

MINUTES

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

Meeting Number 5

June 7, 2024

Supervisors Present:

Steve Killian

Julia Elmore

David Caldwell

Brandon Bowman

William (Bill) Shillito

Others Present:

Randy Willis, Soil Conservation Supervisor

Blake Henley, Soil Conservation Technician

Leia Hamlyn, Education Coordinator

Jim Propst, NRCS Team 5 Supervisor

Elise McLaughlin, Area 2 Regional Coordinator

Steve Killian read the following statements then called the business meeting to order at 9:04 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.

Statement of Professionalism

Supervisors are reminded of their responsibility to uphold the laws of the United States and North Carolina and their constitutions. Business is to be conducted in a professional manner, free of bias, of interactions that violate policies or individual liberties and that address business issues only. Interactions are to be held with integrity, courtesy, honesty and in compliance with the highest ethical standards.

Bill Shillito made a motion to approve the agenda for the board meeting. Brandon Bowman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Agenda approved.

Bill Shillito made a motion to approve the minutes from the May 3, 2024, board meeting. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Minutes approved.

Lorien Deaton, AgWrap Coordinator with the Division, presented the Program Review Report with commendations on Catawba Soil & Water's reporting and record keeping.

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

District Operations and Technical Assistance:

- STRAP- We received the weight limits for the bridge and had a pre-bid meeting on May 23rd. We received four bids back on June 4th with bids ranging from \$26k to \$62k. Purchasing is verifying the references before we announce the winning bid. We are working on the final easement agreement for the Bill Long project

from Microsoft and have submitted a Non-Disclosure Agreement. The allocation of the second round of StRAP funds has been postponed because there is a potential for an additional funding source which would increase the total funds that could be allocated.

- County Budget- The BOC approved the recommended budget on June 3rd. We received the increases we asked for.
- Met with a landowner about erosion behind her house.
- Attended the local work group meeting.
- Drone training.

NCACSP

- Contract 18-23-03-03 is complete will be processing the RFP.
- Contract 18-24-01-03 has been delivered the specs.

CCAP

- Contract 18-22-501-01 update.

Leia Hamlyn gave the Education and Outreach Report:

- Purchased supplies for new grass head cup project for upcoming library program and throughout the school year.
- Environmental Awareness Field Days scheduled for September 26 and October 3 at Southside Park in Newton.

Jim Propst gave the Catawba NRCS Supervisory Soil Conservationist's Report and the Team 5 NRCS Supervisory Soil Conservationist's Report:

FY 24 EQIP/CSP:

EQIP: Still in process of generating contracts for the additional participants in EQIP as Area Office releases them.

**Team 5 (33) Contracts Obligated/Preapproved/Approved
= \$1,915,715**

CSP: Applications accepted and now being evaluated and ranked.

- **Team 5 has (23) Eligible Applications to rank**

Fieldwork: Team members working on several projects, as well as assisting SWCD personnel, (3) Waste Storage Systems, (6) Stream Exclusion/Water Systems, several follow-up measurements/site evaluations for FY24 EQIP & CSP applications.

Elise McLaughlin gave the Division Report highlights.

- StRAP application update: Announcement of FY2024 awards has been delayed until June 27 due to new opportunity for added funding from NC DEQ, which could potentially double the funding and number of projects that could be funded. The Commission will hold a special meeting on June 27 at 7:00pm to discuss.
- 2020-2024 Supervisor Terms: By statute, filing for elected seats shall be open from noon on the second Monday in June until noon on the first Friday in July. Holidays may affect this. Check with local County Board of Elections to confirm filing dates/times.
- Nominations for appointment and reappointment will be considered by batch by Commission at November meeting. Appointment recommendations must be approved at a board meeting. Note two new questions on the reappointment form related to attendance at Area and Annual Meetings during the previous term. The Commission seeks to emphasize participation in these training activities.
- Conservation Employee Training (CET) is now open for registration; September 16-19, Atlantic Beach.
- LGBFCA Reminder: By July 1 of each year, adopt a balanced budget ordinance; complete annual audit after close of fiscal year – consider August board meeting.
- “Grow More” outreach and communication training July 9 in Fletcher, October 16 in Raleigh area, and April 22, 2025 in Winston-Salem.
- New Advanced Training for SWCD Supervisors will be Tuesday, August 13 at Steve Troxler Ag Science Center in Raleigh. This new 6-hour training opportunity will take a deeper dive into responsibilities and opportunities for District Board members. Eventually this training will be offered in different areas across the state. Employees are invited to attend as well.
- The Annual Meeting will be held in Durham January 5-7, 2025. Basic Training will be January 4.
- Area 2 Fall Meeting will be October 10 in Morganton.
- At the May Commission meeting, Commissioners discussed the need for supervisors to know programs well to be able to discuss these with members of the community, and to get the word out about the work of Soil and Water Conservation. (The shortfall of funding is a concern because we don’t want to disappoint potential cooperators if their projects don’t get funded.)
- Senate Bill 613 (Stream Buffer Rule) is now being considered by the House. It would require a 25-foot setback on both sides of trout streams. The Farm Bureau and other entities oppose this because it could have big impacts on farmers.

David Caldwell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Brandon Bowman seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:58 a.m.

Minutes taken by Leia Hamlyn.



Stephen Killian, Board Chair