

NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
January 12, 2023
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
David McCardle, Marshall County
Mark Fitzsimmons, Marshall County, Chairman

Supervisor Absent

Amy Wade, Ohio County - Secretary

Others Present

Veronica Gibson, Administrative Specialist, WVCA
Jennifer Kile, Conservation Specialist, WVCA
Kim Fisher, District Operations Manager, WVCA
Don Whetzel, Watershed Manager, WVCA – via teleconference
Abby Geho, District Administrator, NPCD
Harry Aston, Work Crew, NPCD
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS
Bob Straub, CPA
Robert Luchetti, Sr.

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, January 12, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. at the USDA Service Center in McMechen, WV.

Pledge of Allegiance – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Minutes

- **David McCardle made a motion to approve the December 2022 board meeting minutes and the December 14, 2022, special meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.**

Financial Report

- Bob Straub reviewed the NPCD financials for December 2022.
- Chuck Glenn reviewed the December 2022 co-administered funds financials.

Reports

- District Crew (NPCD)
 - Harry Aston reported that he is working on needed maintenance of the district equipment and cleaning up the garage. Mark Fitzsimmons would like for Harry to clean out the inside of the truck. There was a discussion regarding the need of a toolbox for the bed of the truck.

- Harry stated that he would like the district to find someone to replace him before the upcoming O&M season for the dams. He said if the district is unable to find someone that he would be willing to continue to mow the dams but will not weed eat. Harry was asked if he knew of anyone that would be interested in weed eating. He does not. Mark asked Harry to calculate how many hours it takes for him to weed eat each dam. Eric Freeland suggested that local landscaping/mowing companies may be interested in weed eating the dams. Eric has hired contractors for his farm to weed eat and it has worked out well.
 - The district nor Harry has heard from the Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission regarding mowing and weed eating the PA dams.
- Farm Service Agency (FSA) - No Report
 - WV Division of Forestry (WVDOF) – No Report
 - WV Conservation Agency (WVCA)
 - Kim Fisher reviewed a written report. It will be filed with the minutes. Highlights of the report included:
 - The April WVACD quarterly meeting will be held on April 10 only.
 - The October WVACD quarterly meeting will be held on October 15 – 18.
 - The State Conservation Committee meeting will be held on April 11.
 - The AgEP review needs to be completed by the Administrative Specialist by the end of January. Random files to be reviewed will be picked.
 - The District Personnel Plan is due to the State Conservation Committee in March. It will need to appear on the next district board meeting agenda.
 - Information will be coming regarding the district plans of work and long-range plans of work.
 - A watershed section report was received and included in the supervisor packets for their review. The report will be filed with the minutes.
 - Don Whetzel reported that the O&M work orders will be completed soon and sent to the district. He discussed that O&M funds may be distributed to the districts in a different way for FY24. The WVCA will not match funds that are deposited by the sponsors. Instead, each district will receive a set amount for each dam in each watershed. Don said to wait to send out the FY24 sponsor agreements until the amount to each district is determined. An agreement must be reached between the WVCA and the district. Don is working with Potesta for approval of outstanding NPCD invoices.
 - WV Association of Conservation Districts (WVACD) – No Report
 - Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
 - Katie Fitzsimmons reviewed a written report. It will be filed with the minutes. Highlights of the report included:
 - Trainings/Upcoming Events/Outreach
 - Programs Training 1/5 & 1/12
 - Application Deadlines
 - EQIP/AMA Ranking Deadline – 3/17
 - CSP Applications – signup ongoing

- Programs
 - Program Applications
 - EQIP – 32 NPCD, 16 UOCD
 - AMA – 5 NPCD, 1 UOCD
 - Field Visits/Conservation Planning
 - Staff completed field visits for conservation planning, technical assistance, and practice certifications
 - Stream project preconstruction meeting was held in December, project starts end of January
 - Other
 - Forestry Seminar – January 23rd, online
 - February Dinner Meeting – February 6th, Valley Grove Community Building, Topic – Mental Health Awareness in the Agriculture Community
 - March Dinner Meeting – March 6th, Sleep Inn- Moundsville, Topic – Bale Grazing
 - Women in Ag Day – May 23
 - Invasive Species Dinner Meeting and Field Day
 - May 19th – Valley Grove Community Building, 6pm
 - May 20th – Steve Paull Farm
 - Katie is working on scheduling the workshops for the NPCD Educational Workshop Series
 - An email was received from Karen Cox regarding Annie’s Project. Katie will attend the event on May 8.
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- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC)
 - The next meeting is January 20, at 10:00 am.
 - Administrative Specialist (WVCA)
 - Veronica Gibson received the FY22 AUP draft report. A copy will be sent to each supervisor, and it will be on the February board meeting agenda for approval.
 - District Administrator (NPCD)
 - Abby Geho is working on the newsletter and has sent an email to each supervisor and all USDA Service Center staff for anything to be placed in the newsletter.
 - Visitors
 - Robert Luchetti, Sr. attended the meeting.
 - Committee Reports
 - Education Committee
 - Mark Fitzsimmons reported that the district was awarded a grant from the WVACD in the amount of \$13,748.33. Katie Fitzsimmons reviewed the plan for the funds.
 - Veronica Gibson mailed and emailed the 2023 poster contest information to all schools.
 - High Tunnel Committee
 - Jim Anderson brought in stainless steel half hoops that could be used as supports for low tunnels.

- Building Committee
 - Mark Fitzsimmons reported that some of the caulking along the windows is cracking and needs replaced. Additionally, at least one window has no caulking at all. He will ask Harry to caulk the windows.
 - Legislative Committee
 - Jim Anderson reported that Gene Saurborn will send a handout to supervisors to use at Legislative Day.
 - David McCardle said he spoke to Delegate Sheedy and sent watershed dam information to him.
 - Equipment Committee
 - Abby Geho reported that one spreader is out. The aerator needs cleaned.
 - O&M Committee – No Report
 - Personnel Committee - No Report
 - Safety Committee
 - Eric Freeland was added to the safety committee.
- Supervisor Reports
 - Robert Luchetti, Jr. went to Wheeling Creek #3 on Wednesday to check on the progress of the work. He was in Charleston on Tuesday.
 - Jim Anderson reported on the January State Conservation Committee (SCC) meeting. As president of the WV RC&D, Jim has a non-voting seat on the SCC. There was a motion passed to increase the supervisor per diem to \$150 per day effective February 1, 2023. The NPCD board discussed the effect the increase would have on their budget. The district policy for supervisor travel and per diem will need to be revised.

Old Business

- Wheeling Creek #3 – Updates
 - Don Whetzel reported that the repairs are complete except for a punch list of items that need to be completed.
- Ohio County WVU Hands on Ag Day Support
 - Mark Fitzsimmons spoke to Aimee Figgatt regarding the rental of the soil trailer for the Ohio County Country Fair and the Ohio County Hands on Ag Day. The NPCD will partner with the WVU Ohio County Extension office for the Ohio County Hands on Ag Day and the NPCD will rent the soil trailer.

New Business

- Signatures for Bank Accounts
 - **David McCardle made a motion to remove Britney Hervey-Farris and Robert Luchetti from all NPCD bank accounts that are held at The Community Bank and to add Eric Freeland and Robert Luchetti, Jr. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.** The approved signers for all bank accounts at The Community Bank are Kenneth (Jim) Anderson, Chuck Glenn, Eric Freeland, Stephen Paull, Amy Wade, Robert Luchetti, Jr., David McCardle, and Mark Fitzsimmons.

- Quote for New Metal Doors and Installation - \$12,894.93
 - A quote for three new metal doors was received from Doors Unlimited Inc. in the amount of \$12,894.93. Additional quotes are needed. Veronica Gibson and Abby Geho will get additional quotes.
- Purchase of Fire Extinguishers (3) - \$300
 - David McCardle met with 1st Choice Fire Extinguishers at the office. David was advised that three fire extinguishers are needed for the garage and bays outside. A price of \$300 was presented for the fire extinguishers and the cost of installation. **Robert Luchetti, Jr. made a motion to purchase three fires extinguishers from 1st Choice Fire Extinguishers. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**
- 2023 Century Farms
 - The 2023 Century Farm applications are due to the district by February 1 and to the WVACD by April 1. The program will be advertised in the district newsletter and the district Facebook page.
- Employee Holidays
 - **There was a unanimous decision to pay district employees for all federal holidays regardless of hours worked during the holiday pay period.**
- Mileage Rate Increase
 - The supervisor mileage rate will be increased to 65.5 cents per mile effective January 1, 2023, as per the IRS guidelines.
- Legislative Day at the Capitol
 - Mark Fitzsimmons, Robert Luchetti, Jr., Amy Wade, and Jim Anderson will attend Legislative Day at the Capitol on January 16. Appointments are being made with senators and delegates.
- New Conservation Agreement
 - Matthew Jenkins/Ohio County/20 acres
David McCardle made a motion to approve M. Jenkins as a new cooperator. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.
- AgEP
 - Payments

Name	Practice	Amount	Cost Share
McCombs Farm	Water System	System	\$2,000.00
David Brooks	Pasture Division Fence	370 Feet	\$876.90
	Total payments		\$2,876.90

David McCardle made a motion to approve the completed AgEP practices as presented for McCombs Farm and D. Brooks. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

Jennifer Kile presented liquid lime information that will be discussed at an upcoming meeting that may be used for the AgEP if approved.

An AgEP Committee meeting was scheduled for Thursday, February 9, following the monthly board meeting.

Correspondence – None

NEXT MEETING –The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, February 9, 2023, at the USDA Service Center, McMechen at **9:15 a.m.**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman

Amy Wade, Secretary

Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson