NORTHERN PANHANDLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING
May 14, 2026
10:00 a.m.

Supervisors Present
Jim Anderson, Hancock County – Vice-Chairman
Chuck Glenn, Hancock County – Treasurer
Steve Paull, Brooke County
Robert Luchetti, Jr., Ohio County
Amy Wade, Ohio County – Secretary via Teams
David McCardle, Marshall County
Mark Fitzsimmons, Marshall County – Chairman

Supervisor Absent
Eric Freeland, Brooke County

Others Present
Veronica Gibson, Administrative Specialist, WVCA
Jessica Otte, Conservation Specialist, WVCA
Don Whetzel, District Operations Manager, WVCA
Devon Koska, Watershed Manager, WVCA via Teams
Bill Armstrong, Watershed Technician, WVCA via Teams
Katie Fitzsimmons, District Conservationist, NRCS
Victoria White, District Administrator, NPCD
Abby Clegg, Soil Tester/Administrator, NPCD
Brent Lyons, Forester, WVDOF
Heather Duncan, Executive Director, WVACD via Teams
Bob Straub, CPA, Hartley & Straub
Tim Smith, Solutions Specialist, Lauttamus Communications

Chairman Mark Fitzsimmons called the meeting to order on Thursday, May 14, 2026, at 10:05 a.m. at the USDA Service Center in McMechen.

Pledge of Allegiance – The pledge of allegiance was recited.

Minutes
- **David McCardle made a motion to approve the April 2026 board meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed.**

Financial Report
- Bob Straub reviewed the April 2026 NPCD funds. Jim Anderson asked if the funds for the PA dams had been invested. **Jim Anderson made a motion to allow Chuck Glenn (treasurer) to contact banks for CD rates to invest $200,000.00 from the PA dam fund and $20,000.00 from the General Fund. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.** The $20,000.00 was from the NPCD CD that matured last month and was deposited into the General Fund until an investment could be found.
- A letter of inactivity for the Special Projects fund was received. Chuck Glenn will take care of it.
- Chuck Glenn reviewed the April 2026 Co-Administered funds and all bank statement reconcilements.

Reports

- Farm Service Agency (FSA) – No report

- WV Division of Forestry (WVDOF) – Brent Lyons reviewed a written report.
  West Virginia Division of Forestry Activities Brooke,
  Hancock, Marshall and Ohio Counties May 14, 2026
  This Report Covers Activities from 03/12/26 - 05/08/26

  BROOKE COUNTY
  Seasonal FC contacts. VFD contacts. Suppressed/investigated fires. Conducted training w/McKinleyville VFD. Inspected logging jobs.

  HANCOCK COUNTY
  Seasonal FC contacts. Suppressed/Investigated fires. Assisted w/prescribed burning at Hillcrest WMA. Conducted maintenance on the Hillcrest RAWS. Issued burning permits. Inspected logging jobs.

  MARSHALL COUNTY
  Seasonal FC contacts. Suppressed/investigated fires. Issued burning permits. Conducted 3 timber recons. Center McMechen Elementary Career Day. Inspected logging jobs.

  OHIO COUNTY
  Seasonal FC contacts. Suppressed/Investigated fires. Issued a burning permit. Completed EQIP and CSP determinations. Conducted a timber recon. Inspected logging jobs.

  OTHER
  Attended Service Forester Todd Carnell's viewing. Legislative outcome for DOF/forestry. Attended online Stewardship trainings. NRCS training in Farmington. Radio work in Farmington.

- WV Conservation Agency (WVCA) - Don Whetzel reviewed a written report.

  May 2026 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.

  Annual Work Plan
  Reminder - District annual work plans are due **June 30** to Guthrie.

  Conservation Farm Tour
  It is time for districts to think about the conservation farm families to be awarded. CDs should have their district farm selection to their Area Directors by June 16.
  South Area Tour – Week of July 13th.
  North Area Tour – Week of July 27th.

  Ag Enhancement Program Timeline
  May/June/July – CDs to finalize upcoming FY program, update AgEP agreement addendums, take action to approve LORs Mid June – Deadline for CDs submit final practice list to WVCA (CDs can submit final list any time after SCC approval of practice list)

Press contact reminder

The WVCA wants to remind all CDs that the WVCA Communications specialist is available to help districts with press releases, and media contacts, especially if it the situation involves WVCA programs or staff.

