

TYGARTS VALLEY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Regular Board Meeting Minutes

August 10, 2026, 6:00 PM, TVCD Office in Philippi, WV & via Teams

ATTENDANCE

Supervisors Present: James Dean (Chair), Donnie Tenney (Vice-Chair), Delbert Vandevander (Treasurer), James Nester, Joseph Shaffer, Tom Short, Mateal Poling, Logan Hosaflook, Sarah Cunningham

Partners Present:

WVCA: Jim Roy, Don Whetzel, Haley Cunningham, Amber Higgins. Teams: Judith Lyons, Erin Coda, Ben Heavner

WVDOF: Rudy Williams

NRCS: Tim Canfield, Robbie Shomo

Visitor Present via Teams: Michael Miller

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Dean called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Nester led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda & Minutes:

- July 13, 2026 regular meeting minutes
- August 3, 2026 Grassland/AgEP Committee minutes
- **Motion to approve both minutes as presented by Tenney, seconded by Shaffer. Motion carried.**
- August 10, 2026 regular meeting agenda
- **Motion to approve agenda as presented by Shaffer, seconded by Nester. Motion carried.**

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

- Dean announced the passing of former board member Joe Gumm, noted that the funeral was held over the weekend, and circulated a sympathy card for signatures
- A moment of silence in Gumm's honor was held at Nester's request

CORRESPONDENCE

- Joe Gumm's obituary was included in the packet
- July 21 notice from WVCA Executive Director confirmed approval of the WestMonTy RC&D grant application for FY27
- Memo on the recall of emergency watershed funds will require board action later in the agenda
- Thank-you card from a camper at West Virginia State Conservation Camp

TVCD REPORTS

Treasurer's Report: Vandevander

- Main checking balance was \$31,039.84 on July 1 and \$64,524.36 on July 31; Secondary checking balance was \$1,442
- Savings balance remained \$54,857; Accounts receivable totaled \$8,388
- Income included \$100 from lime spreader rental, \$2,186 from purchases for resale, \$1,840.60 from office space rentals, and \$42,469 in CDO & supervisor support
- Expenses included \$92.64 in lime spreader repairs, \$2,352 in building repairs and upgrades, \$1,367 for utilities, cleaning, and supplies, \$4,306 in purchases for resale, \$254.98 for event supplies, \$23.75 for forage testing, \$199 for a new hay sampling tool, \$1,259 in mortgage payments, \$1,515 in quarterly unemployment tax, \$3,880 in supervisor per diem, and \$1,413 in travel
- **Motion to accept Treasurer's Report and file for audit by Shaffer, seconded by Nester. Motion carried.**
- Higgins reported that the co-admin report was not yet available because the bank statement arrived that morning and was just sent to district fiscal

District Work Crew Report: Vandevander

- July payroll for the crew was \$3,260; Income totaled \$12,350 from a Lewis County job
- Recent work included delivery of three 400-gallon troughs to Franklin in Pendleton County and tree removal in Randolph County
- Upcoming work includes Forest Service projects at Elk Mountain, dam maintenance at Elkwater, spring development and trough installation in Preston County, and installation of four troughs for a Barbour County cooperator
- Crew activity increased after several months of limited work due to weather and scheduling

Watershed O&M Report: Roy

- Pecks Run remained in good condition after recent heavy rains and high water
- Sprayed Elkwater Dam for vegetation on August 5th

AGENCY REPORTS

WVCA: Whetzel & Lyons

- Whetzel noted the WVCA handout in the packets composed of daily flood response updates; contractors continued EWP cleanup in the district, completing 31 sites up to this point
- He reported that 74 landowners had contacted the district thus far, and reviewed the process for receiving and documenting stream blockage calls, identifying sites, assigning technicians, and determining eligibility
- Lyons stated that the EWP funds recall is necessary to support ongoing flood work across all districts since the costs are running between \$35K-\$40K per day and any potential FEMA reimbursements can tend to take a long time to materialize
- She clarified that state contractors were used because the flood damage required immediate large-scale work and WVCA holds a regional Corps permit to enter streams
- Lyons acknowledged that the district is already aware it cannot bid against contractors when work has been put out for public bid through state procurement, and added that district work crews may take on stabilization jobs when appropriate
- Higgins stated that now that district's role has been clarified for the entire board, EWP updates will be forwarded upon receipt
- Whetzel noted upcoming deadlines, including conservation awards nominations on 9/1 and AgEP practice suggestions on 8/18
- Added that the state Conservation Farm Tour was tentatively scheduled for 8/26 and that State Fair booth signups remained open
- EWP fund recall to be addressed later in the agenda

WVACD: Tenney

- Heather Duncan and Vanta Coda were unavailable to attend; handouts included in meeting packets had also been emailed
- Tenney summarized actions from the WVACD quarterly meeting and noted the association passed a resolution opposing the Valley North Transmission Line and certain solar and wind farm projects
- Additional funding requests will be made to the legislature for AgEP and district support increasing CDO operational funding
- Lyons stated that a Teams meeting has been scheduled to review district budgets, and WVCA's fiscal team will be included
- Award information and deadlines were included in the packet, and the board proceeded with nominations
- **Motion to nominate Gene Hovatter for Member at Large by Short, seconded by Shaffer. Motion carried.**
- **Motion to nominate Delbert Vandevander for the Carroll Greene Award by Short, seconded by Shaffer. Motion carried.**
- The board agreed that nomination submissions will be handled by nominations committee to be formed later in the meeting

WVU Extension: WVU Extension staff unavailable to attend; no report

NRCS: Canfield

- Fiscal year obligations close to completion, with \$2.2M obligated and remaining contracts expected to be finished by 8/14
- Recent payments included waste storage systems, grazing and nutrient management plans, and other conservation practices
- A watershed review in Barbour County found no sites eligible for federal EWP and referred all cases back to WVCA
- USDA restructuring will allow West Virginia to fill several vacancies, with no staff relocations expected
- West Virginia will participate as a pilot state for new conservation planning procedures
- Soil sampling contractor options were discussed, with additional contacts identified in Preston and Taylor counties

WesMonTy RC&D: Poling

- Poling reported recent site visits, including an agritourism visit to Sunflower Farm
- FY27 grant work nearing completion; LOR received and funds expected soon so contracts can be issued to grant recipients
- Next meeting scheduled to be held 8/18 at WVU Extension Office in Buckhannon due to flood damage at Farm Bureau building
- **Motion to approve LOR 16574, FY27 WesMonTy RC&D Allotment for \$17,575 made by Tenney, seconded by Shaffer. Motion carried.**

WVDOF: Williams

- Three staff returned from western wildfire assignments; one remained deployed as a helibase manager
- Staff supported National Jamboree, completing merit badge requirements and providing demonstrations to thousands of visitors
- Recent mast surveys showed mixed production across counties
- Spring frost caused major fruit losses, contributing to increased demand at local farmers markets
- Additional soil sampling contractor options were identified
- Williams announced upcoming heart surgery and brief medical leave starting next week

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Building/Budget/Finance: Vandevander

- One tenant still in process of moving into an office space
- Two others viewed spaces and have not yet responded; three spaces remain available

Education/Publicity/Exhibit: Poling

- Preparations continue for an outreach display at the Upshur County Farm Bureau picnic, and plans were made to contact school principals about the electronic 8th grade conservation test
- Higgins added that several have requested that a repeat of the invasive species class held on 7/21; a future session will be scheduled after current flood work slows

Legislative: Tenney

- Tenney reported several funding requests submitted to the legislature and details were sent by the WVACD executive director
- Remaining grant funds were approved to support the executive director's position through the end of the year

Grassland/AgEP: Dean

- The committee met on 8/3 to approve AgEP practices for FY27, allocating \$89,087.40
- Program was over-allocated by about \$7,000 to account for expected withdrawals and ensure full use of district funds
- Higgins reported that WVCA intern Haley Cunningham assisted extensively with preparing and mailing agreements while Helmondollar was assigned to flood duties; her support made it possible to complete all required mailings during a busy period
- Cunningham is finishing her final week with the district, and the board expressed appreciation for her hard work

Water Resource: Short

- Short yielded to Dean, who reviewed the Upshur Emergency Management spreadsheet of flood-related calls
- Board agreed that most items were outside the scope of EWP
- Whetzel noted that many requests involved driveway repair, culverts, feed assistance, or general debris removal, which should be directed to FEMA or other agencies
- Board determined that only stream blockage issues fall within EWP and that landowners must contact the district office directly so technicians can obtain permission and required information
- Higgins agreed to follow up with Upshur County officials and communicate that non-EWP items should be directed to FEMA or FSA and that only landowner-reported stream blockages should be sent to the district

Work Crew/Equipment/Safety: Dean stated a machine shop agreed to repair & balance the mulcher disc; may prevent replacement

Personnel: Dean stated nothing to report

WVACD Directors: Nester/Tenney

- Quarterly WVACD Directors meeting was shortened to one day due to the flood
- New officers were elected: Mark Myers (MCD) as president, Mark Fitzsimmons (NPCD) as vice president, Lois Carr (PVCD) as second vice president, Larry Greynolds (ECD) as treasurer, and Holly Morgon (UOCD) as secretary

OLD BUSINESS

WV DEP Air Sensor Partnership

- Shaffer reported Taylor County Schools are willing to host an air sensor, but installation is delayed due to ongoing Wi-Fi issues; they asked to revisit the request after September 1
- Tenney stated Upshur County received the contact information again for DEP's air sensor program, with proposed locations at Curry Park and the Hall flood monitoring site; flood-related delays are expected before installations can move forward

State Fair Signups: Tenney

- Reminder to view Sign Up Sheet on WVACD website and email Heather Duncan at hduncan@wvacd.us to reserve chosen times
- Tenney had already signed up for multiple time slots

Drought Exigency Program: Dean

- Latest drought monitor provided in packets; no remaining D1 conditions in the district
- Program was not opened; board agreed to remove the item from next month's agenda

Expense Reimbursement for New Supervisor Orientation: Dean

- Dean reported that WVCA billed the district for lunch costs for Waybright and Cunningham, who attended New Supervisor Orientation while their appointments were still pending
- **Motion to reimburse lunch expenses was made by Short, seconded by Nester. Motion carried.**

Northern Panhandle CD/Wheeling Watershed Assn Case: Dean reported no new communication received

NEW BUSINESS

TVCD Resolution: Valley North Transmission Line Project

- Tenney presented the resolution opposing the Valley North Transmission Line Project and noted it had been adapted from Farm Bureau language and shared with WVACD
- **Motion to approve the resolution was made by Tenney, seconded by Nester. Motion carried.**
- Board members discussed proposed project routes in Barbour County and noted that the final decision will rest with the PSC
- Higgins agreed to distribute the resolution to appropriate agencies and post publicly

Funds Recall: Emergency Watershed Protection Quick Response

- Dean presented the WVCA request to return \$13,793.26 in EWP Quick Response funds plus accrued interest
- **Motion to return EWP Quick Response funds plus accrued interest made by Tenney, seconded by Hosaflook. Motion carried.**

LOR 16566: FY27 Ag Enhancement Program Allotment: Dean

- Dean presented the FY27 AgEP allotment LOR for \$73,400 and confirmed the prior-year rollover allowed for higher total allocation
- **Motion to approve LOR 16566 was made by Shaffer, seconded by Nester. Motion carried.**

TVCD Committee Assignments: Dean

- Building/Budget/Finance: Vandevander (chair), Short, Dean, Cunningham
- Education/Publicity/Exhibit: Poling (chair), Shaffer, Tenney, Waybright
- Legislative: Tenney (chair), Nester, Hosaflook
- Grassland/AgEP: Dean (chair), Nester, Vandevander, Cunningham, Tenney
- Water Resources: Short (chair), Shaffer, Hosaflook
- Work Crew/Equipment/Safety: Nester (chair), Vandevander, Dean, Waybright
- Personnel: Tenney (chair), Dean, Vandevander, Hosaflook, Cunningham
- Nominations & Awards: Cunningham (chair), Waybright, Vandevander, Nester
- Printed copies of updated assignments will be provided at the next meeting

Committee Assignment to Review & Update Policy & Procedure Manual: Dean

- The board agreed that the Personnel Committee will lead the review, with additional members added as needed
- Nester, Vandevander, Dean, Cunningham, and Waybright were assigned to assist due to the extensive updates required
- The board discussed potentially holding a separate work session for a full manual review and noted that several sections have been missing or outdated since 2019
- Hosaflook suggested, and members agreed, that once revisions are drafted, the district should seek affordable legal review to ensure accuracy and reduce future risk

Century Farm Sign Presentations

- Dean reported that four Century Farm signs are ready for presentation at the October legislative dinner
- Added that Waybright's Farm of the Year sign from a prior year has not been presented; the board agreed to order a replacement

October Delegate Dinner Planning

- The board reviewed prior venues and agreed to check availability at The Outpost
- Potential dates were identified as October 15 or October 22, depending on scheduling and election timing
- Legislative Committee will contact The Outpost regarding available dates and coordinate with Higgins
- Invitation list will utilize last year's contact information once the date and location are set
- Board noted staff availability is limited due to flood response and end-of-summer assignments

SUPERVISOR REPORTS

- Supervisors summarized recent activities, including attending local meetings, assisting with AgEP work, participating in RC&D and WVACD executive committee meetings, monitoring spotted lanternfly and tree-of-heaven concerns, supporting landowner outreach, and helping with invasive species and conservation education efforts
- Additional updates included participation in economic development discussions, follow-up on departmental meetings, and coordination with staff during ongoing flood response
- Short received a five-year service recognition; the board presented his certificate and took a photo to mark the occasion
- Dean reminded the board that the next TVCD board meeting on Monday, September 14th will also be held at 6:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:05 PM was made by Tenney, seconded by Vandevander. Motion carried.

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