

Tygarts Valley Conservation District Board of Supervisors
 Regular Board Meeting, 9:00 AM, Monday, September 15, 2025,
 Philippi District Office, Philippi, WV and via TEAMS

Supervisors Present: Donnie Tenney (chair), Joseph Shaffer, James Nester, Don Adams, Delbert Vandevander, James Dean, Tim Cunningham, Mateal Poling, Tom Short

WVCA: Don Whetzel, Erin Coda, Steven Burner

NRCS: Jared Nestor, Jon Bourdon, Robbie Shomo, Tyler Putzulu, Jessica Ball

WVDOF: Rudy Williams

WVACD: Virtual: Vanta Coda, Heather Duncan

WVU Cooperative Extension: Brittany Leggett

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Chairman Donnie Tenney. Nester led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Reading/Approval of the Agenda/Minutes: 09/15/25 Agenda and 08/11/25 Regular Meeting Minutes were presented. Shaffer moved to approve as presented; Nester seconded. Before the motion was carried, Whetzel requested adding Save the Tygart Watershed's fiscal sponsorship request to the agenda, noting it had just come to Shaffer's attention on 9/12/25. Tenney questioned the legality of adding it post-deadline. Whetzel responded that the board could vote to add it and noted that the Barbour County Development Authority (BCDA) had notified Amber Higgins that they would agree to assist if TVCD could not. Tenney asked if there were objections to letting BCDA handle it, citing legal concerns. No objections were raised. **Motion to approve both the 09/15/25 Agenda and 08/11/25 Minutes as originally presented was carried.**

Correspondence: The following received & acknowledged by the board:

- DEP Permit No: Q201489 Modification #15, Rose Holdings, LLC
- Attorney General Opinion SB941
- Notice to dismiss under rule 41b Filing (to be discussed later in executive session)
- PVCD 2025 Awards Banquet Invitation

Treasurer's Report: Vandevander presented; **Cunningham moved to accept Treasurer's Report as presented, seconded by Adams; motion carried.**

District Conservation & Work Crew Report: Vandevander reported seven farm visits, crew finished at Elkwater, two brush jobs in Randolph, a pond cleanout/repair in Upshur. Presently mowing at Pecks Run. Skid steer's being repaired. Work crew members are at Seneca Rocks for chainsaw safety training to prepare for Forest Service job at Spruce Knob.

Watershed O&M Report: Erin Coda reminded board of upcoming inspection dates, 10/07/25 for Elkwater and 10/16/25 for Shooks & Pecks Run; both days the groups will be meeting at TVCD at 9am and departing from there.

WVCA: Whetzel reminded the group that area and state farm awards will be at quarterly meeting in Flatwoods on 10/23/25. Registration forms and payment for luncheon need to be turned in prior to 9/30/25. State AgEP meeting 10am on 30th at Elk CD Office in Sutton.

WVACD: Duncan reported that NACD President Gary Blair will attend quarterly meeting. Year-long Next Generation Leadership Institute sponsored by National Conservation Foundation is coming to WV soon.

WVU Cooperative Extension Service: Leggett shared that the Forest Festival is approaching in Randolph County, along with several other fall festivals in surrounding counties. Extension is continuing outdoor education programs with 3rd–5th graders in Randolph. The regional turkey project includes multiple counties. Upshur County has a

team leader weekend coming up, along with a 5th grade Adopt-a-Dairy Cow program. The annual 4-H Conference is scheduled for next week, and Ag in the Classroom remains ongoing.

NRCS: Putzulu reported that the application deadline for the first round of 2026 was August 29, 2025. However, signups are still being accepted on a rolling basis throughout the year. With the new fiscal year beginning on October 1, eligibility verification will be a key focus. Staffing levels have remained unchanged since the last meeting. The team continues to work on CSP, contract management, and field visits.

Bourdon shared that WV recently hosted the NRCS national leadership meeting at Canaan Valley, with representatives from all 50 states and headquarters in attendance. An all-employee meeting is scheduled for tomorrow. He anticipates that the reorganization plan will result in five regional offices to be used by USDA. While no new hiring or additional RIFs are expected currently, the situation remains uncertain. Bourdon also expects NRCS will be able to support some small grants and agreements, though the extent will depend on the final budget. Proposed budgets appear to favor directing more funds to farmers through conservation programs rather than technical assistance. Regardless of a potential government shutdown, mandatory Farm Bill funding should be sufficient to keep NRCS operations running.

WesMonTy: Poling announced the next meeting will be held at 10 a.m. on 9/16/25 at the Farm Bureau. Nearly a dozen grant recipients have been notified, covering a wide range of innovative conservation efforts involving schools and communities. Bluebird houses and pollinator hotels are still available.

DOE: Williams reported that despite the drought, they are fully staffed following the recent hire in Wetzel County. An engine is returning from California as WV's fire season begins. A new structure is being built at Coopers Rock to house an engine, and UTVs equipped with pumps are now in use. A burn ban is not expected until after leaf fall.

Old Business:

Supervisor Name Tags & Shirts: Poling shared that she's gathered samples, but quality hasn't met expectations. Several members suggested expanding the project to include hats and possibly updating the TVCD logo. Tenney recommended forming a committee to work on it during the winter when things slow down.

Community Outreach Grant: Tenney acknowledged the 9/30/25 deadline to spend \$8,166 and asked Duncan about the expected reimbursement timeline. Duncan estimated 1.5 to 3 months, with Bourdon in agreement. Tenney stated the expenditure is expected to be finalized within the next few business days.

Northern Panhandle CD / Wheeling Watershed Association Case: Tenney postponed until executive session.

Committee Reports:

Building/Finance/Budget Committee: Vandevander reported that the Barbour County Commission tabled WVU Extension's request to move into the former NRCS space, pending a request for them to explore other options first. A for-sale sign has been posted on the adjacent property where TVCD had previously made an offer.

Equipment/Safety Committee: Nester stated no safety meeting was held this morning due to crew members currently attending chainsaw training elsewhere.

Education/Publicity/Exhibit Committee: Poling noted that the second Field Day was recently held and felt both events reflected a strong cross-section of the community. She thanked the district for its support in making them possible. Vanta Coda confirmed that the next article in the TVCD Conservation Series will focus on biochar. He's also exploring the idea of partnering with maple producers in the district to host a Field Day during Maple Days. Erin Coda suggested that the article series during Maple Days could highlight local producers and encourage those interested in learning how to get started with maple tapping. Tenney recommended continuing the discussion in upcoming meetings leading into winter.

Legislative Committee: Tenney reported that the committee has begun preparing legislative items for next year, with more detailed discussion planned for the upcoming quarterly and area meetings. Duncan noted that all state agencies were required to submit a 2% budget cut, highlighting the importance of pursuing partner funding for ag enhancement and alternative funding for supervisor per diem. More information is expected once the new fiscal year begins.

Grassland/AgEP Committee:

Drought Exigency Program: Erin Coda reported that TVCD is currently in both D1 and D2 drought status per the U.S. Drought Monitor, making the district eligible for the Drought Exigency Program, pending board approval.

Shaffer moved to open the Drought Exigency Program application period with payments retroactive to 9/2/25, offering a 50% cost share up to \$500. Eligible participants may apply for up to two practices per person, including livestock water supply, irrigation, revegetation of feeding areas, cover crop establishment, and/or temporary fencing. The program will remain open until it is closed at the district's discretion.

Cunningham seconded; motion carried.

FY26 AgEP Allocation: Burner presented the proposed FY26 AgEP budget. Erin Coda explained that the district typically over-allocates by 5–10% each year, and a decision on the percentage is needed to determine which applicants can be approved. **Dean moved to over-allocate FY26 AgEP by 10%; Short seconded; motion carried.**

FY26 AgEP Applications presented for approval:

LIME:

Turansky, Frank	\$1,556.80	Upshur
Hawkins, Clifford	\$2,000.00	Barbour
Cross Properties	\$2,000.00	Barbour
Mitchell, Bryan	\$811.20	Barbour
Winans, Robert	\$400.00	Barbour
Bealko, Susan	\$160.40	Barbour
Moats Land & Livestock LLC	\$1,161.60	Tucker
Carr, Danny	\$2,000.00	Tucker
Plitt, Cheryl	\$1,400.00	Barbour
Shrader, Chris	\$219.60	Barbour
Thornhill, Matthew	\$1,935.00	Randolph
Connell, Gary	\$273.60	Upshur
Williams, James	\$2,000.00	Randolph
Elbon, Gary	\$1,959.20	Upshur
Hunt, Jeff	\$800.00	Barbour
McAtee, Justin	\$1,112.00	Randolph
Holsberry, Philip	\$1,087.20	Randolph
Hissam, Kevin	\$2,000.00	Upshur

URBAN AGRICULTURE:

Walton, Courtney	\$600.00	Upshur
Dilley, Abby	\$600.00	Upshur
Swecker, Brenda	\$600.00	Randolph
Cross Properties	\$600.00	Barbour

POLLINATION:

*Tenney, Donnie	\$250.00	Upshur
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SMALL SCALE SOIL AMENDMENTS:

Strain, Aaron	\$112.50	Tucker
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POND CLEANOUT:

Wolfe, Basil	\$2,000.00	Barbour
*True, Bob	\$2,000.00	Barbour
Hawkins, Clifford	\$2,000.00	Barbour
Hamner, Steve	\$2,000.00	Upshur

WATER SYSTEMS:

Poling, Edward & Sara	\$3,000.00	Barbour
Poling, Mary	\$3,000.00	Barbour
Mayle, Kenneth	\$3,000.00	Taylor
Boice, Richard	\$3,000.00	Taylor
Sheldon, Tim	\$3,000.00	Barbour
O'Brien, Chester	\$3,000.00	Barbour
Ward, Creed	\$3,000.00	Barbour
Winans, Gary	\$3,000.00	Barbour
Lach, T Luke	\$3,000.00	Barbour
*Dean, Portia	\$3,000.00	Randolph
*Cunningham, Timothy	\$3,000.00	Randolph

HONEYBEE NUCS:

McDaniel, Ira	\$250.00	Barbour
Gooden, Darrel	\$250.00	Upshur
Hornbeck, Caroll	\$250.00	Upshur
Sottlemeyer, Michael	\$250.00	Taylor
Foley, Charles	\$250.00	Taylor

HEAVY USE AREA PROTECTION:

Lach, T Luke	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Hunt, Jeff	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Ferguson, Paul	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Boyce, Richard	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Carpenter, Jaxon	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Wentz, Gloria	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Sheldon, Nolan	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Gooden, Darrel	\$1,500.00	Upshur
Circle W	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Tucker, Kody	\$1,500.00	Barbour
Boice, Richard	\$1,500.00	Taylor
Titchnell, Joseph	\$1,500.00	Barbour

***TVCD Supervisor and family approvals are made by West Virginia Conservation Agency (WVCA) District Operations Manager Don Whetzel.**

Short moved to approve all above FY26 AgEP Applications as presented; Nester seconded; Tenney, Dean and Cunningham abstained; motion carried.

Conservation Agreements: Derek & Chelsea McDowell and Donna L. Pitrolo's Conservation Agreements presented; **Shaffer moved to accept as presented; Short seconded; motion carried.**

Water Resource Committee: Short reported only that rain is needed.

WVACD Directors Report: Nester stated nothing new to report. Tenney requested that board members let them know of anything they'd like to be mentioned at upcoming quarterly meeting.

Personnel Committee: Dean requested to postpone personnel discussion until executive session at end of the meeting.

New Business: Tenney asked if any plans were underway for the Legislative/Awards Dinner and the Christmas Dinner. Nester explained that, since Administrative Specialist Amber Higgins is new since last year's events, he recently brought them to her attention. She was previously unaware, but he's currently looking into locations in Tucker County and will coordinate with her after she returns to the office. No potential dates for these events were discussed.

Supervisor Reports:

Shaffer: TVCD Field Day, New Horizons, Save the Tygart, New Horizons, TVCD Board Meeting

Poling: TVCD Field Day, researched supervisor shirts & name tags, grant activities, TVCD Board Meeting

Nester: TVCD Field Day, Ag Safety Day in Tucker Co, TVCD Board Meeting

Adams: Busy farming, TVCD Board Meeting

Short: Signed checks, TVCD Board Meeting, noted that Clarksburg paper had a TVCD Field Day article w/pictures

Cunningham: Ran excavator for work crew, TVCD Board Meeting

Proudfoot: Whetzel, speaking on behalf of Chad Proudfoot, reported that his resignation letter had been received in response to the board's letter last month requesting more consistent participation. He stated that he will research the correct procedure. Someone mentioned that Logan Hosaflook, who also ran for the position, may be contacted regarding a possible appointment until the next election.

Vandevander: See multiple reports above, TVCD Field Day & Board Meeting

Tenney: TVCD Field Day, grant activities, TVCD Board Meeting

At 10:40am, Shaffer moved that after a 10min break, the supervisors, along with Don Whetzel, enter executive session under WV State Code 6-9A-4a to discuss the Northern Panhandle CD / Wheeling Watershed Association case and personnel matters. Vandevander seconded; motion carried.

At 11:45am, Shaffer moved to return to regular session. Poling seconded; motion passed.

Short moved to accept Quentin Marsh's resignation as crew leader, with his pay to revert to the rate prior to his promotion. Cunningham seconded; motion passed.

Vandevander reported that \$2,500 in parts for the skid steer have been ordered but requested board input before proceeding with the purchase of tracks. Including the tracks and windshield replacement, the total investment would be approximately \$8,000. Dean and Tenney agreed that further discussion is needed.

There being no further business, Nester moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:15pm; Short seconded; motion carried.

Minutes compiled and prepared by Amber Higgins, WVCA Administrative Specialist, based on notes provided by Don Whetzel, the Teams transcript, and meeting video, excluding executive session.