HB5364 - Transition

Working with Attorney General's Office to secure outside legal counsel to transfer easements and real property for dams, channels, dikes, and levees.
Adrienne Hoalcraft hired as the Watershed Coordinator to support the transition.
Sponsor Letters sent this week. WVCA staff will be meeting with the sponsors to address questions.
Sending letters to districts requesting the transfer of funds for associated with OM&R and Rehab projects to WVCA.
Working with engineering firms to transfer current district agreements and contracts to WVCA.

- WV Association of Conservation Districts (WVACD) – Heather Duncan reviewed a written report.

May 2026 Board Report from Heather Duncan, WVACD Executive Director

April Quarterly Meeting

A HUGE thank you to the Eastern Panhandle CD for organizing the tour and to Martin's Elevator, Inc for their monetary meeting sponsorship. It was a great meeting and a fantastic tour as well. We also want to recognize Jim Foster, WFCD, for his many years of wisdom and leadership. John Pitsenbarger and Larry Greynolds were formally recognized for their lifetime memberships.

Key highlights from the meeting: The 2026 July meeting will be held the 22-23 at the Bridgeport Conference Center. October 28-29 meeting will be held in conjunction with the WVCAC luncheon at Cedar Lakes. The 2027 April meeting will be virtual only and the winter meeting will be a one day meeting at the WVACD office in the day prior to Ag/Conservation Day.

WV Envirothon

We had 20 teams compete from 12 CDs compete at Camp Caesar. Congratulations to a team from Morgantown High School (Morgantown 1) who won and will compete in the NCF Envirothon in Mississippi in July.

Farm of the Year Contest

Please think ahead about the farm of the year contest and who would be eligible. It's never too early to begin planning! WV Conservation Awards Council will only be providing awards for the state level of the contest.

NE NACD Meeting

It is quickly approaching for the NE NACD conference that will be held in Wilmington, DE August 24-27. The meeting looks to be timely on topics and is relatively close for everyone to travel to. More information can be found here: https://dacdnet.org/2026nacdne/. Also, if you're interested in helping to plan the WV 2028 conference, please let me know. The next meeting will be May 6th at 12:30 pm.

Magnets Available!
WVACD has wooden magnets for sale! They are made right here in St. Albans! They are available for $5 each. The proceeds will go to further our mission and goals. A picture has been sent to AS' and also included in the quarterly newsletter. They are housed at the WVACD office and can be purchased there.

NACD Spring Fly In
The NACD Spring Fly In will be held on March 25th. More information will be coming about this event. It's a great way to see the federal government in action and also a great way to meet fellow conservation district supervisors from across the nation. I think it is a very worthwhile event to attend at least once. Last year it was a special treat to be in town when the cherry blossoms were blooming!

WVACD Membership and Sponsorships Available
Half-off sponsorships are available along with a BOGO on WVACD membership. Contact Heather for more information! These memberships and sponsorship assist with the general budget, meetings, outreach activities, and supervisor support.

Sustainable Management in Agriculture using Regenerative Techniques Grant (SMART Farms WV Grant)
This grant is through NASDA and is available to non-Chesapeake Bay draining counties to establish native warm season grasses into pastures and log landing sites focusing on Historically Underserved producers. This grant is a partnership with WVCA, WVACD, and WVDOF. This is a great grant to reach out to someone who is not currently a cooperator with the district to help get their foot in the door. Please contact myself or Dylan Johnson, WVCA, for more information.

Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative (GLCI)

This grant is housed by WVCA with funding coming from NRCS. This is to develop conservation district field days, create learning stations, and hold virtual pasture walk. $3,000 is available to conservation districts to host a workshop on grazing and soil health topics. Conservation districts may combine funding and workshops to host a larger scale event. $400 is available for a learning station at the conservation district office.

Grasslands Committee
If you are interested in becoming involved with the Grasslands Committee, please let Heather know. The committee would like to see 1-2 supervisor members from each conservation district represented. Currently, the committee meets quarterly at the WVACD office and a virtual option is available as well. Please contact Heather or committee chair, Jim Anderson for more information. Please be sure to have teams show their interest soon!

WV State Fair Signups
The WV State Fair will be held August 13-22, 2026. Heather Duncan will handle all signups this year. Please email her with the times and dates you are available to assist in covering the booth. The signup sheet can be found on the WVACD website for availability.

WVACD Communication and Outreach Employees
Please do not forget to contact Julie Simmons (wvacdoutreach2@wvacd.onmicrosoft.com) and Vanta Coda (wvacdoutreach@wvacd.onmicrosoft.com) for your outreach needs. Rather it's developing printed or online materials, assisting with outreach events, or coming up with ideas to reach new producers or CSP outreach, they are here to help!

Membership and Educational Needs
If you would like to discuss your membership needs, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Also, please let me know what other continuing education and training you need to be a better supervisor and/or director. I especially want to hear what type of training, educational events, and the format you would like to see at quarterly meetings. We've had in depth and updates at various quarterly meetings, but I'm still hearing there are questions and confusion even with offering various topics of concern.

Upcoming Dates
April 30-May 2: Appalachian Grazing Conference Tour
May 6: Envirothon Committee Meeting, WVACD Office, 10 am
May 6: 2028 NACD NE Planning Meeting, WVACD Office, 12:30 pm
May 8: Grasslands Committee Meeting, 10 am
May 12: PRIMARY DAY
May 15: State Fair Committee Meeting, 8:30 am
May 22: AGC Committee Meeting, 10 am

***Please remember to think about your upcoming WVACD directors after primaries close. If your boards could vote on your directors in May/June meetings and send those results ASAP to Heather, it would be appreciated. It is an election year and the nominating committee will need a list of all directors prior to July 1st.*

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

May 2026
NRCS Report: Northen Panhandle Conservation District

- **Training/Upcoming Events/Outreach**
  - **May 21 – Open House/Hancock County Office Hours – New Manchester VFD 1pm – 6pm**
  - **May 28 – Open House McMechen Service Center 2pm-6pm**
  - **Field Day held at the end of April was well attended and overall, a very good program!**
- **Programs**
  - FY 2026 EQIP/AMA/CSP –
    - Ranking Deadline – Deadline Met
    - Preapprovals coming out week of May 11th
- **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.
- **Hancock County Office Hours**
  - Office hours will be held as weather dependent. If it looks clear, we will go up, if it looks like inclement weather, we will hold off.
    - May 21st

- June 18th
- July 16th

- **Miscellaneous**
  - Kevin has been assisting area office engineering staff on a part-time basis.
  - Please review attached north area report
  - Rogue racoon in the parking lot during daylight hours, assisted with extermination

Area Conservationist's Bimonthly Report May/June 2026

Program Priorities

Field staff are working on completing field visits, planning, assessment, and ranking for applications received by January 15th for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Agricultural Management Assistance Program (AMA). West Virginia was allocated $10.4 million for CSP, $22.3 million EQIP, and $485 thousand for AMA. We have 403 eligible CSP applications, 1237 eligible EQIP applications, and 192 eligible AMA applications statewide. Our assessment and ranking deadline is May 6th, 2026, with funding approvals announced May 8th. We plan to obligate all funds into contracts with participants by July 30th, 2026.

Twenty five percent of CSP and EQIP funding will be targeted to USDA's Regenerative Pilot Program (RPP), which aims to restore land health, improve long-term productivity, and ensure American grown production for the future.

As part of participating in Regenerative Pilot Program, producers must complete a Soil Health Testing (CEMA 216) through a "Qualified Individual (QI)". A QI ensures proper soil sampling, packaging, timely submission to the labs, and provide data interpretation. QIs may be certified professionals, degree holders, or experienced technicians. Conservation Districts can play an integral in identifying QIs for our shared customers. If you're interested in learning more about how districts can be involved in this process, please reach out to your District or Area Conservationist.

Local Work Group Meetings

Over the next few months, our District Conservationists will be assisting Conservation Districts to hold Local Working Group (LWG) meetings in each of the 14 Districts. These LWG meetings are an essential component in NRCS programming. We rely on local input to help set program priorities and focus funding to directly meet locally identified resource concerns.

Elk-March 24th @1pm
Monongahela-April 2nd @ 6pm
Tygarts Valley-April 9th @ 6pm
Upper Ohio-April 21st @ 10pm
Western-April 28th @ 9am
Northern Panhandle-May 14th @ 9am
Guyan-May 15th @ 4pm

Emergency Watershed Program (EWP)

Several EWP projects will be starting (or restarting) over the next few months. Work will resume on sites in Braxton and Kanawha Counties in May, while work on other sites in Kanawha and McDowell will begin in June. Sites identified in Mineral and Ohio Counties will begin construction later this summer.

- Wheeling Creek Watershed Commission (WCWC)
    - Jim Anderson reported the following:
        - At the last WCWC meeting, Robert Luchetti, Jr. requested forgiveness from the WCWC for the debt owed for the repairs to Wheeling Creek #3. The WCWC will meet with their attorney to seek legal action against the NPCD, TVCD, and the NPCD insurance.
        - The WVCA is in negotiations with the WCWC for the transfer of the dams.

- Administrative Specialist (WVCA)
    - Veronica Gibson reported the following:
        - An invoice received from the NPCD attorney includes charges for UGC/ACNR and charges for the transfer of the dams. Charges for UGC/ACNR are paid from the co-administered funds account by funds provided by the WVCA. **Robert Luchetti, Jr. made a motion to pay charges from the NPCD attorney for services not pertaining to the UGC/ACNR from the NPCD General Fund. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**

- District Administrator (NPCD) – Victoria White reviewed a written report.
  NPCD District Administrator
  May 2026 Updates:

  General Updates:
  - If you have items that need added to Facebook or website, please email with necessary information
  - Beginning to draft the 2025-2026 Education District of the Year Binder – due at July WVACD Quarterly Meeting
  - New EpiPen for Apiary is in the Beekeeping First Aid Kit on the shelf in Administrator Office
  - All FY 27 AgEP Info is on the NPCD website – npcdwv.org/ag-enhancement-program
  - NPCD Photo Contest Entries are due Friday, June 5th

  NPCD Foundation Scholarship:
  - JMHS Senior Awards Banquet – Friday, May 15th at 1 PM
  - WPHS Senior Awards Banquet – Friday, May 22nd at 8 AM
    - Bob Luchetti, Jr. attending

  Events:
- Grazing Field Day – 20 attendees
    - GLCI Grant reporting is being submitted to WVCA
    - Rain gauges ordered with leftover grant funds
- Planning Summer/Fall Events
    - Pollinator Field Day – Tentatively the end of June
    - Youth Beekeeping Program – Tentatively the end of June/beginning of July
    - Forestry Field Day – Tentatively in September
    - Rain and Compost Barrel Workshops – Tentatively July and August

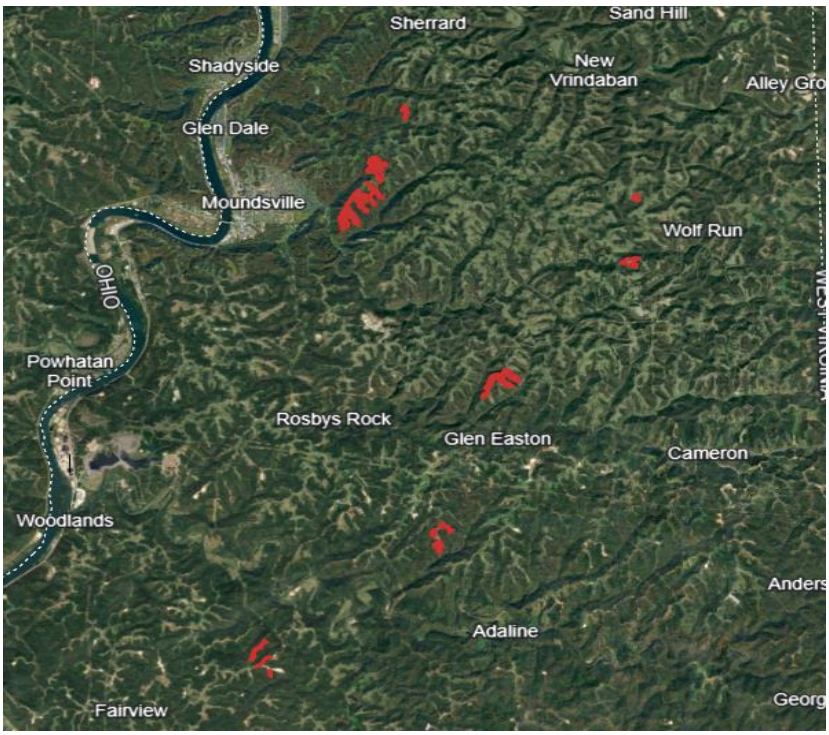
Grants:

Name	Amount	Progress
Northern Panhandle RC&D (Educational Material)	$500	Awarded **$275 remaining – needs spent by June 2026**
GLCI Pasture Walk (Grazing Field Day)	$3,000	Reimbursement from WVCA for Grazing Field Day
Helen J. Prince Foundation	$20,000	Awarded
WV Beekeepers Association Grant	$1,000	Awarded to Tri-State Beekeepers Assoc. Will be used towards maintenance of NPCD Apiary and Educational Events
Center for Behavior and Climate (CBC)	$7,200	In Review
RC&D Mini Grant (HOA Day)	$3,000	Awarded Waiting on State RC&D to approve
DanPaul Foundation	$15,000	Rolling deadline In review
Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation	Up to $100,000	Rolling deadline Drafting
Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation Grant	$20,000	Submitted May 11th Award notice October 2026
Cleveland Cliffs Foundation	$20,000	Letter of Inquiry: Due May 26th , 2026 Grant Deadline: Due June 12, 2026
Giant Eagle Foundation	$1,000–$2,105,000	Rolling Deadline
WV Division of Forestry Community Tree Grant	Up to $50,000	Rolling Deadline
Labcorp Charitable Foundation	$5,000–$25,000	Rolling Deadline

- Soil Tester (NPCD) – Abby Clegg reviewed a written report

Soil Sampling Log 2026

Farmer	County	Acres	Date Sampled	Forage Sample (Y/N)
Eli Wengerd	Marshall	21	3/26/2026	N
Van Aston	Marshall	66	4/14/2026	N
Dennis McCardle	Marshall	30	4/17/2026	N
Eric Butler	Marshall	25	4/21/2026	N
Dave Witzgall	Marshall	88.5	4/26/2026	N
Brett Hawkins	Marshall	8.5	5/5/2026	N
Frank Heller	Marshall	14	5/7/2026	N
Alan Crow	Marshall	118.5	5/12/2026	N
Kylie Bungard	Marshall	70	5/13/2026	N
	Total Acres	**441.5**		
	Updated through 5/12/2026			



- Visitors - None

- Committee Reports
  - Equipment Committee
    - Veronica Gibson reminded the board that belts need to be ordered to have on hand for the spreaders. The 06 trailer was picked up by the high bidder, Mark Myers. Paperwork needs to be completed.
    - Victoria White provided an equipment rental report.
  - Building Committee
    - There was a discussion regarding the construction of a new equipment building.
  - High Tunnel Committee – A written report was provided.
    May 2026 High Tunnel/ Garden Committee Report
    - Tomatoes & Celery have been planted in high tunnel
    - Beds in high tunnel prepped for planting with kids
    - Additional raised bed filled and ready for planting
    - All beds have had additional soil added
    - Planting with the kids will be after board meeting at 1 PM. Peppers in high tunnel and other plants in outside beds (kids will receive a take home plant)
    - A big thank you for the supervisors that were able to help on cleanup day
  - Education Committee
    - Veronica Gibson worked out a schedule with supervisors to deliver samara and poster contest awards to schools.
  - Grassland Committee
    - Jim Anderson discussed upcoming contest.
  - Bee Committee
    - Victoria White reported on the private swarm catching class held by the Tri-State Bee Keepers.

Old Business

- Upper Grave Creek #7, #8, & #9 – ACNR Mining
  - Devon Kokoska reported that mowing of UGC #7, #8, and #9 was completed over the weekend by Cut & Clear Solutions.

- Tygarts Valley CD Lawsuit
  - No update.

- USDA Service Center Mowing and Mower Repairs
  - Robbie Luchetti will continue to mow and weed eat at the NPCD building.
  - Robert Luchetti, Jr. repaired the wheels on the deck and will order new blades.

New Business

- NPCD Truck ABS & Traction Control Light
  - Abby Clegg reported that the ABS and traction lights are on in the district truck. It was decided to take it to Straub's to have it checked.

- NPCD Annual Plan of Work Due June 30
  - The NPCD annual Plan of Work was tabled.

- Mowing PA Dams
  - Jim Anderson will discuss with the WCWC about completing the mowing of the PA dams.

- Letter to WV DEP Regarding Lack of Response for Engineer Report for UGC
  - Amy Wade and Robert Luchetti, Jr. worked together to draft a letter to WV DEP regarding their lack of response for the engineer report for UGC. **Jim Anderson made a motion to approve the letter and send it to WV DEP with Amy Wade's signature. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**

- Conservation Farm Visit
  - A visit to a Hancock County farm (Chad Lamp) was scheduled for May 21 at noon.

- Update Cameras at USDA Service Center
  - Two quotes were received for the update of cameras at the NPCD building. The board is awaiting an additional quote. The agenda item was tabled.

- Soil Health Program
  - Katie Fitzsimmons reviewed the program. Details of the cost have not been calculated. The agenda item was tabled.

- NPCD Expenses Review
  - Forage Testing – **Jim Anderson made a motion that beginning June 1 the cost of a forage test will be $40 per sample. Seconded by Robert Luchetti, Jr. Motion passed.**
  - Soil Testing – **Robert Luchetti, Jr. made a motion that beginning June 1 the cost of a soil test will be $10 per sample. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**

- Equipment Rental – **Jim Anderson made a motion that beginning June 1 the rental cost of the forage sampler will be $25 for 48 hours. If the forage sampler is not returned within 48 hours, the charge will be an additional $25 per day. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**
- **Jim Anderson made a motion that beginning June 1 the rental cost of the lime/fertilizer spreader will be $80 per day, the manure spreader will be $80 per day, the weed wiper will be $50 per day, and the no-till drill will be $10 per acre with a $100 minimum. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.**

- Appointment of Nominating Committee for NPCD Election of Officers
  - Mark Fitzsimmons appointed Steve Paull, Robert Luchetti, Jr., and David McCardle as the nominating committee for the NPCD election of officers. The committee will report at the June board meeting.

- Letters of Request
  - $37,775.00 – FY27 Q1 District Support Allotment
  - $20,045.00 – FY27 Q2 District Support Allotment
  - $20,044.00 – FY27 Q3 District Support Allotment
  - $14,680.00 – FY27 Q4 District Support Allotment

    Jim Anderson made a motion to sign and submit the letters of request to the WVCA for FY27 District Support. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

- Conservation Agreement
  - Zachary M. Ryan/Brooke County/34 acres

    Steve Paull made a motion to approve Z. Ryan as a new cooperator. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.

- Ag Enhancement Program (AgEP)
  - FY27 AgEP Administration Agreement
    - **David McCardle made a motion to approve the FY27 AgEP Administration Agreement. Seconded by Steve Paull. Motion passed.**
  - Cancellations

Name	Practice	Cost-share Allocated	Reason
Lisa White	Exclusion Fence	$2,000.00	Landowner Request
Jim Anderson	Pasture Division Fence	$2,000.00	Landowner Request
Gary Allen	Pollination	$200.00	Landowner Request

David McCardle made a motion to cancel the AgEP contracts for L. White, J. Anderson, and G. Allen. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.

  - Payments

Name	Practice	Payment Amount
Jeff Allen	Invasive Species	$600.00
Richard Otte	Lime	$516.75
Carrie Shipman	Lime	$300.00
Chad Lamp	Nutrient Management	$1,875.00
Matt Amaismeier	Lime	$486.50
Sharon Whetzel	Pasture Division Fence	$2,000.00

Chuck Glenn made a motion to pay for completed AgEP practices as presented for J. Allen, R. Otte, C. Shipman, C. Lamp, M. Amaismeier, and S. Whetzel. Seconded by David McCardle. Motion passed.

- Payment for Discussion
    - Logan Toler/Exclusion Fence/$2,000.00 – **David McCardle made a motion to pay the completed AgEP practice as presented for L. Toler. Seconded by Chuck Glenn. Motion passed.**

Correspondence – Veronica Gibson reviewed the following correspondence – 1) A thank you from the WVU Soils Team for the donation the NPCD sent. 2) A thank you from the WV Envirothon for the sponsorship for the 5th place scholarship.

Supervisor Reports

- Jim Anderson reported on the AGC that he attended. He attended all three conferences.

NEXT MEETING

The next board meeting will be held on **Thursday, June 11, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.,** at the USDA Service Center, McMechen.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 p.m.

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Mark Fitzsimmons, Chairman **Amy Wade, Secretary**

Minutes submitted by Veronica Gibson