

MINUTES

Catawba Soil and Water Conservation District held at Newton, N.C.

Meeting Number 4

April 14, 2023

Supervisors Present:

Steve Killian

Julia Elmore

Brandon Bowman

William (Bill) Shillito

David Caldwell

Others Present:

Randy Willis, Soil Conservation Supervisor

Blake Henley, Soil Conservation Technician

Leia Hamlyn, Education Coordinator

Jim Propst, NRCS Team 5 Supervisor

Julius Johnson, Catawba NRCS

Will Faulkner, NRCS Conservationist

Rick McSwain, Area Coordinator

Steve Killian read the following statement then called the business meeting to order at 9:09 a.m.:

The State Government Ethics Act mandates that at the beginning of any meeting the Chair reminds all the members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest and inquire as to whether any member knows of any conflict of interest or potential conflict with respect to matters to come before the Board. If any member knows of a conflict of interest or potential conflict, please state so at this time.

David Caldwell made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 3, 2023, board meeting. Brandon Bowman seconded. All in favor. Minutes approved.

Randy Willis and Blake Henley gave the Catawba District Operations Report:

District Operations and Technical Assistance

- StRAP
 - We currently have \$61,738.00 remaining in unencumbered funds. We will be approaching the next stream on our list. The state has released \$1.3M for supplemental funds with applications due by May 1st. Bill Shillito made a motion to apply for more funds. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- YMCA
 - We held a pre-bid meeting at the YMCA on March 16th with 8 contractors in attendance. We received two bids back in the amounts of \$105,572.33 and \$68,731.94. Contract has been signed with KBS Earthworks in the amount of \$68,731.94. We will coordinate construction start date with KBS and Cindy Safrit (Engineer).

- Attended a MS Teams meeting with updates on Spot Check procedures. We will have our spot checks following the May Meeting.
- We are working on updating our ranking sheets.
- Steve, David and Bill along with staff attended the Area 2 Spring Meeting.
- Gave a presentation to the Rotary Club of Catawba Valley
- Attended Regional Conservation Partnership Discussion for the South Fork Catawba River Watershed.
- Had our departmental budget meeting with County Management.
- Attended joint meeting with other departments to discuss erosion issues at Mountain Creek Park's pump track.
- Blake celebrated his 10th Anniversary with the Soil & Water office on April 1st.
- Provided technical assistance to several landowners with erosion issues/debris in creek.
- Assisted Burke Soil & Water with drone photos of stream debris.

NCACSP

- Contract 18-23-002-03 has been delivered the specs.
- Contract 18-21-01-01 is nearing completion.
- We received a supplemental allocation in the amount of \$3,332.00.
- David Caldwell made a motion to accept Contract application 18-23-003-03. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Brandon Bowman made a motion to approve Contract 18-23-003-03 in the amount of \$14,962.00. David Caldwell seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

AGWRAP

- Contract 18-21-801-01 is nearing completion.
- We have applied for a supplemental allocation in the amount of \$11,204.00.
- Julia Elmore made a motion to accept Contract application 18-23-801-01. Brandon Bowman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- David Caldwell made a motion to approve Contract 18-23-801-01 in the amount of 11,204.00. Brandon Bowman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Leia Hamlyn gave the Education and Outreach Report:

- Area 2 Contest Night held March 16 in Morganton.
- 7th Grade Speech contestant won first place and will advance to State Competition in May.
- Middle School Envirothon was held March 21.
- High School Envirothon was held March 22.
- Three Catawba County High School Teams placed in the top seven and will advance to the State Envirothon April 28-29.
- Attended Deaf Culture Inclusivity Training and Envirothon Committee Meeting April 12 in Morganton.
- State Envirothon will be held April 28-29 in Burlington.

Jim Propst gave the Team 4/5 NRCS Supervisory Report:

This is Julius Johnson's last board meeting. He will be taking a job with NRCS in Mississippi and April 28 will be his last day in Catawba.

FY 23 EQIP

New IRA (Inflation Reduction Act) Pools had a new application period till 3/17/23 and new deadlines of 5/12/23. New applications were received up to 3/17/23 and applications already in the system were coded the IRA fund pool. In Catawba there is only one application impacted: Wildlife. IRA applications must address at least one practice that impacts climate change, on a designated list.

**Catawba (4)* Eligible Applications, \$105,000 Estimated
Pasture, Wildlife, Urban/High Tunnel**

***One application is duplicate in new and beginning pool**

Team members now working finalizing preapproved/approved regular EQIP applications as well as additional site evaluations, field notes, and cost estimates preparing for ranking IRA applications in the following pools: Cropland, Pasture, Wildlife, and Forestry,

Team 5 currently has (6) applications pre-approved/approved

= \$471,778

Julius Johnson gave the Catawba NRCS Report:

FY23 EQIP:

Catawba has 4 EQIP applications:

- 1 Pasture
- 1 Wildlife
- 1 NBF -New Beginning Farmer
- 1 Urban Initiative - (High Tunnel) – Currently Approved and awaiting Obligation.

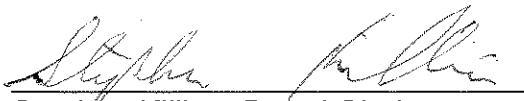
Fieldwork/Projects: All Expiring Contracts 3/31/2023

- (1) Pasture Systems (1) Livestock watering facility (tanks and Pipeline (1) Forage Seeding
- Litter Storage building – 1 item left to complete (Critical Area Planting)
- (2) Seasonal High Tunnels

Rick McSwain gave the Division Report highlights. CET will be held September 18-21 at the Embassy Suites in Greensboro. Starting July 1 a new W-9 Form will be required for board supervisors. Soon, each district will be able to decide if they will be partisan or non-partisan due to Senate Bill 27. Statement of professionalism should appear on the agenda of next meeting.

Brandon Bowman made a motion to adjourn the meeting. David Caldwell seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

Minutes taken by Leia Hamlyn.


Stephen Killian, Board Chair