

NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
December 11, 2025
10:00 a.m.

Supervisors Present

Jim Anderson, Hancock County – Vice-Chairman
Chuck Glenn, Hancock County – Treasurer
Steve Paull, Brooke County
Eric Freeland, Brooke County
Robert Luchetti, Jr., Ohio County
Amy Wade, Ohio County – Secretary
David McCardle, Marshall County
Mark Fitzsimmons, Marshall County – Chairman

Others Present

Veronica Gibson, Administrative Specialist, WVCA
Gene Saurborn, Director of Field Operations, WVCA
Don Whetzel, District Operations Manager, WVCA via Teams
Jessica Otte, Watershed Technician, WVCA
Davin White, Communications Specialist, WVCA via Teams
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS
Heather Duncan, Executive Director, WVACD via Teams
Victoria White, District Administrator, NPCD via Teams
Abby Clegg, Soil Tester, NPCD
Bob Straub, CPA, Hartley & Straub

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, December 11, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. at the USDA Service Center in McMechen.

Pledge of Allegiance – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Minutes

- **David McCardle made a motion to accept the November 2025 board meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**

Financial Report

- Bob Straub reviewed the November 2025 NPCD funds. Due to the government shut down, GSA rent has not been received for USDA office space. Amy Wade asked Bob Straub if there should be any concern by the district regarding funding NPCD employee salaries. Bob recommended using grant funds to support NPCD employee salaries if the grant allows.
- Chuck Glenn reviewed the November 2025 Co-Administered funds. Gene Saurborn stated that any funds that were reimbursed to NPCD by ACNR need to be returned to the WVCA, not deposited to the UGC Mining Investigation account.
Chuck Glenn made a motion to file the November NPCD and Co-Administered funds for audit. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.

Reports

- Farm Service Agency (FSA) – No report

- WV Division of Forestry (WVDof) – No report.
- WV Conservation Agency (WVCA) – Don Whetzel reviewed a written report.
 - Don spoke about the WVDEP nonregulatory air sensor partnership opportunity. The board would like to receive four of the sensors and install one in each county.

December 2025 WVCA Report

Request to Conservation Districts

The WVCA is encouraging Conservation Districts to review and update their District Policy Manuals. Districts are also encouraged to review their CD Employee Manual (if you have one).

Agricultural Enhancement Program (AgEP) Administrative Review

Each District’s Administrative Specialist will conduct a review of 10% or a minimum of 3 files with applications that fiscal year and submit the Administrative Review Form to their District Operations Manager by January 31st. By completing this review halfway through a fiscal year, staff will have time to find possible procedural errors and take steps to prevent them from happening in the future.

The Administrative Review process will allow WVCA to ensure that all proper documentation is physically accessible in the district cooperator file, and that the districts’ online database records system is in agreement with WVCA financial records system.

Ag Enhancement Program Timeline

December 15- State AgEP committee meeting to finalize upcoming FY program.

January - 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)

The **district personnel plan is due to SCC in March**, so please add to your February agenda for review and approval.

Ag Day/Legislative Meet and Greet

February 18th

- WV Association of Conservation Districts (WVACD) – Heather Duncan reviewed a written report.

December 2025 Board Report from Heather Duncan, WVACD Executive Director

February Quarterly Meeting and Ag & Conservation Day

The one day meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 17th at the WVACD office. An agenda will be coming in January. Committee meetings will meet prior to the quarterly meeting. Please contact committee chairs for meeting information.

The following day will be Ag & Conservation Day at the Capitol. More information will be coming soon, including a schedule and other information. Please remember to order any handouts and to bring one pop up banner to represent your CD. Please also remember to schedule meetings with your legislators. There will be a legislative committee meeting in January with a date TBD.

Magnets Available

WVACD has wooden magnets for sale! They are made right here in St. Albans! They are available for \$5 each. The proceeds will go to further our mission and goals. A picture has been sent to AS’ and also included in the quarterly newsletter. They are housed at the WVACD office and can be purchased there.

NACD Spring Fly In

The NACD Spring Fly In will be held on March 25th. More information will be coming about this event. It's a great way to see the federal government in action and also a great way to meet fellow conservation district supervisors from across the nation. I think it is a very worthwhile event to attend at least once. Last year it was a special treat to be in town when the cherry blossoms were blooming!

NACD Annual Meeting

The NACD annual meeting will be held February 15-19, 2026 in San Antonio, Texas. Registration is now open. Please contact Wayne McKeever or Heather Duncan for more information if you are interested in attending.

Appalachian Grazing Conference

If you have not heard, AGC will be a three day, three site format this year. April 30 at the Wardensville WVU farm, May 1 at the WV State Fairgrounds, and May 2 at the WV State Farm. More information will be coming soon. Registration and vendor forms are available now. Contact Allen Rush or myself for more information. <http://www.wvagc.com>

Sustainable Management in Agriculture using Regenerative Techniques Grant (SMART Farms WV Grant)

This grant is through NASDA and is available to non-Chesapeake Bay draining counties to establish native warm season grasses into pastures and log landing sites focusing on Historically Underserved producers. This grant is a partnership with WVCA, WVACD, and WVDOP. This is a great grant to reach out to someone who is not currently a cooperater with the district to help get their foot in the door. Please contact myself or Dylan Johnson, WVCA, for more information.

Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI)

This grant is housed by WVCA with funding coming from NRCS. This is to develop conservation district field days, create learning stations, and hold virtual pasture walk. \$3,000 is available to conservation districts to host a workshop on grazing and soil health topics. Conservation districts may combine funding and workshops to host a larger scale event. \$400 is available for a learning station at the conservation district office.

Grasslands Committee

If you are interested in becoming involved with the Grasslands Committee, please let Heather know. The committee would like to see 1-2 supervisor members from each conservation district represented. Currently, the committee meets quarterly at the WVACD office and a virtual option is available as well. Please contact Heather or committee chair, Jim Anderson for more information.

WVACD Communication and Outreach Employees

Please do not forget to contact Julie Simmons (wvacdoutreach2@wvacd.onmicrosoft.com) and Vanta Coda (wvacdoutreach@wvacd.onmicrosoft.com) for your outreach needs. Rather it's developing printed or online materials, assisting with outreach events, or coming up with ideas to reach new producers or CSP outreach, they are here to help!

Membership and Educational Needs

If you would like to discuss your membership needs, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Also, please let me know what other continuing education and training you need to be a better supervisor and/or director. I especially want to hear what type of training, educational events, and

the format you would like to see at quarterly meetings. We've had in depth and updates at various quarterly meetings, but I'm still hearing there are questions and confusion even with offering various topics of concern.

Upcoming Dates

Monday, January 5, 2026: Eastern Area Meeting at TVCD Office, 10 am

Monday, January 12, 2026: Western Area Meeting, VIRTUAL, 10 am

Tuesday, January 13, 2026: WV SCC Meeting, Guthrie

Thursday, January 22, 2026: WV Conservation Awards Council Meeting, Guthrie, 10 am

Friday, January 30, 2026: Central Area Meeting, ECD Office, 10 am

- Heather spoke about the NACD Spring Fly In. Robert Luchetti, Jr., would like to attend the NACD Spring Fly In and is requesting that the NPCD district pay for his daily per diem only. This will appear on the January NPCD board meeting agenda.
- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – Katie Fitzsimmons reviewed a written report.

December 2025

NRCS Report: Northern Panhandle Conservation District

Trainings/Upcoming Events/Outreach Programs

FY 2026 EQIP/AMA/CSP

- National sign up ends in January

Field Visits/Conservation Planning

Staff completed field visits for conservation planning, technical assistance, and practice certifications.

Staff are reviewing contracts to ensure designs are completed.

Misc.

Hancock County Office Hours – we still have people coming in to meet with us!

- Winter hours will be looked at based on weather conditions

- Katie reported that NRCS is working with the NPCD district and the WVACD for information needed for the NACD TA grant. The Guyan CD, Southern CD, as well as the NPCD are applying along with the WVACD for the NACD TA grant.
- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC) – No report.
- Administrative Specialist (WVCA) – No report.
- District Administrator (NPCD) – Victoria White reported the following.
 - The Tri-State Beekeepers Association requested a letter of support from the NPCD for a grant that they are applying for. **Amy Wade made a motion to provide a letter of support to the Tri-State Beekeepers Association for a grant that they are applying for. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
 - Victoria reviewed a written report.

NPCD District Administrator

December Updates:

General Updates:

If you have items that need added to Facebook or website, please email with necessary information

December schedule is now available for all supervisors

Promotion for Envirothon, Samara, Photo Contest, and Poster Contest has begun (all available on website)

Equipment:

2025: \$5,270 total income; 2024: \$5,023 total income; 2023: \$3,044.60 total income; 2022: \$1,240.80 total income

Events:

Tentative 2026 Schedule attached

Grants:

Name	Amount	Progress
Northern Panhandle RC&D (Educational Material)	\$500	Awarded Used towards Pumpkin Experiment \$275 remaining
GLCI Pasture Walk (Grazing Field Day)	\$3,000	Reimbursement from WVCA for rescheduled Grazing Field Day
Helen J. Prince Foundation	\$20,000	Awarded
NACD Technical Assistance Grant	\$100,000	Applying through WVACD
WV Beekeepers Association Grant	\$1,000	Due December 31st, 2025
Center for Behavior and Climate (CBC)	\$7,200	In Review
FirstEnergy Foundation		In Review
Anderson-Rogers Foundation		In Review
AEP Foundation		In Review
Daniel K. Thorne Foundation		In Review
Chris Hess Foundation		In Review

- Soil Tester – Abby Clegg reviewed a written report.

Tasks in Progress or Completed:

TA Grant

- Submitted all necessary documents to Heather
- Corresponding with her as necessary to ensure she has all needed information from NPCD

General Updates & Tasks

- Daily Office Tasks; phones, equipment, anything Victoria/Veronica need, etc.

Soil/Forage Sampling & Prep

- Collected forage samples as requested
- Prepared and mailed forage and soil samples
- Created and filed maps and forms for all samples collected

Equipment Rentals/Sales

- Prepared Compost/Rain Barrels for pick up as purchased
- Cut and prepared fabric for pick-up as purchased
- Handled equipment rentals and logging as needed

NPCD Christmas Luncheon

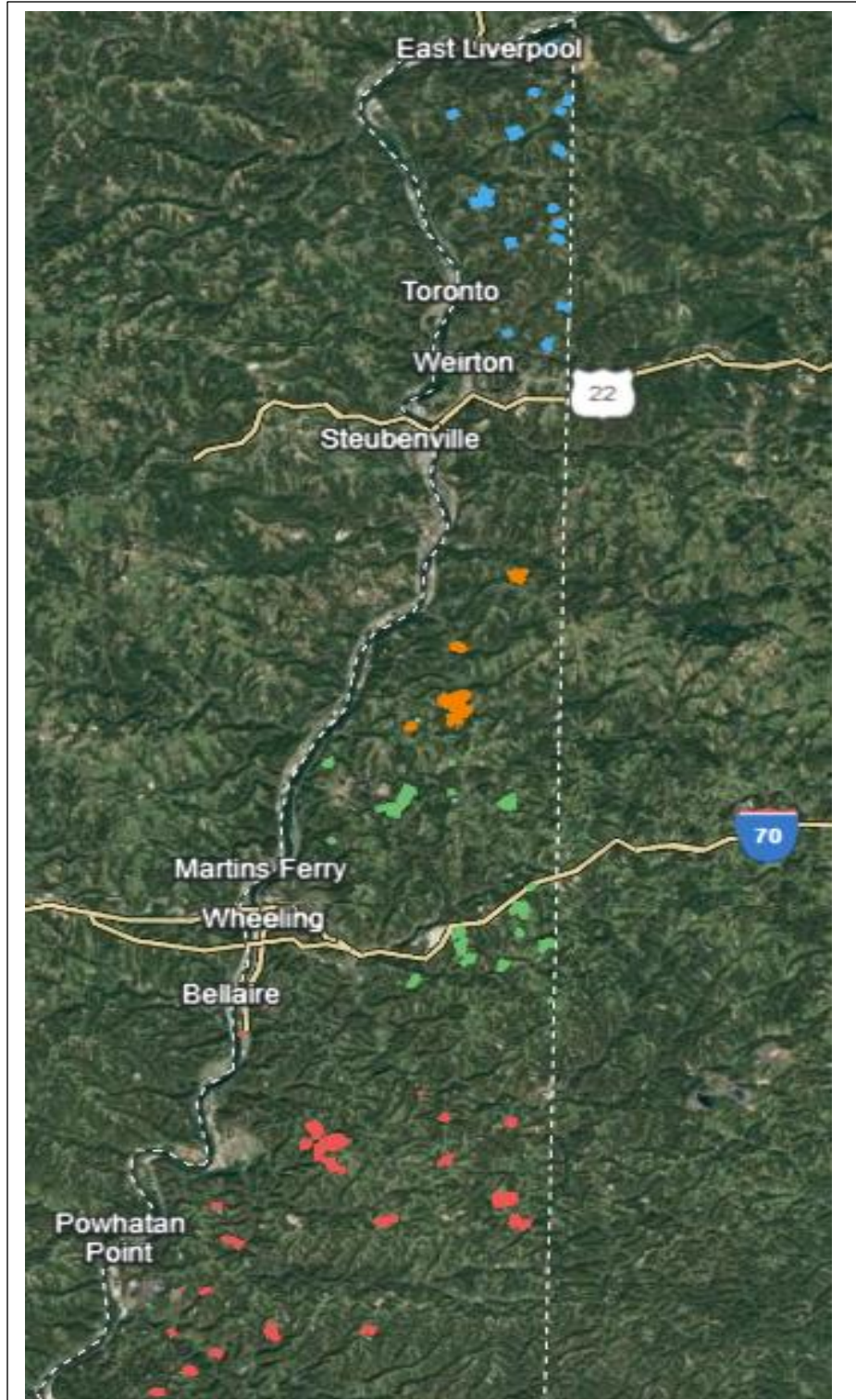
- Handled RSVPs
- Arranged catering
- Created and distributed invitations

Education/Outreach

- Keeping Facebook up to date with current events and information
- Adding updated applications, graphics, and information to website

- Preparing flyers and sending out information about Envirothon & Samara Contests
- Creating graphics for Photo & Poster Contests, Envirothon, Samara, and Century Farms
- Helping Victoria plan/schedule educational activities for 2026
- Began scheduling advertisements/posts for 2026 activities
- Attended Education Committee Meeting

Completed Soil Sampling Map for 2025





Total Acres Sampled: 2,278.5; Collected Forage Samples for 14 Cooperators

- There was a discussion to have Abby talk about soil testing at events and put an article in the newsletter that Abby is available to review soil test results with cooperators.

- Visitors - None

- Committee Reports
 - Equipment Committee
 - David McCardle reported that the 2013 spreader is back from Knight's and the tire needs repaired.
 - Victoria White provided a written equipment rental report.
 - Jim Anderson reported that the skid steer and the truck would not start. He said the district needs to purchase a trickle charger.
 - Mark Fitzsimmons and Jim Anderson put all equipment that would fit in the bays.
 - Building Committee
 - Mark Fitzsimmons suggested a three-sided open shed be built on the east side of the property across from the garage. It would be used to store equipment. There was a discussion regarding the size of the building. **Jim Anderson made a motion to ask the NPCD Foundation to have a three-sided storage building built. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed.**
 - High Tunnel Committee
 - Abby Clegg said the lettuce and garlic are growing.
 - AgEP Committee
 - The State AgEP Committee meeting will be held December 15.
 - Safety Committee
 - Eric Freeland reported that a safety committee meeting was held at 9:30 this morning. Eric, Robert Luchetti, Jr., and David McCardle attended the meeting.
 - Bee Committee
 - Victoria White will meet with the Tri-State Bee Association to discuss 2026 events.

Old Business

- Upper Grave Creek #7, #8, & #9 – ACNR Mining
 - Amy Wade would like to have a meeting scheduled with the NPCD attorney. Robert Luchetti, Jr., will contact the attorney to set up a meeting soon.

- Robert Luchetti, Jr. wrote a letter to Harold Ward, WVDEP Cabinet Secretary, pertaining to concerns regarding subsidence damage to flood control dams Upper Grave Creek #7 and #9 that have impacted the integrity and serviceability of these structures.
 - Jim Anderson asked if the NPCD attorney should be who the letter comes from. Robert Luchetti Jr. will send the letter to the NPCD attorney to review.
 - Jim Anderson wants to know if NPCD signs the letter, could the district be called as a witness. Jim feels that if the letter comes directly from the NPCD, the district will not be involved.
 - Gene Saurborn recommended that the NPCD engineer review the technical parts of the letter.
 - **Amy Wade made a motion to send the letter to WVDEP after it has been approved by the NPCD attorney and the NPCD engineer. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
 - Amy Wade and Robert Luchetti, Jr., feel the district should go public with the mining situation. Robert Luchetti, Jr., feels the citizens in Cameron need to be brought up to speed of the situation.

- Tygarts Valley CD Lawsuit
 - Robert Luchetti, Jr., has not been able to work on securing an attorney.

- WVCA Lease Renewal SCC-011
 - A lease contract was received from the WV Real Estate Division. The lease commences 3/1/2026 through 2/28/2031 with no changes to the current lease. **Amy Wade made a motion to approve the lease from the WV Real Estate Division dated 3/1/2026 through 2/28/2031 as presented. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**

- Review/Approve District Policy Manuals
 - The NPCD held a meeting 12/3/2025 to review policy manuals. All supervisors received a draft of each policy with changes to review.
 - Information Technology Acceptable Usage Policy and Procedures
 - **David McCardle made a motion to approve the Information Technology Acceptable Usage Policy and Procedures as presented. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**
 - Sexual Harassment Policy
 - **David McCardle made a motion to approve the Sexual Harassment Policy in its original format. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**
 - NPCD Policy Manual
 - **Amy Wade made a motion to approve the NPCD Policy Manual as presented. Seconded by Eric Freeland. Motion passed.**
 - Time and Attendance Policy and Procedures
 - **Amy Wade made a motion to approve the Time and Attendance Policy and Procedures as presented. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
 - NPCD Employee Policy
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to approve the NPCD Employee Policy as presented. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**

- Grant Funds Bank Account
 - Robert Luchetti, Jr., will open a new account for the grant funds.
- Riding Mower Repairs
 - Jim Anderson will repair the wheels on the mower deck. Robert Luchetti Jr. will take care of getting the hood replaced.
- NPCD Work Crew
 - Thirty resumes have been received. The NPCD Personnel Committee will review the resumes to get to a lower number of applicants. The remaining resumes will be reviewed at a future meeting.

New Business

- Appalachian Grazing Conference
 - Donation
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to donate \$1,000.00 to the 2026 Appalachian Grazing Conference. The motion died for a lack of a second.**
 - Cooperator Sponsorship
 - **Jim Anderson made a motion to reimburse conference registration and mileage for two cooperators from each county. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed. Amy Wade opposed.**
- Request Funding from NPCD Foundation for Education Programs
 - **Amy Wade made a motion to use the Helen J. Prince grant funds - \$20,000.00 – for employee salaries and to ask the NPCD Foundation to sponsor the \$9,200.00 for NPCD education programs as needed. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- 2025 NPCD Highlights for WVCA Annual Report
 - Davin White asked the board what they would want to be presented on the NPCD page for the WVCA annual report. Items discussed were Hands on Ag Day, Conservation Farm, Women in Ag, Ohio County Flood, Beekeeping Events, and Education District of the Year. Victoria White will send information to Davin.
- WVU Extension – Ohio County – Winter Meetings Support Request
 - A letter was received from Karen Cox, Ohio County Agent – WVU Extension Service, requesting support for two upcoming programs to be held January 12 and February 9, 2026. **Jim Anderson made a motion to donate \$400.00 to support Ohio County WVU Extension programs to be held in January and February 2026. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed. The donation will be paid from the NPCD General Fund.**
- Ohio River Bill
 - An email was received from Judith Lyons, WVCA Executive Director, requesting supervisor support of the Ohio River Restoration Program Act H.R. 5966 that could secure federal funding for the Ohio River Basin. **Jim Anderson made a motion for the NPCD to support the Ohio River Bill and to be the NPCD representative. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.** Jim Anderson will be the NPCD representative.

- Wheeling Creek Dams EAP Statement of Review 2025
 - The Wheeling Creek Dams emergency action plans were updated and approved in April 2025. The WVCA presented the statement of review that needs to be signed for each Wheeling Creek watershed dam. **Robert Luchetti, Jr., made a motion to sign the statement of review for each Wheeling Creek watershed dam. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- 2026 Education Programs and Budget
Proposed Budgets for 2026 Educational Programs

Cattleman’s Conference

- Hold in two locations
 - *North & South
- Dates: April TBD
- Budget: \$2,000 total (\$1,000/day)
- Registration Fee: \$15

Compost Barrel Workshop

- Date: TBD
- Budget: \$500
- Registration Fee: \$30
- *Limit 30 people

Local Work Group Meeting/Local

Conservation Discussion

- Location: USDA Service Center
- Date: May 14th
- Budget: \$1,000
- Registration Fee: \$15

Pollinator Field Day

- Date: Spring
- Budget: \$1,000
- Registration Fee: \$15

Forestry Field Day

- Date: September TBD
- Budget: \$750
- Registration Fee: \$15

Tree I.D. Workshop

- Date: Late Summer
- Budget: \$1,000
- Registration Fee: \$15

Youth Beekeeping Program

- Date: Summer
- Budget: \$500
- No Registration Fee

Pumpkin Experiment

- Date: Fall
- Budget: \$500

Rain Barrel Workshop

- Date: TBD
- Budget: \$1,000
- Registration Fee: \$30
- *Limit 30 People

Elementary Student Planting/Harvesting

- Date: Plant in Spring; Harvest in Fall
- Budget: \$500

Community Garden/High Tunnel

- Budget: \$500
- Needs: *Row Cover
- *Seed Starting Station

Open House

- Locations: USDA Service Center (Marshall) & New Manchester VFD (Hancock)
- Dates: Marshall TBD; Hancock May 21st
- Budget: 200\$ (\$100/day)
- No Registration Fee

Total Cost Budgeted: \$9,200

No registration fees will be accepted at the door; they must be paid online or by check prior to the event. No refunds will be given for registration fees.

Jim Anderson made a motion to accept the 2026 education programs and budget. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

- Ag Enhancement Program (AgEP)
 - AgEP Exigency Application Approval

Name	Practice	Cost Share Payment
Dalton Ebbert	Temporary Fence	50% up to \$500.00
Carolyn R Harris	Temporary Fence	50% up to \$500.00
Zachary Sberna	Temporary Fence	50% up to \$500.00

David McCardle made a motion to approve the applications for the AgEP Exigency Program for D. Ebbert, C. Harris, and Z. Sberna. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

- AgEP Exigency Payment Approval

Name	Practice	Cost Share Payment
Dalton Ebbert	Temporary Fence	\$142.79
Jeffery Cumpston	Temporary Fence	\$500.00
Carolyn R Harris	Temporary Fence	\$35.00
Lewis Hopkins	Livestock Water Supply	\$341.87
Ronald K Mason	Temporary Fence	\$72.08
John L Miller	Cover Crop Establishment	\$500.00
Zachary Sberna	Temporary Fence	\$166.50
Paul Robert Seidewitz	Cover Crop Establishment	\$500.00
Kimberly Strum	Revegetation of Feeding Area	\$218.97
Kimberly Strum	Temporary Fence	\$39.98

Jim Anderson made a motion to approve the completed practices for the AgEP Exigency Program as presented for D. Ebbert, C. Harris, and Z. Sberna for payment from the NPCD General Fund. Seconded by Eric Freelend. Motion passed.

David McCardle made a motion to approve the completed practices for the AgEP Exigency Program as presented for J. Cumpston, L. Hopkins, R. Mason, J. L. Miller, P. Seidewitz, and K. Strum for payment. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

- AgEP Payment Approval

Name	Practice	Cost Share Payment
Nick Frankovitch	Nutrient Management – 21.8 acres	\$1,635.00

David McCardle made a motion to approve the completed practice for the AgEP as presented for N. Frankovitch for payment. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

Correspondence - None

Supervisor Reports - None

NEXT MEETING

The next board meeting will be held on **Thursday, January 8, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.**, at the USDA Service Center in McMechen.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.

Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman

Amy Wade, Secretary

Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson