

TYGARTS VALLEY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2026, 9:00 AM

TVCD Office in Philippi, WV & via TEAMS

ATTENDANCE

Supervisors Present: Donnie Tenney (Chair), Delbert Vandevander (Treasurer), Mateal Poling, Joseph Shaffer, Donald Adams, Logan Hosaflook, Tom Short, James Dean, Tim Cunningham

Partners Present:

WVCA: Jim Roy, Ben Heavner, James Helmondollar, Don Whetzel, Erin Coda, Amber Higgins

WVACD: (TEAMS) Heather Duncan, Vanta Coda

WVU Extension: (TEAMS) Brittany Leggett

WVDOF: Rudy Williams

NRCS: Tyler Putzulu, Brandon Duckworth

Guests Present:

Nick Kuhn, Kuhn's Aerial Applications

(TEAMS) Dave Lavender, WV Film Office

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Tenney called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Shaffer led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda & Minutes:

- March 9, 2026, Agenda
 - February 6, 2026, AgEP Committee Meeting minutes
 - February 9, 2026, Regular Meeting minutes
 - **Motion by Shaffer, seconded by Short, to approve Agenda and Minutes as presented; Motion carried.**
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GUEST PRESENTATIONS

Kuhn's Aerial Applications: Nick Kuhn

- Introduced drone spraying services for herbicide, fungicide, lime and fertilizer
- Services offered for pastures, hay fields, dams and ponds
- Now operating two identical spray drones
- Provided brochures for interested landowners

WV Film Office: Dave Lavender

- Provided overview of WV Film Office programs and film tax credit
 - Encouraged listing farms and properties in the statewide filming locations database
 - Listings are free and may remain private, viewable only to producers upon request
 - Will send instructions and contact info for district distribution
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CORRESPONDENCE

- Letter from Greer Industries regarding price increases on lime
- Two coal company public notices from DEP
- All correspondence previously forwarded to supervisors

TVCD REPORTS

Treasurer's Report: Vandevander

- Feb 1 main checking balance: \$50,964; Feb 29: \$49,554
- Secondary checking: \$1,207, Savings: \$19,324
- Income: Office space rentals \$3,891
- Expenses: Utilities \$2,195; Building repair \$628; Cleaning labor/supplies \$425; Event supplies \$196; Accountant \$125; Office supplies/copier lease \$217; Internet \$356; Advertising \$360; Per diem \$2,560; Travel \$607; Payroll taxes \$344; Legal services \$219
- **Motion to accept Treasurer's Report as presented was made by Shaffer, seconded by Cunningham. Motion carried.**

District Conservation & Crew Report: Vandevander

- Crew working in office spaces; limited field work
- Feb payroll: \$1,963
- Income from prior months: \$6,662
- Forest Service requested brush work at Bickle Knob, with possible follow-up job at Smoke Hole

Watershed O&M Report: Roy

- Upshur County Commission responded favorably to presentation of completed and planned Pecks Run work and cost estimates
- Additional work on Pecks Run is expected to begin this year when scheduling allows

AGENCY REPORTS

WVCA: Whetzel

- Written report provided in board packets
- Annual Conservation Farm award nominations due to Whetzel by mid-June; supervisors should complete reviews and reach agreement no later than June meeting
- Legislative update: language from SB631 incorporated into SB894; SB894 passed Senate and is in House government committee
- HB5364 contains similar provisions but excludes districts and dams; passed House and is in Senate
- Monitoring progress of both bills through the end of the legislative session

WVACD: Duncan

- Will update supervisors after Senate action on House bill
- April quarterly meeting in Martinsburg: committees on Apr 21; standing committees and afternoon tour on Apr 22; business meeting on Apr 23; Quarterly meeting hotel room block closes Mar 31
- Grasslands Committee meeting scheduled for Mar 13 at 10 a.m.; meeting link provided
- State Fair sign-ups ongoing

WVU Extension: Leggett

- Reported successful Small Farms Conference and Winter Blues events
- Offering free Tuesday webinars throughout March on animal production, pasture management, pond weed management, invasives
- Spring Expo hosted by Freedom Ag in Upshur Co. on Mar 24, 4-7 p.m.
- Producer Safety Alliance training and farm food safety plan workshops available via Zoom; shared on Extension Facebook page
- Preparing for Strawberry Festival; seeking local growers
- Beef Expo scheduled for early April; youth teams will participate

NRCS: Putzulu & Duckworth

- Feb field activity: 32 grazing/grassland visits; 8 forestry/wildlife visits; 5 high tunnel-related visits
- Completed 18 implementation/certification visits for practices including nutrient management, forest management, prescribed grazing, pipeline, water facilities and fencing
- Total payments issued Feb to date: \$16,821.32
- Ongoing field visits for 210 applications for Round 1
- Staff providing technical assistance for high tunnels and spring practice planning; office receiving steady calls and visits
- Contract actions: 6 modifications; 1 cancellation; no terminations
- Staffing unchanged; Office continues supporting West Fork with shared personnel
- Provided overview of the new Regenerative Agriculture pilot program and soil test requirements for qualified individuals
- Discussed anticipated challenges in identifying qualified soil testers and limited approved labs
- Local Work Group meeting to be scheduled by June; flexible format allowed and included on today's agenda

WesMonTy RC&D: Poling

- Continuing educational programs requiring on-site support for grant recipients
- Ongoing work on locally focused conservation initiatives
- New birdhouses and pollinator houses are available for purchase

WVDOF: Williams

- Spring fire season runs Mar 1–May 31; burning allowed after 5 p.m. and out by 7 a.m.; ag burning permits available
- Recent fires have been small due to wet conditions
- Staff participated in the Hunting & Fishing Outdoor Show at Milan Park
- Noted passing of Region 2 forester Todd Carnell after prolonged illness

OLD BUSINESS**Appalachian Grazing Conference Scholarship: Duncan**

- Board previously allocated \$250 total to provide two \$25 scholarships per county
- Clarified that conference registration is \$25 in advance; \$35 is the on-site late fee
- Allocation remains unchanged

Local Workgroup Meeting Planning

- Belington Fire Hall selected pending availability; Short will contact the fire hall to confirm
- TVCD will provide required 14-day public notice once date is confirmed
- **Motion to hold the Local Work Group meeting at Belington Fire Hall on Apr 9 (or Apr 8 if needed) with a \$300 refreshment budget was made by Adams; Short seconded. Motion carried.**

WV DEP Air Sensor Partnership

- Barbour County is covered: Audra State Park and TVCD
- Upshur County Commission expressed interest; potential sites identified at Curry Library and the courthouse area
- Taylor County: one placed at Tygart Lake State Park; second site still needed away from Grafton; supervisors exploring options
- Tucker County: no applications submitted; supervisors will contact DNR to explore Blackwater Falls or Canaan Valley
- Randolph County: Kumbrow State Forest application received; second site needed; supervisors will check with Camp Pioneer
- Supervisors will continue outreach and report progress at future meetings

Northern Panhandle CD/Wheeling Watershed Assn Case: Dean

- No updates; Board agreed to take no further action at this time

COMMITTEE REPORTS**Building/Budget/Finance: Vandevander**

- Reported ongoing efforts to fill vacant rental spaces; one room remains to be painted.
- Noted \$1,911 spent on materials for building improvements.
- Stated that available spaces have been advertised in the newspaper and a large sign is being posted.
- Discussed exploring additional advertising options, including possible online listings such as Zillow; staff will review feasibility.

Education, Publicity & Exhibit: Poling

- Thanked members for assistance with preparations for Ag Day at the Capitol.
- Reported that weather disruptions have limited school-based education activities this year.
- Noted that planning will shift toward next year's conservation education efforts, including 4H camp programming.

Legislative: Tenney

- Reported that only the Senate bill includes removing districts from watershed and dam responsibilities; outcome depends on which bill advances and any floor amendments.
- Noted that correspondence was sent to legislators outlining district concerns.
- Stated that potential changes could affect districts differently and that district roles under agency authority remain uncertain.
- Reported continued cooperation with agency staff, which helps support operations amid recent funding and rental revenue losses.

Grassland/AgEP: Dean

- Two Heavy Use Area Protection contracts reported cancelled; the following motions presented:
 - **Approve the next Heavy Use Area Protection applicants in order of eligibility**
 - **Motion by Shaffer; Poling seconded. Motion carried.**
 - **Allow Cross Properties to reapply next year without restriction due to USPS mis-delivery of their contract**
 - **Motion by Cunningham; Short seconded. Motion carried.**
 - **Approve reimbursement of Alan Suder's lime cost share payment of \$2,000**
 - **Motion by Dean; Cunningham seconded. Motion carried.**
- A handout included a link-based webpage resource outlining steps landowners can complete before AgEP signup, including FSA and WVU Extension office lookups and required forms.

Water Resource: Shaffer

- Reported Save the Tygart projects, including brownfield cleanup in Kerens and portal work near Coalton.
- Noted ongoing stream monitoring; Hackers Creek testing is scheduled for this month.
- Stated that Make It Shine efforts will focus on the lower Tygart.
- Reported that Sandy Creek will be stocked following long-term water quality issues.

WVACD Directors: Tenney

- Reported on the recent quarterly WVACD meeting; next meeting will be held in the Eastern Panhandle.
- Noted that legislative issues dominated discussion.
- Stated that holding the December meeting in Flatwoods reduced costs and that expenditures are being monitored due to reduced association participation by three districts and the agency.
- Reported that the association may seek legislative funding next year, pending the status of existing grants.
- Noted discussion of a potential future request to increase AgEP's statewide allocation to \$1M as a line item.
- Encouraged districts to meet deadlines and fully spend AgEP funds to support future funding requests.

Personnel, Work Crew, Equipment & Safety: Cunningham

- No additional items reported

NEW BUSINESS**Sign up for TVCD Constant Contact**

- Information was provided on TVCD's new Constant Contact system for email and text communications, and attendees were invited to sign up using the QR code included in packets and posted in the room.
- It was noted that individuals must opt in to receive texts.
- Texts will be limited to key reminders, with a maximum of three per month, while emails will continue to provide full details.
- It was reported that the district has purchased a one-year subscription to the service.

SUPERVISOR REPORTS

- Supervisors reported attending various meetings and events, including New Horizon, Save the Tygart, economic development meetings, Conservation Day at the Capitol, board meetings, and RC&D activities.
- Activities included discussions on potential partnerships, water testing requests, outreach efforts, educational events, and updates to district materials such as rack cards.
- Additional reported work included compiling Century Farm applications, preparing work crew estimates for dam mowing across multiple counties, and participating in legislative and project-related correspondence and meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Chair Tenney adjourned the meeting at 10:30 AM.

(Minutes compiled and prepared by Amber Higgins, WVCA Administrative Specialist)