester led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Reading/Approval of the Agenda/Minutes:** 4/21/25 Agenda, 3/19/25 Education Committee Meeting Minutes, and 3/10/25 Regular Board Meeting Minutes presented; **Nester moved to approve all as presented; Short seconded; motion carried.**

**Introduction and Recognition of Visitors:** Tenney introduced Robert Kuhn of Aerial Applications LLC who described drone spraying services now locally available. Gene Hovatter of Higher Knowledge Farms LLC demonstrated applications for the free Web Soil Survey site, also reminded of the upcoming free tech application class to be held at TVCD 6:30pm on 4/29/25.

**Correspondence:**

- **Upshur FFA Envirothon request:** Tenney reported that the students didn't attend Envirothon after all, so their request has been withdrawn.
- **WVU Extension's 4-H National Land Judging Contest request:** **Nester Moved to donate \$750; Poling seconded; motion carried.**
- **WV Watershed Network statewide symposium request:** **Short moved to donate \$100; Nester seconded; motion carried.**
- **WVCA Response to Grassland Grant Reallocation Request:** Shreve explained that since the funds were never intended for equipment purchases, they can only be reallocated based on a similar proposal written by a WVCA Conservation Specialist. Since WVCA is in the process of recruiting a new one for TVCD, she encouraged returning the funds until a new one is hired. **Nester moved to return the \$37,000 to WVCA; Adams seconded; motion carried.**

**Treasurer Report:** Vandevander presented; **Short moved to accept Treasurer's Report as presented, seconded by Adams; motion carried.**

**District Conservation & Work Crew Report:** Vandevander stated that Neil Posey got his CDL, they've installed 6 water troughs, built some fencing, plus several other brush and pond jobs ongoing and pending.

**Watershed O&M Report:** Roy reported that he has plenty of work lined up for the TVCD work crew.

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**WVCA:** Krieger stated that several Conservation Specialist candidates have been scheduled for job interviews this week, then introduced Ben Heavner from Potomac Valley who will be filling in to help with AgEp during interim. Whetzel reminded the board that Conservation Farm Tour nominations should be sent to him by mid-June.

**WVACD:** Duncan reported that the quarterly meeting in Bridgeport is coming up in July; please get any training requests or sponsorship suggestions to her ASAP since they're developing the agenda.

**WVU Extension:** Leggett stated that Upshur hired a new 4-H agent, farmers markets are starting, and Women in Ag Conference is coming up. Carpenter reported that he took the 4-H kids to Beef Expo and there have been lots of soil sample submissions; turnaround time currently 3-4 weeks since it's busy season.

**NRCS:** Shomo reported several planning and field visits, practices completed per report sent prior to meeting. Total practice installation payments \$194, 183.70 for month of April to date. Assessing 85 Farm Bill applications.

**WesMonTy:** Poling stated that they continue to work on outreach for bluebird and pollinator. Putting final touches on some grant applications with deadlines coming up soon.

**Old Business / Drought Assistance Update:** Higgins referred to the list of remaining applicants pending pasture renovation checks for April and advised that funds have been received; just waiting for information on allocation. Also referenced \$503.04 invoice for TVCD's incurred expenses that WVCA has already approved & forwarded on to Dept of Ag for payment.

**Building/Finance/Budget Committee:**

- **NRCS:** Shomo reported that current plans are to be out of the office by June 20<sup>th</sup>.
- **WVCA Additional Office Rental:** **Short moved to rent the 288 square foot office at the rear of the former WVU Extension space to WVCA for Watershed Program Coordinator at \$15/sf; Nester seconded; motion carried.**
- **Cvechko Insurance Lease:** **Nester moved to make an exception for their next lease term to be \$14/sf instead of \$15/sf since tenant declines cleaning services; Poling seconded; motion carried.**

**Equipment/Safety Committee:** Nester reported safety meeting was held that morning on proper tool inventory & placement.

**Education/Publicity/Exhibit Committee:** Poling stated that a productive meeting was held on 3/19 and we now have survey results for Grazing Field Day planning. Primary concerns were accessible parking and portable sanitary facilities. Krieger reminded the board that she will need a rough agenda 2-3mos ahead of time to start LOR process. Since the survey indicated most interest in an event held late Aug-Oct, Poling suggested that the next Education Committee meeting be scheduled during the May board meeting.

**Legislative Committee:** Tenney asked for clarification regarding AgEP allocation amount. Shreve stated that \$550k has been allocated for this fiscal year, and her understanding is that reappropriated dollars will make up the difference from the previous amount of \$880k. Tenney went on to report that the request for additional per diem funds was denied because it wasn't in the budget.

**Grassland/AgEP Committee:** The following Conservation Agreements and were presented:

Baker, James	Delaney, Robert	O'Brien, Chester
Beeson, Jared	Gooden, Darrel	Phillips, Derek
Boyce, Richard	Hissam, Kevin	Plitt, Cheryl
Cantrell, Gregory	Hornbeck, Caroll	Richman, John
Carpenter, Jeff & Jaxon	Leggett, Zachary &	Rohr, William
Cross, Brian & Sheela	Brittany	Russell, Ralph
Cunningham, Steven	Lewis, Timothy Lee	Sharp, Frederick
Davis, Glenn	Licking Creek Farm, LLC	Stottlemeyer Jr, Michael
	Mitchell, Bryan	

The Awe and Wander Co,  
LLC  
Thornhill, Matthew  
Titchnell, Joseph

Tucker, Brent  
Tucker, Kody  
Van Zyl, Douglas  
Walton, Courtney

Walton, Garry  
Wentz, Gloria  
White, Greg  
Winans, Gary

**Short moved to approve the Conservation Agreements as presented; Adams seconded; motion carried.**

**The following AgEP Payments were presented:**

D. Carr	Urban Agriculture	\$441.63
T. Knotts	Frost Seeding	\$820.00
M. Poling	Lime	\$360.00
B. Tucker	Invasive Species	\$2,000.00
G. Hovatter	Watering System	\$3,000.00
T. Sheldon	Watering System	\$3,000.00
J. Harvey	Watering System	\$1,750.00
M. Nestor	Pond Cleanout	\$2,000.00
R. Nestor	Pond Cleanout	\$2,000.00
G. Wentz	Invasive Species	\$1,586.00
G. Wentz	Pond Cleanout	\$680.00
L. Newbrough	Pond Cleanout	\$2,000.00
T. Knotts	Lime	\$400.00

**Short moved to approve the AgEP Payments as presented; Adams seconded; motion carried.**

**Carson requested extensions to June 6<sup>th</sup> for Gary Elbon and George Shaw; Vandevander moved to approve, Poling seconded; motion carried.**

Carson announced that although she will be working out of the back office of the former WVU Extension space, her availability will be limited going forward since she has accepted a position as WVCA Watershed Program Coordinator which will necessitate frequent travel. She reiterated that Ben Heavner will fill in as ConSpec until a new one is hired.

**WVACD Directors Report:** Nester stated that bylaws were discussed at quarterly meeting; GLCI partnering with Farm Bureau on a grant in all counties

**Personnel Committee:** Postponed to executive session at the end of the meeting

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**New Business:**

**Freedom of Information Act Requests:** Wetzel suggested that since several districts receive the FOIA request that TVCD also received last month, the board might consider putting together an SOP for future ones,

especially since the response needs to be registered with Secretary of State's office within 5 days. Tenney acknowledged that a response is required and that the board will keep it in mind going forward.

**Purchase of a Post Driver:** After discussing whether to buy a new one, **Nester moved to authorize Dean to bid up to \$5K at an upcoming auction for a used post driver; Poling seconded; motion carried.**

**LOR # 16302 - WVU Extension GRASS Partnership, \$20,000:** Nestor moved to approve; Short seconded; motion carried.

**LOR # 16318 - FY25 AgEP Exigency Rebalance Allotment, \$1,785.17:** Dean moved to approve; Short seconded; motion carried.

#### **Supervisor Reports:**

**Vandevander:** see prior reports already made

**Short:** signed checks

**Poling:** Education committee meeting, local workgroup, beekeeper

**Adams:** Local workgroup, regular board meeting

**Nester:** Local workgroup, regular board meeting, quarterly, drone spraying demonstration

**Tenney:** Local workgroup, beekeepers, DC Fly-In, quarterly meeting, Envirothon

**Shaffer:** Higgins delivered his regrets due to medical procedure; will apply to May board meeting as well

**At 10:45am, Nester moved to go into executive session for a personnel discussion as per WV state code 6-9A-4a; Nestor seconded; motion passed.**

Executive session ended at 11:15am.

**Nestor moved to have Vandevander interview candidates for Laborer position, Quentin Marsh to start leading the work crew as a 3-month trial at \$22/hr, and Neal Posey to receive a \$2/hr raise since he got his CDL, as per the TVCD Policies and Procedures Manual. Adams Seconded; motion passed.**

**At 11:20am, Short motioned to adjourn; Nester seconded; motion passed; meeting adjourned.**

Minutes recorded and prepared by Amber Higgins – WVCA Administrative Specialist