

**Mountain Castles Soil and Water Conservation District
Board of Directors Monthly Meeting
December 13, 2023 – USDA Bonsack**

Jeff Henderson called the meeting to order with a quorum present at 7:20 p.m.

Directors Present: Jeff Henderson, Chair, Botetourt (elected)
Preston Wickline, Vice Chair, Botetourt (elected)
Andrew Keffer, Craig (elected)
Jason Williams, Craig (elected)
Walter Nelson, Botetourt (appointed)
Michael Beahm, Treasurer (associate director)
Jeff Munsey (associate director)

Absent: none

Staff Present: Dan Naff
Tim Miller

Others Present: Derek Hancock, NRCS

Minutes:

November board meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made by Preston to approve, second by Jason, motion carried.

Treasurer's Report

- Treasurer's report was reviewed, which included the balance sheet and profit and loss report. Walter moved to approve the treasurer's report, second by Andrew, motion carried.
- Tim discussed the opportunity to move the VACS account from Farmers & Merchants to a new account with First Bank in order to take advantage of an interest rate which mirrors the rate of the Local Government Investment Pool (LGIP). The current rate offered by First Bank is over 5%. Farmers and Merchants are currently paying 0.10%. There are no restrictions on check-writing and no monthly service fees with the First Bank account. After discussion, Walter moved to open a new account with First Bank and transfer the balance of the VACS account. Second by Andrew, motion carried. Michael will open the First Bank account and transfer the money in January.

Other Business

- Tim presented Jeff and Preston their 15-year service pins that were awarded at the VASWCD annual meeting.
- Walter made a motion to keep the current slate of officers for the 2024 calendar year. Second by Andrew, motion carried.
Chair – Jeff Henderson
Vice-Chair – Preston Wickline
Treasurer – Michael Beahm
- Walter moved to assign Tim as both FOIA officer and Records Retention officer. Second by Andrew, motion carried.
- Tim said that Emily Williams, one of his education volunteers, was interested in assisting with the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) in the district on a limited basis. She would help follow up on existing leads, conduct site visits, and help homeowners with applications. Preston moved that we contract her at a rate of \$25/hr plus mileage at approximately 10 hours per month. Second by Jason, motion carried.
- Walter moved to approve a 2% cost-of-living increase for district staff, as recommended by Craig County. Second by Jason, motion carried.

319 Contracts

- #45-24-0036; Instance #581359; RB-3M (Level 2); 80% CS; max CS=\$3,200
- #45-24-0038; Instance #582493; RB-1; 80% CS; max CS=\$320; request for district to pay the \$130 match out of local funds for this contract, due to extreme financial hardship
- #45-24-0039; Instance #582172; RB-1; 50% CS; max CS=\$175
- #45-24-0041; Instance #582723; RB-4; 65% CS; max CS=\$9,701 (pending approval of variance request from Virginia DEQ)

Jason moved to approve all 319 contracts, including paying the \$130 match for #45-24-0038. Second by Walter, motion carried.

VACS Contracts

Dan requested adjustments for the following VACS contracts (report attached):

- #45-23-0014; Instance #504060; SL-6W; 2023 CB VACS; increase cost share for buffer payment by \$228 for a max CS of \$71,585.25
Jason moved to approve, second by Andrew, motion carried.
- #45-24-0006; Instance #534605; SL-6N; 2024 CB VACS; buffer width reduced from 25' per side to 10' per side; cost share is reduced from 75% to 65%; new max approved CS = \$20,602.92
Jason moved to approve, second by Andrew, motion carried.

Dan requested approval of the following conservation plans (report attached):

- CP-45-20-0007 (for tax credit purposes)
- CP-45-22-0007 (attached to VACS contract 45-24-0040)
- CP-45-24-0006 (attached to VACS contract 45-24-0037)
- CP-45-23-0013 (attached to VACS contract 45-24-0035)
Jason moved to approve all conservation plans, second by Andrew, motion carried.

Dan requested approval of the following VACS contracts (report attached):

- #45-24-0035; Instance #528948; SL-6W; 2024 CB VACS; max CS amount = \$71,292.50
After discussion, Jason moved to approve, second by Preston, motion carried.
- #45-24-0037; Instance #581596; SL-6N; 2024 CB VACS; max CS amount = \$7,522.50
Instance #567234; SL-6-W; 2024 CB VACS; max CS amount = \$71,915.00
Total max CS for both instances: \$79,437.50
After discussion, Andrew moved to approve, second by Walter, motion carried.
- #45-24-0040; Instance #550093; SL-6W; 2024 CB VACS; max CS amount = \$66,236.50
Instance #474695; SL-7; 2024 CB VACS; max CS amount = \$89,269.00
Instance #563546; SL-7; 2024 CB VACS; max CS amount = \$19,115.00
Total max CS for all instances: \$174,620.50
After discussion, Preston moved to approve, second by Jason, motion carried.

Johns Creek Dam #1 Contract – Walter moved to approve the design contract from Freese & Nichols, second by Jason, motion carried.

Conservation Technician Report: see attached

District Coordinator Report: see attached

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Agency Reports:

- DCR - submitted by Angela Ball – see attached
- VCE - no report
- VDOF – no report
- NRCS - submitted by Derek Hancock – see attached
- FSA - no report

Jeff Henderson publicly thanked Derek Hancock on behalf of the board of directors for his support for the district during the last year. With new staff and old staff in new roles, there have been many challenges, to say the least. Derek's assistance has been vital to the success of the district.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 by a motion from Walter, second by Jason.

Submitted by Tim Miller

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tim Miller', is written diagonally across the lower right portion of the page.

