

January 24, 2024

## MINUTES

**Watauga Soil & Water Conservation District  
971 West King Street, Boone NC 28607**

**January 24, 2024**

**Present:**

**Denny Norris - Chair**

**Bill Moretz**

**Todd Combs**

**Jennifer Hanifan**

**Michelle Kasey**

**Mikey Woodie**

**Alan Walker**

**Daphne Cartner**

**Denny Norris called meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.**

**Denny Norris opened the meeting in prayer.**

**Approval of the minutes-** Bill Moretz made a motion to accept, Jennifer Hanifan 2<sup>nd</sup>. Minutes accepted.

**Approval of the agenda-** Bill Moretz made a motion to accept, Jennifer Hanifan 2<sup>nd</sup>. Agenda accepted.

**Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder:**

***In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every board member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict. Does any board member have any conflicts of interest or appearances of conflict with respect to any matters coming before the board today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearances of conflict and refrain from any undue participation in the particular matter involved.***

**Statement of Professionalism:**

***Supervisors are reminded of their responsibility to uphold the laws of the United States and North Carolina and their constitutions. Business is to be conducted in a professional manner, free of bias, of interactions that violate policies or individual liberties and that address business issues only. Interactions are to be held with integrity, courtesy, honesty and in compliance with the highest ethical standards.***

**Alan Walker, Research Institute –**

The Watauga River/Reece Project 1<sup>st</sup> request included 3 non-ag pieces. These are about 10% of the project. The remaining pieces are non-contiguous because of the non-ag pieces. Blue Ridge RC&D will take care of this part. EQUIP will pay for construction on the Ag part of the project. Mr. Pritchett across the river has applied for EQUIP. There is about 5000' of Bare Creek & river that make up the project.

Mr. Walker also stated that the Vanderpool Spring restoration construction will begin after the Trout moratorium in April. There is about 4000' in this project.

The Cove Creek Project – Eugene Walker has been closed.

**District Report - Mikey Woodie**

**New StRAP Ranking Sheet –** Mikey Woodie designed a new ranking sheet for the StRAP program. Jennifer Hanifan made a motion to accept the new ranking sheet; Bill Moretz 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in agreement that new ranking sheet should be used.

**New Applications: StRAP**

Mikey Woodie had a list of new StRAP applications ranked on the new ranking sheet – ranked by score. After some discussion with Board, it was decided that Ms. Woodie would accept 3-4 applications at this time. Ms. Woodie stated that no one has applied for debris removal only. Denny Norris asked for the amount of money that has been requested. Ms. Woodie stated that the deadline for requesting the money has been extended to February 23<sup>rd</sup>. She will be working with Alan Walker and Daphne Carter to get estimates for the projects.

**Contracts needing approval:**

**Ag Cost Share:**

**95-2024-002- Dale Cornette Supplement – Ag Road Repair** Bill Moretz made a motion to approve; Todd Combs 2<sup>nd</sup>. Contract approved.

**95-2024-004 Rusty Henson Supplement – Ag Road Repair and heavy use area protection** Bill Moretz made a motion to approve; Todd Combs 2<sup>nd</sup>. Contract approved.

**CCAP:**

**95-2024-501 New River Conservancy – Stream restoration and riparian buffer for tributary in Green Valley Park** Bill Moretz made a motion to approve contract; Todd Combs 2<sup>nd</sup>. Contract approved.

**Contract updates:**

95-2021-003 & 95-2023-004 Michael Greene – no update

95-2021-004 Chris Kuhn – Sent letter reminding of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 deadline.

95-2022-007 Jessica Miller – Sent letter reminding of June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024 deadline.

Well hasn't been drilled.

95-2023-001 Scott Jensen – Project to start in spring.

95-2023-003 Ronnie Joe Brown – Waiting on cooperator to set date with Yadkin Well.

95-2023-006 Bart & Robina Walker – no update.

95-2024-001 Justin Eggers – cancelled contract.

**AgWrap updates:**

95-2022-801 Genevieve Mente – pump installed. Need Request for Payment approved. Bill Moretz made a motion to approve; Todd Combs 2<sup>nd</sup>. Request for payment approved.

95-2023-801 Daniel Brown – Contract complete.

**CCAP updates:**

95-2022-502 Blue Ridge Conservancy – They hired a private engineer.

95-2023-501 Valle Crucis Park – Waiting on floodplain permit.

**StRAP**

**Construction on Elk Creek Section 1 – Complete.**

**Stone Mountain Branch – Contractor wanting to start next week.**

**General Updates:**

Impaired and Impacted funding from the cancelled contract for Justin Eggers Beaver Dam area – must go to toward the Zimmerman project or we will have to return it by March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. Zimmerman is ranked last for AG cost Share but he is the only applicant that could use the Impaired and Impacted funds. Ms. Woodie asked if the Board would like to pursue? Denny Norris suggested that we wait until the next Board Meeting.

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Ms. Woodie stated that the engineer's preliminary design for Charles Norris' new concrete feed pad with a diversion above it is complete.

Denny Norris asked if the program reviews with John Beck have been resolved. Mr. Beck has several across the state and will be working with the Attorney General for guidance where the cooperators have sold or passed on.

There was a discussion about rip rap replacement made in Hickory. Denny Norris suggested having a lunch meeting with other districts, builders and construction employees with this company having a presentation.

**NRCS Report – None**

**RC&D Report – none**

**Division Report – Rick McSwain**

The Coordinator position resolution passed. The Commission is waiting on pledges from the Districts. This position will be housed in the Foundation Building.

There are no programs with a push to get Technical Assistance Funding. Farm Bureau brought up the National Asset Committee which will take rights away from farmers with easements. It will also allow stockholders to mine in parks and use land to make money.

Rick McSwain stated that this is his last Board Meeting with Watauga County. His replacement is Elise McLaughlin.

He also stated that he will be helping to plan the Spring Meeting with his replacement Elise McLaughlin. It will be held in Morganton in March.

**Admin Report: Michelle Kasey**

Poster Contest is complete. We had 5 schools participate this year. The total amount of prizes is \$445.00. Bill Moretz made a motion to pay the prize winners; Todd Combs 2<sup>nd</sup>. Permission was given to request funds from County to pay the Poster Contest winners.

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Jennifer Hanifan stated that she volunteered to help with the State Envirothon this year.

**Meeting was adjourned at 9:56am.**

**Next meeting will be February 28, 2024**

**Minutes submitted by: Michelle Kasey**

*Denny Norris*

Signed

2-28-24

Dated

Denny Norris, Chair

DRAFT