

NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
**March 21, 2024**  
**10:00 a.m.**

**Supervisors Present**

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

**Supervisors Absent**

Chuck Glenn, Hancock County – Treasurer  
Amy Wade, Ohio County – Secretary

**Others Present**

Veronica Gibson, Administrative Specialist, WVCA  
Jennifer Kile, Conservation Specialist, WVCA  
Gene Saurborn, Director of Field Operations, WVCA – via teleconference  
Kim Fisher, District Operations Manager-West, WVCA – via teleconference  
Cindy Shreve, Conservation Specialist Manager – North, WVCA  
Don Whetzel, Watershed Manger-East, WVCA  
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS  
David Shipman, Soil Conservationist, NRCS – via teleconference  
Kevin Paul, NRCS – via teleconference

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, March 21, 2024, 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 February 2024 board meeting minutes, the February 22, 2024, special meeting minutes, and the March 5, 2024, special meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed.**

**Financial Report**

- Bob Straub reviewed the January and February 2024 NPCD funds. He also reviewed the supervisor travel and per diem from July 2023 through February 2024.
- Chuck Glenn was absent from the meeting. The January and February co-administered funds will be reviewed at the April board meeting.

## **Reports**

- District Crew (NPCD)
  - Mark Fitzsimmons reported that the O&M work orders have been received from the WVCA. Mark asked if each dam could be bid out separately instead of by watershed. Don Whetzel said he would have to find out for sure. Don has not seen the work bid out that way before. Gene Saurborn said it could be if the cost is not over \$2,500 but cautioned the district to not give the impression of stringing the bids.
- Farm Service Agency (FSA)
  - Katie Fitzsimmons reported for FSA. FSA is starting to do acreage reports and farm storage loans are available.
- WV Division of Forestry (WVDOF) – No report.
- WV Conservation Agency (WVCA) - Kim Fisher reviewed a written report.

### **March 2024 WVCA Report**

## **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 these reviews, please disregard this request.

## **District Personnel Plan**

District Personnel Plans are due to Guthrie March 22. Failure to meet the deadline may cause a delay in approving the District's personnel plan and the release of state funds for those positions.

## **Conservation District Operation (CDO) Grant Funds**

Districts are asked to prepare your CDO budget report. The budget is to be submitted to Fiscal Services and your Area Director by March 22, so it can be presented to SCC in April.

## **Annual Work Plan**

Reminder - District annual work plans are due June 30.

## **Conservation Farm Tour**

It is time for districts to be thinking about the conservation farm families to be awarded. CDs should have their district farm selection to their Area Directors by May 31.

## **Timelines:**

**May 31** - County and District judging.

**July** - Area judging.

**August** - Statewide judging.

**October** – Presentation of Area and State awards at WV Conservation Partnership Annual Conference. County and District winners at local Conservation District annual banquets.

### **O&M Agreements:**

CD's are encouraged to continue to work with local sponsors for O&M funding. The change will be that these agreements will not be matched dollar for dollar as they were in the past. The WVCA will be allocating funds on a watershed basis moving forward to help with O&M costs.

### **AGEP Timeline:**

**March** - State AgEP committee meeting to finalize upcoming FY AgEP

**April** - 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)

### **WV State Fair Sign Ups**

The schedule for state fair volunteers is now available under the WVCA admin webpage. If you would like to schedule a time frame to work at the fair, please contact your Administrative Specialist.

- WV Association of Conservation Districts (WVACD) – A written report was provided.

**March 2024 Board Report from Heather Duncan, WVACD Executive Director**

### **April Quarterly Meeting**

The April Quarterly Meeting will be held on Monday, April 8 at the La Quinta in Morgantown. Rooms can be reserved by calling the hotel directly (1-304-241-4501) using the booking code: 040824WVA or

Using the following link: <http://tinyurl.com/289rhk2k> . The room rate is \$99 plus any taxes and fees. The room block ends March 10 so please book your room prior to that date. The following day will be the SCC meeting which will be held on the WVU campus.

### **July Quarterly Meeting**

Please send speaker and topic ideas to [hduncan@wvca.us](mailto:hduncan@wvca.us) as you think of them. Especially if there is something that you think other supervisors would benefit, especially in regard to supervisor training.

The dates for the July quarterly meeting are July 15-16 at the Clarion Harpers Ferry (Jefferson County).

### **NACD Annual Meeting & Other NACD News**

The Spring NACD Fly In will be held March 20, 2024. Please let me know if you plan to attend! There are 2 webinars on March 12 and 14 at 3 pm. More info can be found here: <https://www.nacdnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/NACD-2024-DC-Fly-In-Schedule-2-1.pdf>

The Urban and Community Grant has been announced. It is due April 1 Visit

<https://www.nacdnet.org/about-nacd/what-we-do/urban-and-community/> for more information.

Points to takeaway from the NACD Annual Meeting:

- Working Lands Climate Corps was announced.
- Gary Blair was elected as President-Elect
- There are 4 NGLI cohorts this year
- WV received the 100% membership award this year

- There was an underlying theme of remembering that we are all here for more than ourselves and personal gain.

Here is a link to [Wayne's NACD report](#). This was also sent out in an email March 1, 2024.

### **WVACD Scholarships due MARCH 4**

The WVACD Scholarship is due in the WVACD office on Monday, March 4. Late submissions will not be accepted.

### **WVACD Grant Reporting Period Ending**

For those with a WVACD outreach grant, the reporting quarter of Jan-March will end soon. Please have your reports to [hduncan@wvca.us](mailto:hduncan@wvca.us) AND [wvacd@wvca.us](mailto:wvacd@wvca.us) by April 5<sup>th</sup> if possible. Many grants will have a lot to spend in the next quarter.

### **WV Envirothon Updates**

The WV Envirothon will be held April 18-19 at Cedar Lakes. The cost for registration of a 5 student, 2 teacher team (considered a full team) staying for one night is \$455.00. There is an option this year to stay one extra night which would bring the cost for the team to \$566. The late registration fee for teams (registered post March 1) is \$75 compared to the early registration fee (registered prior to March 1) of \$50. The average is \$65 per person this year.

If your district will be hosting a training day, please contact Davin White ([dwhite@wvca.us](mailto:dwhite@wvca.us)) so that he may put it on the Envirothon website.

### **Other**

Congratulations to Andy Deichert who was awarded the 2024 Engineer of the Year for WV and NRCS.

High Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) has been found in a mixed backyard flock in Kanawha Co. Please remember to stay vigilant and to practice best safety practices.

The latest NASS census is available. More information can be found here: [2022-Census-of-Agriculture-USDA-NASS.pdf \(southeastagnet.com\)](#)

State Fair signups are available. Please check with your AS for available time slots. You can also check with Clyde Bailey for more information.

Please send any district events and announcements to me ([hduncan@wvca.us](mailto:hduncan@wvca.us)) so that I can place them in our online calendar and also include on the Facebook page and other outreach avenues.

Do not forget about the [www.wvacd.org](http://www.wvacd.org) website as it contains a lot of information and answers to commonly asked questions.

### **Upcoming Dates**

- March 20, 2024: NACD Fly In at Washington DC
- April 2, 2024: Eastern Area Meeting at MCD
- March 22, 2024: Central Area Meeting at GVCD
- April 8, 2024: Quarterly Meeting at LaQuinta Morgantown

April 9, 2024: State Conservation Committee Meeting at 270 Mylan Park LN, Morgantown, WV, West Virginia

- Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) – Katie Fitzsimmons reviewed a written report.

## **March 2024**

### **NRCS Report: Monongahela & Northern Panhandle Conservation Districts**

- **Trainings/Upcoming Events/Outreach**
  - Local Work Group Meetings need to be scheduled and completed by June 15<sup>th</sup>.
- **Programs**
  - Round 1 Preapprovals have been partially released, as of 3/6/24
    - Monongahela CD
      - Estimated Kingwood - \$784,700
      - Estimated White Hall - \$165,250
    - Northern Panhandle CD
      - Estimated \$864,600
  - FY2024 Sign Ups
    - Round 2 sign up ends March 15, 2024
- **Field Visits/Conservation Planning**
  - Staff completed field visits for conservation planning, technical assistance, and practice certifications.
  - Field staff has been reaching out to participants for completion of contract reviews.
- **Staffing**
  - NRCS is working to hire soil conservation technicians in Middlebourne and Kingwood.
  - Jeff Barr is serving as Acting State Conservationist until Jon Bourdon returns to WV, hoping for that return in March
  - Dustin Adkins is serving as the State Resource Conservationist until Jeff Barr completes his detail.
  - Monongahela CD District Conservationist position has been selected
- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC) – No report.
- Administrative Specialist (WVCA) – Veronica Gibson
  - Reimbursement has been received for O&M work completed at the PA dams.
  - Posters have been received for the poster contest.
  - Working on FY25 O&M spondee letters.
  - FY23 AUP has been completed. Waiting for the report from the CPA.

- Visitors
  - Cindy Shreve reviewed an AgEP report. Interviews will be held for Conservation Specialist intern on April 4.
- Committee Reports
 

Mark Fitzsimmons asked the chairman of each committee to submit a written report to Veronica Gibson one week before each board meeting. The reports will be included in the meeting packets. This will be done to save time during a board meeting.

  - Equipment – Minor repairs were completed on the 2017 and 2006 spreaders.
  - Building – Jim Anderson requested a copy of the bid received for repairs to the red building. Jim will get additional bids for the repairs.
  - High tunnel – John Marshall students have started the seeds for the high tunnel. They should be ready by April 1. Chuck Glenn will pick up the raised beds.
  - Grasslands – The Grasslands contest will be April 12. There are five teams competing. Jim Anderson said he believes that there is plenty of help for the contest.
  - Education – Mark Fitzsimmons reported that the WVACD judged the WVACD scholarship applications. Fourteen applications were received. None of the applications were from the northern panhandle.
  - Safety – Robert Luchetti, Jr. said a safety committee meeting will be held soon.

### **Old Business**

- District Administrator/Work Crew Committee
  - A committee was formed by Mark Fitzsimmons at the February board meeting to create an advertisement for the available positions in the district. This will be an agenda item at a special meeting to be held on April 4 at 1:00 p.m.
- Blue Bird Boxes
  - Wheeling Park High School carpentry class built 25 blue bird boxes. **Jim Anderson made a motion to pay Wheeling Park High School carpentry class \$10 each for the blue bird boxes. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed. Jim Anderson made a motion to sell the blue bird boxes for \$20 each. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- Bee Hotels
  - Wheeling Park High School carpentry class made 2 bee hotels and invoiced the district \$10 each.
- Upper Grave Creek Mining – Monitoring & Monetary Costs
  - Judith Lyons will ask the SCC for funds with needed documentation from the engineer. The district attorney will ask ACNR to pay for this expense.

- Update Compost Bin
  - The size of the bucket on the skid steer needs to be measured. Jim Anderson made a motion to table the construction of an updated compost bin.
- Conservation Farms
  - Farms are due to WVCA by June 15.
  - The district will tour county farms on May 3 at 9:00 a.m. beginning in Hancock County.
- Participation in SMART Farms WV Grant
  - **Jim Anderson made a motion to participate in the SMART Farms WV grant. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**

### New Business

- New Manchester VFD Donation
  - The McMechen USDA Service Center agencies have held monthly office hours at the New Manchester VFD 8 times since last year. **Jim Anderson made a motion to donate \$400 to the New Manchester VFD for use of their building through March 2024 and \$50 for each day used moving forward. Seconded by Eric Freeland. Motion passed.**
- WVU Soils Team Support
  - **Jim Anderson made a motion to donate \$2,000 to the WVU Soils team for the NACTA. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- Women in Ag Support
  - **Jim Anderson made a motion to donate \$2,000 to Women in Ag. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed.**
- State Fair Committee Support
  - **David McCardle made a motion to table the support for the State Fair Committee. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed.**
- WVCA Cash Balances
  - The was completed prior to the meeting.
- Spring Box Lids
  - David Shipman said cooperators are requesting premade spring box lids. The district has the form to make them. A motion was not made.
- Subsoiler
  - Bob Fowler rented the subsoiler and called and said he broke it beyond repair. Bob spoke to Eric Freeland and Bob told Eric on two occasions that he would purchase a new one for the district. **Eric Freeland made a motion for the district to write a**

**letter to Bob Fowler with an invoice for the cost of a subsoiler. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**

- WVU Extension/Marshall County Sponsorship for Upcoming Programs
  - A request was not received.
- Parking Lot/Driveway Asphalt Repair
  - Jim Anderson will get bids for asphalt patching.
- District Annual Plan of Work – Due June 30
  - A special meeting will be held on April 4 at 1:00.
- Local Work Group Meetings
  - Hancock and Brooke Counties – May 9, 6:00 pm at the New Manchester Volunteer Fire Department.
  - Ohio and Marshall Counties – May 15, 6:00 pm at the USDA Service Center in McMechen.
- Spotted Lantern Fly Meeting – Marshall/Ohio Counties
  - NRCS will hold a spotted lantern fly meeting on April 25 at 6:00 pm at the Valley Grove Community Center. Dinner will be provided by the NPCD. The funds for the dinner will be part of the WVACD grant.
- WVCA Policies and Procedures Review
  - All supervisors were provided with a copy of three policies from the WVCA. Supervisors will review and submit any questions or concerns to Judith Lyons by March 29.
- FAC Request for Building – Painting and Carpet Cleaning
  - A request was received from the FAC for office painting and carpet cleaning of the USDA Service Center. **David McCardle made a motion to solicit for bids for office painting and carpet cleaning as requested by the FAC. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.**
- Conservation Agreements
  - Fowler Farms/Brooke County/50 acres
  - Matthew O'Hara/Ohio County/47 acres
  - Brandi Alderman/Ohio County/150 acres
  - William Kidd/Marshall County/12.7 acres

**Jim Anderson made a motion to approve the conservation agreements for Fowler Farms, M. O'Hara, B. Alderman, and W. Kidd. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**



- Ag EP
  - FY25 AgEP Administration Agreement
    - Jennifer Kile presented the FY25 AgEP Administration Agreement. **Jim Anderson made a motion to change the cost share for lime to \$50 per ton at a 50 % cost share. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed. Jim Anderson made a motion to accept the FY25 AgEP Administrative Agreement. Seconded by Steve Paul. Motion passed.**

- Payments

Name	Practice	Amount	Cost Share
Kimberly Riggle	Nutrient Management	17.3 acres	\$1,297.50
Charles Glenn	Nutrient Management	25 acres	\$1,778.28
	Total Payments		\$3,075.78

**The completed AgEP practices for K. Riggle and C. Glenn were unanimously approved as presented.**

- Cancellation

Name	Practice	Amount
Bobbi Hager	Pasture Division Fence	\$2,000.00
	Total	\$2,000.00

**The AgEP contract for B. Hager was unanimously cancelled.**

**Correspondence** - Veronica Gibson reviewed the following correspondence:

- 1) A thank you from Simpson Methodist Church for the vegetable donations throughout the summer.
- 2) An invite from the OCSWA for the district to set up a display at an Earth Day event on April 20. There was no response from the board to attend.

**Supervisor Reports**

Mark Fitzsimmons asked for written supervisor reports to be submitted to Veronica Gibson one week before each board meeting. These reports will be included with the meeting packets. This is an effort to save time in a meeting.

**NEXT MEETING** - The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, April 11, 2024, 10:00 a.m., at the USDA Service Center in McMechen.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:45 p.m.

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**Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman**

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**Amy Wade, Secretary**

**Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson**