

Greenbrier Valley Conservation District

February 19, 2026, 11:00am
Regular Board Meeting
Approved Minutes

The Greenbrier Valley Board of Supervisors met on Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 11:00am in the conference room of the USDA service center located in Lewisburg.

Those present:

Supervisors:

Chairman, Gary Sawyers
Donald McNeel (Virtual)
Avery Atkins
Timothy VanReenen
Gary Truex

Supervisors absent:

Carolyn Miller

Others:

Joseph Kirsch, U.S. Fish and Wildlife
John "Dave" Moore II, NRCS
Dewey Broyles, NRCS
Jeremy Salyer, WVCA (Virtual)
Jacob Lavender, WVCA
Morgan Dial, WVCA
Jason Nicolai, WVCA
Angela Feamster – Sawyers, WVCA
Kevin Hoke, GVCD

Chairman Sawyers called the meeting to order at 11:05am and welcomed everyone.

Approval of Minutes

*Donald McNeel moved for the approval of the January 15, 2026, regular board meeting minutes.
Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.*

Guests

Joseph Kirsch, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Programs Coordinator

Joseph, the project leader for the Appalachian Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office at the National Fish Hatchery in White Sulphur Springs, provided an overview of the seed Network partnership, which has secured just over \$1.6 million in funding for development work in West Virginia, expected to last about three years. The funding primarily comes from federal sources within the Fish and Wildlife Service, along with private donations from energy companies.

The partnership aims to enhance the seed supply chain for native local ecotype plants for restoration projects. The focus is on common species that are not rare but lack the appropriate strains and genetics for West Virginia ecosystems. The project will unfold in multiple phases, with the initial three to five years dedicated to collecting wild seeds from various ecoregions in the state and establishing increased plots for these plants.

Restoration efforts will take place in the Greenbrier Valley, including nature reserves owned by the West Virginia Land Trust and other Fish and Wildlife Service properties. Collaboration with the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will also occur for state park and forest management.

The project will employ a team of about five individuals for three years to conduct wild seed collection, utilizing specialized equipment for both seed collection and planting. This equipment will be shareable with interested landowners and agency staff for collaborative projects. The initiative emphasizes the importance of relationships with landowners to access suitable seed collection sites and to ensure compliance with federal protocols for seed collection and processing. – Discussion Ensued.

Administrative Specialist Report

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

Funding Requests

Timothy VanReenen moved to approve the following letter of request:

LOR: 16479- FY26 Q2 Employee Reimbursement: \$13,371.81; (AGR: 1525-00)

Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

Cooperating Agency Reports

- NRCS – John "David" Moore, the acting District Conservationist for Greenbrier Valley North, provided an update on the current workload and ongoing projects. He mentioned that they are processing FY26 applications, conducting assessments and rankings, and completing field visits. The team is managing 101 EQIP applications in Pocahontas and Greenbrier Counties, along with 26 CSP applications. Key deadlines include program eligibility on February 27, 2026, assessment and ranking by May 6, 2026, and funding obligations by July 1, 2026. He reported on the completion of three major stream restoration projects in Pocahontas County, with final payments underway. Additionally, he reported that the soil conservation technician is working on designs for CRP, grassland

ECP, and NRCS financial assistance, and their partner biologists are conducting wildlife and forestry assessments and assisting FSA with CREP site monitoring.

Dewey Broyles reported that they are currently focusing on assessments and catching up on payments for completed installation practices and fieldwork. They are managing approximately 70 ECP (Emergency Conservation Program) projects, which have received requests for extensions due to ongoing weather challenges. He also mentioned that they are working on a CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program) renewal for the Talbot family farm.

Avery Atkins moved to approve the CREP conservation plans for Oak Lawn Farm. Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

- FSA
- Forestry
- WVCA – District Operations Manager, Jeremy Salyer, reviewed the highlights of his report, which is attached.
- Other

Committee Reports

Finance Committee

- **Financial Reports**

Gary Truex moved on behalf of the committee to accept the general and CDO funds report, the WVCA restricted funds report, and file for audit. Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Gary Truex moved on behalf of the committee to pay the bills, per payables list. Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

Gary Truex reported that all former employee credit cards were successfully cancelled. He noted that Angela should be receiving a statement reflecting the cancellation. In addition, Chairman Sawyers provided an updated concerning updating the signatories for the City National Bank CD.

Agricultural Enhancement Program Committee

- **Action between board meetings**

Acting with delegated authority, Gary Truex approved a payment of \$1,231.25 to Larry Echols for Pasture Division Fence on January 15, 2026.

- **Payments for Approval**

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

- Kelly Hatfield- \$328.57- AWS (Exigency)
- Charles & Dorothy Larew - \$500.00 – AWS

Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

- **Contract Cancellations**

Timothy VanReenen moved on behalf of the committee to cancel the following contract and the cooperator will not be eligible to work with the district for a two-year period.

- Mason Owen - \$2,504.30

**Inability to complete the installation of troughs and pipeline by the program deadline and extensions granted.*

Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

Timothy VanReenen moved on behalf of the committee to transfer \$5,800 from CDO account to Co-Administered Interest Bearing AgEP Supplemental account (1015-00/10018-GV). Gary Truex seconded; motion carried.

Grassland Committee

- Updates (if any)

Gary Truex inquired about the advertisement for the conservation specialist position. Jacob Lavender stated that he had forwarded the information up the management chain, but he has not received any updates.

Following further discussion, *Gary Truex moved that Chairman Sawyers make a call regarding this matter and then the district follow up with a letter referencing that call and of previous communications since November/December. Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.*

Building/Equipment Committee

- Updates (if any)

The board of supervisors reviewed the monthly equipment report, which is attached.

Education Outreach/Events Committee

- **NASDA Grant**

Morgan Dial explained that they are in the final stages of the project for Rob Jiranek and are working to finalize the planning for warm season grasses. She mentioned that the fence project has resulted in higher costs and requested a contract amendment to increase the budget from \$26,000 to \$35,000 to cover these additional expenses.

Timothy VanReenen moved to amend Rob Jiranek's contract to increase the funding amount from \$26,000 to \$35,000. Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

- Demo Project

A discussion was held about the project and the district's equipment coordinator agreeing to handle maintenance work. The equipment coordinator will use district equipment, and Gary Truex will donate his Brush Hog for use with the district's tractor. The WVCA will prepare a work order for the district to estimate services.

- Payments for Approval

Timothy VanReenen moved to approve the following payment:

- Reimbursement of \$1,849.95 to the Greenbrier Valley Conservation District's general account for the purchase of seeds.

Gary Truex seconded; motion carried.

Timothy VanReenen & Donald McNeel moved to approve the following payment:

- Reimbursement of \$60.50 to the Greenbrier Valley Conservation District's general account for soil sample analysis.

➤ Total Reimbursement: \$1,910.45

Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

- Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI)

Discussion took place on the planning of a Farm Field Day.

Watershed

319 Committee

- Contracts for Approval

Donald McNeel moved on behalf of the committee to approve the following contract:

Spring Creek

- Kathy's Farm, LLC –livestock well, pipeline, troughs, division fence and exclusion fence. Total cost-share amount not to exceed \$51,511.15 (\$41,208.92 – Federal Funds/\$10,302.23 – State Funds)

Timothy VanReenen seconded; motion carried.

Correspondence

Timothy VanReenen moved to approve \$800.00 in funding to support the James Monroe High School Envirothon Teams. Donald McNeel seconded; motion carried.

Other Business

Timothy VanReenen moved to approve the CDO Personnel Plan with the changes that were discussed. Avery Atkins seconded; motion carried.

Timothy VanReenen moved to approve the CDO Budget Plan report for FY27. Donald McNeel seconded; motion carried.

Avery Atkins moved to participate in the Thomas W. VanReenen Memorial Scholarship. Donald McNeel seconded; motion carried.

Following a brief discussion the board of supervisors agreed to change the time for the March 19, 2026, board meeting to 3:00pm.

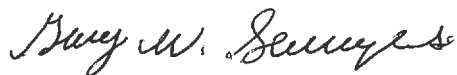
Land Judging - Angela noted that she had sent the proposed date of May 05, 2026, to SCD to see if that date would work for them.

- Appalachian Grazing Conference
 - Promotional Items -Tabled
 - Sponsorship -Equipment Rental Incentive - Tabled

 - Prepare questions for upcoming AGC committee meeting

With no further business the meeting adjourned by consensus at 2:00pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Gary Sawyers
Chairman



Gary Truex
Secretary/ Treasurer

GS/GT/as
Recorded by: Angela Feamster-Sawyers, Administrative Specialist

GVCD Administrative Specialist Report

February 19, 2026

FY26 Funds Received as of February 19, 2026

Quarter 1

FY26 Q1 District Support Allotment	\$33,082.00 - CDO
NPS1829 Spring Creek Phase II	\$45,000.00 - 319
FY26 Ag Enhancement Program Allotment	\$94,700.00 - AgEP
FY26 O&M Allocation	\$12,220.00 - O&M
WVDA AgEP Drought Exigency	<u>\$26,215.80 – WVDA Program</u>
Q1 Total	\$211,217.80

Quarter 2

FY26 Q2 District Support Allotment	<u>\$16,692.00 - CDO</u>
Q2 Total	\$16,692.00

Quarter 3

FY26 Q3 District Support Allotment	\$16,691.00- CDO
SMART Farms WV	\$7,500.00- NASDA Smart Farms Grant
FY26 Q1 Employee Reimbursement	<u>\$13,808.87- CDO</u>
Q3 Total	\$37,999.87

- The FY25 audit has been concluded. The report has been received and approved, and payment has been made. Next week, I will send a copy of the report, invoice, check, and minutes to Guthrie to initiate reimbursement.
- The AgEP Brochure for Legislatures has been drafted and sent via email to Senator Deeds and Senator Woodrum.
- The CDO Budget for FY27 was reviewed during the February committee meeting and is included on the agenda for approval.
- The CD Personnel plan for FY27 was reviewed during the February committee meeting and is included on the agenda for approval.
- Surety bonds have been renewed for the 2026-2027 period for the following supervisors:
 - February: Avery Atkins
 - March: Carolyn Miller, Gary Sawyers, Timothy VanReenen, and Gary Truex.

****Note: Donald McNeel's bond will not be up for renewal until June 30, 2026.**

- The paperwork for updating the Signature Cards for the City National Bank CD has been received. This item of business will need to be included on the agenda for the March board meeting, as we need to update the minutes again to reflect the current signers, remove Jarrell Clifton, and add Donald McNeel.
- LOR 16479 for FY26 Q2 Employee Reimbursement has been prepared and is on the agenda for approval.
- A letter requesting sponsorship was received from the James Monroe High School Envirothon students. The total cost for transportation, registration, and related expenses is \$800.00. This is included on the board meeting agenda for consideration.
- The mileage rate established by GSA has increased to \$0.725 per mile effective January 01, 2026.
- Two Century Farm applications have been received so far, and another is anticipated to be submitted soon. The deadline for submissions to GVCD is March 1, 2026.
- I contacted the Administrative Specialist at SCD to see if Tuesday, May 5, 2026, would be suitable for the SCD board of supervisors to co-host a land judging and homesite evaluation contest. I also asked if they would be willing to provide the awards again this year, and GVCD carry on the tradition of providing the lunch and refreshments. The districts need to inform NRCS for assistance at least two months before the contest date.
- I reached out to the Events and Concessions Manager at the State Fair Grounds regarding the availability of the WVU building, in case you decide to use it again for the 2026 Legislative Awards banquet.

The available dates in September and October are:

- Thursday, September 3, 2026
- Thursday, September 10, 2026
- Thursday, October 8, 2026
- Thursday, October 15, 2026

Dates to remember:

February 20, 2026 – AGC Meeting @ 10:00am

March 01, 2026 – District Personnel Plan due

March 11, 2026 – GVCD Committee Meeting @ 9:00am

March 19, 2026 – GVCD Regular Board Meeting – time TBD

March 21, 2026 – CDO Budget Plan due

May 02, 2026- Appalachian Grazing Conference 2026, WV State Fair Grounds @ 8:00am



February 2026 WVCA Report

Conservation Farm Contest

It is time for the districts to begin thinking about the conservation farm families to be awarded this year. District winners are due to the District Operations Manager by June 15.

Agricultural Enhancement Program (AgEP) Administrative Review

To comply with the requirements from the program documentation, including the Legislative Rule, the traditional AgEP spot check procedure has been reevaluated and is now referred to as the 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 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 district's online database records system is in agreement with WVCA financial records system.

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 the reviews, please disregard this request. However, please let us know with a written response that you are already reviewing or will be reviewing the documents.

The district personnel plan is due to SCC by March 1.

Conservation Districts are asked to begin the **Agreed Procedures Engagement (APE) audit** if you haven't already. Please check your current agreement to make sure it is valid.

SB631

Introduced 1-27.

A BILL to amend and reenact §19-21A-3, §19-21A-4, §19-21A-7, §19-21A-8, §19-21A-11, §19-21A-12, and §19-21A-13 of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to controlling interests in flood control dams and similar structures; revising definitions; authorizing State Conservation Committee to construct, operate, improve, and maintain flood control dams and similar structures and to contract with other entities to do so; removing authority of conservation districts to employ dam monitors; removing authority of conservation districts to construct, operate, improve, and maintain flood control dams and similar structures and to contract with other entities to do so; mandating conservation districts to transfer interests in flood control dams and similar structures, and any associated property, to the West Virginia Conservation Agency by certain date; and requiring conservation districts to transfer all funds and accounts associated with flood control dams and similar structures to the West Virginia Conservation Agency by certain date.

Currently sent to Senate Natural Resources Committee. Information will be shared as received.

West Virginia Legislature's 2026 regular session

- **House Bill Deadline:** February 17, 2026 (Last day to introduce bills in the House).
- **Senate Bill Deadline:** February 23, 2026 (Last day to introduce bills in the Senate).
- **Adjournment:** March 14, 2026 (Midnight).

Ag Enhancement Program Timeline

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)

Ag Day

February 18th

**Greenbrier Valley Conservation District
Monthly Equipment Report**

Month/Year Jan 2026

Equipment	Number of Days Rented	Number of Acres	Total Revenue	Total Cost of Repairs & Maintenance	Total Field Service Mileage
Tye #1					
Tye #2					
Great Plains #1					
Great Plains #2					
Great Plains #3					
No-till Seeder Totals					
Cricket					
Grasshopper				4249	
Big Silver	3 Days		\$450.-	450.-	
Lime/fertilizer Totals					
Chemical Sprayer					
Litter Spreader #1					
Litter Spreader #2			\$150.-		
Litter Spreader Totals					
Post Driver #3					
Post Driver #4					
Post Driver #6	1 Day		\$250.-		
Post Driver Totals					
Potato Planter					
Potato Sprayer					
Potato Hiller					
Potato Totals					
Portable Scales					
Other Filler Fab	60#		\$138.00		
Shop Supplies					
GRAND TOTALS (all equipment)			\$988.00	\$42.49	



James Monroe High School

142 James Monroe Drive, Lindside, West Virginia 24951
(304) 753-5182 * Fax (304) 753-5184



Debbie Sams, *Principal*
Todd Lusk, *Assistant Principal*
Frank Houck, *Assistant Principal*

Catherine Thomas, *Guidance Counselor*
Gabby Pyles, *Guidance Counselor*

Dear Greenbrier Conservation Agency Board,

We are students from James Monroe High School, and we are writing to respectfully request your support in helping our school attend the West Virginia Envirothon Competition.

Envirothon is an academic competition that challenges high school students in the areas of environmental science, forestry, wildlife, soil science, and aquatic ecology. Through this program, we develop leadership skills, teamwork, problem-solving abilities, and a deeper understanding of environmental stewardship—skills that will benefit our community and our future careers.

This year, James Monroe High School has the opportunity to send two student teams along with our advisors to the state competition. The total cost for transportation, registration, and related expenses is \$800. As a public school, funding opportunities are limited, and we are seeking community partners to help make this educational experience possible.

Your sponsorship would directly support student learning and represent an investment in local youth who are passionate about science, conservation, and responsible environmental practices. Any contribution, large or small, would be greatly appreciated and would help ensure that our teams can represent James Monroe High School with pride.

We would be honored to recognize your organization for its support and are happy to provide additional information upon request. Thank you for considering our request and for supporting education in our community.

Sincerely,
James Monroe High School Envirothon Students
Ashley Williams
James Monroe High School

304-753-5182 alwilliams@k12.wv.us