

## MINUTES

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

Meeting Number 8

November 1, 2024

Supervisors Present:

Steve Killian

Julia Elmore

David Caldwell

Brandon Bowman

Others Present:

Randy Willis, Soil Conservation Supervisor

Blake Henley, Soil Conservation Technician

Leia Hamlyn, Education Coordinator

Will Faulkner, NRCS Catawba

Ethan Weinrich, NRCS Iredell

Elise McLaughlin, Area 2 Regional Coordinator

Steve Killian read the following statements then called the business meeting to order at 9:03 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.*

David Caldwell made a motion to approve the agenda for the board meeting. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Agenda approved.

Julia Elmore made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 6, 2024, board meeting. Brandon Bowman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Minutes approved.

David Caldwell made a motion to reappoint Brandon Bowman as a Catawba County Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisor for the 2024-2028 Term. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

**Randy Willis and Blake Henley** presented the Catawba District Operations Report:

### **District Operations and Technical Assistance**

- StRAP- We have completed the Bill Long project. The bid was for \$23,495 and the contractor submitted a change order in the amount of \$8,500, putting the final

invoice at \$31,899. We used the remaining \$7,248 from the 2022 StRAP allocation and \$24,747 from the 2022 County match.

- StRAP- We have a fully executed contract for the \$159,184 StRAP grant funds and are awaiting a contract supplement for an additional \$33,429 giving us a total of \$192,613 in StRAP funds. The grant provides 15% in admin funds in the amount of \$28,892. We have identified a couple of sites that were adversely affected by Helene and pose a risk to infrastructure.
- YMCA- Project complete!!!
- We certified two water points for the Catawba Fire Department.
- Staff attended social media training presented by the County legal department.
- Met with a landowner about ACSP, but he was not interested in a 10-year agreement.
- Went with FSA/NRCS to look at some flood damage.

#### **NCACSP**

- Met with a potential landowner for ACSP.
- Contract 18-24-02-01 has picked up the specs.
- David Caldwell made a motion to accept Contract application 18-25-02-01. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Brandon Bowman made a motion to approve Contract 18-25-02-01 in the amount of \$10,795.00. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Contract 18-24-01-03 has been completed, we will be processing the payment.

#### **AGWRAP**

- David Caldwell made a motion to accept Contract application 18-25-801-01. Brandon Bowman seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Julia Elmore made a motion to approve Contract 18-25-801-01 in the amount of \$10,490.00. David Caldwell seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.
- Contract 18-24-801-03 has been completed. RFP in the amount of \$8,264.00. Steve signed the RFP on 11-1-2024.
- Contract 18-24-802-01 has been completed. RFP in the amount of \$9,164.00. Steve signed the RFP on 11-1-2024.

**Leia Hamlyn** presented the Education and Outreach Report:

- Environmental Awareness Field Days scheduled for September 26 and October 3 at Southside Park in Newton were cancelled due to weather.
- Presented Enviroscape at a mini field day for Online Catawba on September 25.
- Envirothon dates have been set for 2025. The NW Envirothon event will be held on Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup> for middle school, and Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> for high school.
- The Contest Theme for 2024-2025 is Wetlands Are Wonderful. Entry deadline is Jan. 24, 2025.

#### **Upcoming Dates**

- Area 2 Fall Meeting – Tuesday, November 12 (Morganton)

- Speech Contest – Saturday, February 1, 2025 (Snow Date – Saturday, February 8, 2025)
- Banquet – Tuesday, February 25, 2025 (Snow Date – Thursday, February 27, 2025)
- Area 2 Contest Night – Thursday, March 20, 2025 in Catawba County

**Will Faulkner** presented the Team 5 NRCS Supervisory Soil Conservationist's Report and the Catawba NRCS Supervisory Soil Conservationist's Report:

**EWP:** In response to Helene, Team 5 will be requesting EWP funding. Numerous site visits, updates to follow.

**FY 24 EQIP/CSP:**

|                   |                      |                    |
|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| <b>EQIP 2024:</b> | <b>Catawba (2) =</b> | <b>\$40,000</b>    |
|                   | <b>Team 5 (31) =</b> | <b>\$1,829,574</b> |
| <b>CSP 2024:</b>  | <b>Catawba (1) =</b> | <b>\$20,000</b>    |
|                   | <b>Team 5 (10) =</b> | <b>\$398,729</b>   |

**Programs 2025:** All EQIP applications will be accepted until 1/10/25 due to Hurricane Helene. CSP applications ended 11/1/24

**Fieldwork:** Team members working on several projects, as well as assisting SWCD personnel, evaluations for FY25 EQIP, CSP, & NCACSP applications to begin this month.

**Area Office Appraisal:** Team 5 participated in this appraisal Sept. 10 in Morganton, SO to have closeout session Oct. 3.

**Iredell/Statesville SC Position:** Ethan Weinrich, graduate student originally from Florida (U of Florida: BS Environ Mgt. in Ag & Nat Resources) with Master's degree via Michigan State (Crop & Soil Sciences) to begin work Oct. 21. Has spent time with Peace Corps in Senegal as well as research technician and research assistant at both UF and MS.

**Elise McLaughlin** presented the Division Report, highlighting the following: NC Disaster Hay Portal – We've been hearing about people whose hay got washed away in Helene and others looking to donate hay. Here is a link to the NC Disaster Hay Portal. The Department and Extension are working to set up some staging locations for pick up and drop off.

David Caldwell made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Julia Elmore seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 9:47 a.m.

Minutes taken by Leia Hamlyn.

 Stephen Killian, Board Chair