

NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
**August 8, 2024**  
**9:00 a.m.**

**Supervisors Present**

Jim Anderson, Hancock County – Vice-Chairman  
Chuck Glenn, Hancock County – Treasurer  
Eric Freeland, Brooke County  
Steve Paull, 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  
Judith Lyons, Executive Director, WVCA  
Gene Saurborn, Director of Field Operations, WVCA  
Jennifer Kile, Conservation Specialist, WVCA  
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS  
Victoria White, District Administrator, NPCD  
Jason Pockl, Attorney, Bailey & Wyant, PLLC  
Bob Straub, CPA, Hartley & Straub  
Heather Duncan, Executive Director, WVACD – via Teams

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, August 8, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at the USDA Service Center, McMechen.

**Pledge of Allegiance** – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

The following New Business Agenda items were moved to the beginning of the agenda:

- ACNR Cooperation Agreement
- UPC Mining Public Notice  
Judith Lyons, Gene Saurborn, and Jason Pockl updated the board regarding the Upper Grave Creek mining. The Cooperation Agreement and timeframe for public notice were discussed.

**Minutes**

- **David McCardle made a motion to approve the July 11, 2024, board meeting minutes, the July 18, 2024, emergency meeting minutes, and the August 1, 2024, special meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Robert Luchetti Jr. Motion passed.**

**Financial Report**

- Bob Straub reviewed the July 2024 NPCD funds.
  - Bob asked if the issue of reduced rent from USDA has been resolved. Veronica Gibson received an email yesterday stating that the NPCD needs to contact the

lessee (Washington D.C.) directly. Veronica will send an email with a copy of the current lease that does not expire until December 2024.

- Chuck Glenn reviewed the July 2024 co-administered funds.  
**Jim Anderson made a motion to file the July financials for audit. Seconded by Eric Freeland. Motion passed.**

### **Reports**

- District Crew (NPCD)
  - Veronica Gibson reported that the crew has completed work on Upper Grave Creek and Harmon Creek structures. Currently working on Wheeling Creek #7.
  - Gene Sauborn requested that the crew mow Upper Grave Creek #7, #8, and #9 again when Wheeling Creek Structures are completed or no later than October 1. Upper Grave Creek #9 should be mowed first.
  - There was a discussion regarding the contract that is needed for the debris removal at Wheeling Creek sites. Gene will have something together by the September board meeting.
- Farm Service Agency (FSA) – No report.
- WV Division of Forestry (WVDOF) – No report.
- WV Conservation Agency (WVCA) – A written report was provided.

#### **August 2024 WVCA Report**

#### **Items to be thinking about and placed on your agendas in the coming month:**

Carroll Greene Nomination – form is due to Belinda Withrow by September 1  
WVACD Honorary Member At Large  
WVACD Lifetime Honorary Member

#### **Agreed Procedures Engagement (Audit)**

Conservation Districts are asked to begin the Agreed Procedures Engagement (APE) (audit) soon after the close of the fiscal year on June 30<sup>th</sup>. It is important that each district read their audit, and then take steps to correct any findings noted by the auditors. If you have questions, ask Kim, Devon or Jeremy.

#### **Conservation Farm Tour**

##### **Timelines:**

**July/August** - Area judging.

**August** - Statewide judging.

**October** – Presentation of Area and State awards at WV Conservation Partnership Annual Conference

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

CDs are encouraged to continue to work with local sponsors for O&M funding. This process started last year 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.

Gene Saurborn discussed the following:

- The NPCD Conservation Specialist, Jennifer Kile, will be working in the Upper Ohio CD only. The WVCA proposed partially funding, based on AgEP workload, a NPCD employee to administer the AgEP. The WVCA would provide continued training of the program to the NPCD employee and provide technical assistance as needed. The NPCD could use the employee for other duties as they see fit. A draft agreement was presented with details of what would be provided by the WVCA and what the NPCD employee would be asked to do for the AgEP. If the NPCD does not hire their own employee, the WVCA ensured that they would continue to fill the void to have the AgEP continue in the district. The board would like to move forward with the proposed agreement and would like to have the total of monetary funding by the WVCA for the September board meeting.
- WV Association of Conservation Districts (WVACD) – A written report was provided.  
**August 2024 Board Report from Heather Duncan, WVACD Executive Director October Quarterly Meeting**  
The dates for the October Quarterly Meeting will be Sunday, October 20- Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. More information will be coming as the agenda is created. Please do not forget about the live auction and the silent auction. Secure your items now

#### **WVACD Communication and Outreach Employees**

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

#### **Awards**

Please remember other upcoming awards and recognitions. More information on them can be found here: <https://www.wvacd.org/contests-and-awards>. Please note that Terry Hudson is the new WV Conservation Awards Council secretary/treasurer and all nominations that previously went to Belinda Withrow now go to Terry.

#### **New Officer Team**

Congratulations to the new officer team that will serve for the next two years.

#### **New WVACD Community Outreach Grant Funding Available**

Special thank you to NRCS for providing another round of funding for a Community Outreach Grant. These funds can be used to install new community gardens, BMPs, reaching underserved communities, installing demonstration sites for conservation practices, etc. The application period will be open until September 30 and the goal is to announce the new round of awardees at the October quarterly meeting. More information can be found online at: <https://www.wvacd.org/supervisor-information>. This is under the main page of the Supervisor Information tab.

### **Upcoming Dates**

WV State Fair: August 8-17, 2024

Fall Quarterly Meeting: October 20-22, 2024

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

### **August 2024**

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

##### **Trainings/Upcoming Events/Outreach**

Staff attended July JED Biosecurity training

Staff assisted with Small Scale Farming Field Day on July 17<sup>th</sup> at Eric Freeland Farm

August JED training will be on Grazing Management

### **Programs**

#### **Sign up deadlines**

**FY 25 CSP – August 16, 2024**

**FY 25 EQIP – September 13, 2024**

### **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.

### **Staffing**

Forester position was posted to be housed in either McMechen or Middlebourne – position closed June 11<sup>th</sup> – No Updates

Soil Conservation Technician – closed July 9<sup>th</sup> – this would be a shared position between Middlebourne and McMechen but housed in Middlebourne. No Update

### **Other**

#### **Important Dates**

**September 18<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> Marshall County Hands on Ag Day**

**October 4<sup>th</sup> – Ohio County Hands on Ag Day**

We will have a station set up at Small Scale Farming Day on July 17<sup>th</sup> at Eric Freeland's Farm.

Katie emphasized the sign-up deadlines for FY25 CSP and EQIP. Katie is working to complete the book for the judges for the Farm Tour.

- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC) – No report.

- Administrative Specialist (WVCA) – Veronica Gibson reviewed her written report.

August 2024

Submitted an invoice to the WVCA for completed O&M work on all Upper Grave Creek sites.

Mailed past due invoice notice.

- Codey Lucey - \$50.00 – Invoice date 03/18/2024 – Spreader rental

AgEP

- Scanned all cooperator/applicant documents to the FY25 digital file.
- Prepared and mailed approval letters and contracts for all approved practices.
- Entered all approved applicants into the AgEP database.

Communicated with cooperators interested in the AgEP Exigency Drought Program. Mailed applications and entered applications into the ticket system.

Worked registration for the Farm Field Day at the Freeland Farm.

Provided information to NRCS staff regarding the PIFR for Buffalo Creek in Brooke County.

- District Coordinator (NPCD) – Victoria White reviewed a written report.

July/August Updates:

Weekly Facebook posts/website updates (all Exigency Program updates have been shared to Facebook, working on adding to the website).

There were 45 attendees at the Farm Field Day at Freeland Farm on Wednesday, July 18th.

Tree Identification Workshop set for Friday, August 16th at the district office. Karen Cox and Chad Ingram will be joining us. Over 40 people are registered and we are capping it at 50.

Beginning looking over and working on WVACD grant due Sept 30, 2024 and the grant to end July 31, 2026.

Nail City Painting is about halfway completed with their painting. They will be done by the end of August.

Attending Volunteer WV Grant Writing Training on September 25-26 in Flatwoods, WV.

Over 225 pounds of produce have been harvested from raised beds and high tunnels. We are planning a fall garden to include carrots, radishes, kale, lettuce, corn, brussel sprouts, and butternut squash.

Hands-On Ag Day shirts are here and they are tie-dye!

- Soil Tester (NPCD)
  - Victoria White reported the following for Hanna Moore
    - Since the last meeting 19 cooperators and 300 acres were tested.
    - To date, Hanna has completed testing for 41 cooperators, more than 1,000 acres, and over 150 samples.
    - Hanna's last day is August 16. She wanted to thank the board for the opportunity, and she enjoyed the job.
- Visitors – None
- Committee Reports
  - Equipment – Victoria White provided an equipment rental report. Steve Paull rented the spreader in Brooke County. The spreader needed the bearings replaced. The cooperator purchased the wrong bearings and then purchased the correct bearings. Steve asked if the board wants to keep the bearings for another spreader or have the cooperator return them. It was decided to have the cooperator return them where they were purchased. Victoria reminded Steve and Jim of the procedure to follow when cooperators rent the spreader in their districts.
  - Grassland – Jim Anderson reported that he is now the chairman for the state grassland committee.
  - Jennifer Kile reminded the board to remove her from any committee that she is appointed to effective September 1. She will no longer be stationed at the NPCD office.

### **Old Business**

- Bid for Red Building
  - Jim Anderson reported that the contractor will begin work in September. Black was decided for the color of the metal roof.
- Parking Lot/Driveway Asphalt Repair
  - Robert Luchetti, Jr. reported that the contractor was informed that the board accepted his bid for the repairs. The contractor did not provide a date to begin work. Robert will contact the contractor to get a date.
- O&M Work Trailer
  - Jim Anderson will check with the vendor for the O&M trailer to verify that the price for the trailer is still the same. If a check can be provided for payment, Jim could pick the trailer up next week.
- Wheeling Creek 25 O&M Agreement
  - Robert Luchetti, Jr. will review the agreement and speak to Gene Saurborn if he has any questions.

## New Business

- Grant Writing Training
    - Victoria White would like to attend grant writing training that is presented by volunteer WV. The training will be held on September 25-26 in Flatwoods at the Dyas Inn. Registration is \$200.00. **Jim Anderson made a motion to pay registration, mileage, hotel cost and meals for Victoria White to attend the grant writing training to be held in Flatwoods. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**
  
  - Homesteading-ish Conference Sponsorship
    - The Capitol Conservation District requested sponsorship for an upcoming event titled Homestead-ish Conference. The topic died for a lack of a motion.
  
  - FY23 AUP Invoice Approval - \$3,550.00
    - An invoice was presented from Lowe & Associates for the FY23 AUP in the amount of \$3,550.00. **Jim Anderson made a motion to pay the invoice from Lowe & Associates for the FY23 AUP in the amount of \$3,550.00. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**
  
  - FY25 O&M Sponsor Agreements
    - City of Wheeling – Wheeling Creek
    - Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission – PA Structures
    - Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission – Wheeling Creek
    - Robert Luchetti, Jr. made a motion to sign the above listed sponsor agreements for FY25. The sponsor has signed their agreement. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**
  
  - FY24 AUP Bids
    - Veronica Gibson mailed request for bids to 11 accounting firms. Only one bid was returned. The bid was from Lowe & Associates. **Amy Wade made a motion to accept the bid from Lowe & Associates for the FY24 AUP in the amount of \$3,550.00. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**
  
  - Letters of Request
    - \$41,000.00 – FY25 AgEP Allotment
    - \$3,550.00 – FY23 AUP Reimbursement
    - David McCardle made a motion to sign and submit the letters of request for \$41,000.00 for FY25 AgEP Allotment and \$3,550.00 for FY23 AUP Reimbursement. Seconded by Jim Anderson. Motion passed.**
  
  - Conservation Agreements
    - William G. Witherow/Hancock County/30 acres
    - Steven Shultz/Ohio County/88 acres
    - Megan Nicole Chambers/Marshall County/85 acres
    - Barry Litman/Marshall County
-

**Chuck Glenn made a motion to approve the conservation agreements for W.G. Witherow, S. Shultz, M. Chambers, and B. Litman as new cooperators. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**

- Ag Enhancement Program
  - AgEP Exigency Program Application Approvals
    - Randy Chaplin/Water Hauling and Fittings/50% up to \$500.00
    - Lewis Hopkins/Water Hauling and Fittings/50% up to \$500.00
    - Edward Link/Water Hauling and Fittings/50% up to \$500.00

**Amy Wade made a motion to accept the applications for R. Chaplin, L. Hopkins, and E. Link for the AgEP Exigency program as presented. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
  - AgEP Exigency Program Payments
    - Randy Chaplin/200 PSI Water Hose-Fittings/Payment \$192.34
    - Lewis Hopkins/Rubbermaid 300-gal Tank/Payment \$125.00
    - Edward Link/2 Rubbermaid 100 gal Troughs/Payment \$99.99

**Chuck Glenn made a motion to approve the payment for completed AgEP Exigency program practices as presented for R. Chaplin, L. Hopkins, and E. Link. Seconded by Amy Wade. Motion passed.**
  - Jennifer Kile reported on the 6 applications that she had trouble with contacting the cooperator.

**Correspondence** - None

**Supervisor Report**

- Amy Wade feels that all supervisors should be asked to attend all meetings. Each supervisor is equally elected.

**NEXT MEETING**

The next board meeting will be held on Thursday, September 12, 2024, 10:00 a.m., at the USDA Service Center in McMechen.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

-----  
**Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman**

-----  
**Amy Wade, Secretary**

**Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson**