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 Strasburg, VA 22657  
 (540) 465-2424, Ext. 5  
[www.lfswcd.org](http://www.lfswcd.org)

June ~~8~~<sup>10</sup>, 2021

**MINUTES**

The June Board Meeting was held electronically using the WebEx Conference Service in accordance with Chapter 1283 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly and in compliance with the provisions of 2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia. A recording of the meeting is available at: <https://www.lfswcd.org>.

Those attending via the WebEx meeting platform were:

**LFSWCD Directors and Associate Directors**

Richard Hoover, Chairman  
 Joan Comanor, Vice Chairwoman  
 Mary Gessner  
 Justin Mackay-Smith  
 James Martin  
 HB Simpson  
 Kermit Gaither  
 James Martin  
 Ira Richards  
 Corey Childs  
 Wayne Webb

**LFSWCD Staff Members**

Dana Gochenour  
 Ali Sloop  
 Nick Livesay  
 Allyson Ponn  
 Sheryl Ferguson  
 Sam Truban

**Absent Directors or Staff:**

James Fagan  
 Paul Burkholder

**Cooperating Agency Representatives in Attendance:**

Brian Brezinski, USDA, Natural Conservation Service  
 Debbie Dross, CDC/DCR

**Motion is needed to conduct an electronic meeting due to the declaration of emergency related to COVID-19. Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Kitty Hockman-Nicholas. Motion passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		



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Mr. Hoover called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.

**Chairman's Report:**

- Approval of May 2021 Minutes

**Motion made to approve the May 2021 minutes. Motion made by Joan Comanor, seconded by Wayne Webb. Motion passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		

**Chairman's Report:**

- Chairman Hoover announced that Jim Martin had submitted his resignation from the Board, effective June 30, 2021. Jim has been with us since 2013/14. We wish him the best and hope to continue a working relationship. He will be missed.
- Frederick County will be contributing \$1,250.00 to the district for FY2022
- The new software transition is going well with TeamLogicIT, as reported by Sheryl Ferguson.
  - Staff emails will stay the same, Directors with lfswcd.org addresses will need to be changed. Please contact Sheryl to set up a gmail account.
  - Wayne Webb asked about Cloud clarification and security. Sheryl assured all was HIPAA compliant.
- Attendance for Spring Meeting: Joan Comanor, Richard Hoover, and Staff.
- DCR Grants



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**Motion made for Approval of Signature on the DCR Grant Agreements. Motion made by HB Simpson, seconded by Mary Gessner. Motion passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		

- Small Herds Initiative discussion. Mary Gessner gave the CTC’s recommendation. The agreement does not force us to do anything but does give us the opportunity to offer the program as assistance. Wayne Webb added that he and Bud Nagelvoort were not in agreement with accepting the program. Wayne’s concern is that these projects are not approved the way other BMP projects are. Dana Gochenour clarified that these projects would be approved by the CTC before being recommended to the Board. Wayne requested this information be forwarded to him for clarification.

**Motion made for the Approval of Signature on the Small Herd Initiative Program. Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by HB Simpson. Motion passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb		X	

- **MPPP (Mobilization Pilot Payment Project) MOU**



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### **Treasurer's Report:**

- The May bank statements have been received and reconciled by the Administrative Specialist. These items have not been reviewed as of this report.
- A draft budget for FY2022 has been prepared and was presented at the Finance Committee meeting. The proposed budget is included in board member's packets. Edits were made based on input from the Personnel Committee and the Education Committee. For FY2022 we are projecting a net income of just under \$180,000.
- As we are preparing to update our District Strategic Plan for FY22 through FY27, I projected out our budget for the next 5 years. Those projections are bleak. We can anticipate deficits beginning in FY23 of \$170,000 and growing each year to \$228,000 by FY27.
  - Mr. Hoover asked Jim Martin, Treasurer for clarification on his "Projected Number" concerns. The concern lies in relying on the additional funding by DCR and the fact that this income may not continue to hold or increase leading to the unfortunate decision of having to let go of staff if this happens.
  - Joan Comanor clarified that the additional Staff hiring is for 1 additional Tech Person with a 3-year term.

Mr. Hoover suggested moving further Budget discussion to the Finance Committee's time slot.

### **Board Secretary:**

- In addition to her written report, Sarah thanked the Personnel Committee for the kind feedback during her review on June 7, 2021.

### **Technical Reports:**

**Senior Conservation Specialist, Dana Gochenour:** Nothing to add to written report.

- Joan asked for Dana to clarify the total Project Process and ongoing workload. More so, what happens after the approval of the CTC recommendations to the Board.
  - Dana prior to CTC 2 meetings, Property visit, conservation plans & goals, budget and tracking information, Applications. After approval design work, more meetings with Land owners and contractors, project inspections, bill collections, payment process. These projects can take a few months or at some times several years.
  - Staff is currently juggling approximately \$5 million in projects. Plus, the upcoming \$4.8 million for FY22. This is what prompted the request for 1 additional staff person.
- Wayne asked for Att D clarification. Specifically, the need for 4 additional staff members.
  - Dana responded that, the Att D is a representation of an ideal situation to tackle the workload. We are aware that due to budget & office constraints as well as other deciding factors that we will not actually ever get 4 additional staff members, but in an



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ideal setting that is what would be needed to properly handle a workload like we currently have.

- The Att D covers a 2-year time span and is a tool used by DCR for TA assistance – The Att D is not a Budget document, it is more a projected needs listing.

**Conservation Specialist, Sam Truban:** Nothing to add.

**Conservation Specialist, Ali Sloop:** Nothing to add to written report.

**Conservation Specialist, Nick Livesay:** Nothing to add to written report.

**Education and Program Support Specialist, Allyson Ponn:** Nothing to add to written report.

- Busy planning Summer events and helping lead Summer Camps
- Mr. Hoover & other Board Members congratulated Allyson on her FFA Honorary Degree
- She will send photos of Thank You cards from the Scholarship winners.
- Due to recent negative articles, Wayne Webb suggested that Allyson prepares a report to submit to the local papers letting them know what is being done to help in the local water quality. Allyson expressed that this is on the Education Action Plan for FY2022.

**Contractor for Conservation Services, Sheryl Ferguson:** In addition to her written report, Sheryl added that the Staff is under a tremendous work load and along with the transition have been handling things with flying colors.

**Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley: Joan Comanor**

- Ms. Comanor had nothing to add to the written report.

**Conservation Easements Committee:**

- Mr. Richards had nothing to report.

**Conservation Technical Committee:**

- Mary Gessner reviewed the CTC written report.



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**A motion was made, to approve the projects outlined in the written report submitted from the CTC, by Mary Gessner and seconded by Corey Childs. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb		X	

- Mary Gessner reviewed the remainder of the CTC Meeting Minutes to include:
  - Conservation Equipment Tax Credit Certificate approval for a Manure Spreader
  - New Ranking Spreadsheet approval
  - Secondary Considerations recommending approval
  - Average Cost List recommending for approval
  - Delegation of Authority for anything that comes up between now and end of the Month
  - Projects moving from 20 to 21 to be approved by Board

**Motion to approve the Remainder of the CTC minutes to include a Conservation Equipment Tax Credit Certificate for a Manure Spreader, the Secondary Considerations, the Average Cost List for FY 2022, Delegation of Authority to the CTC Committee to handle any items that may arise between today’s meeting and the end of month to continue forward, the moving of projects from the year 2020 to 2021. Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Joan Comanor. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		

- **MPPP (Mobilization Payment Pilot Program)** Debbie Cross reminded us that the District was asked if we would participate as a Pilot district. The CTC and Board accepted this project at January 2021 meeting.



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Four(4) Districts are participating. Effective July 1, 2022. This is a program in which the District could make up front payments to producers to help mobilize contractors to get in place to start the project. It is to be used as an incentive to get projects done more quickly. Mary added that the Staff is accepting of the project. Dana and Staff feels it would be a great help to those farmers who do not have the up-front funds for larger projects in order to participate in some of the larger practices. There will be a webinar on June 15, 2021 that all are invited to participate in.

**Motion to approve Delegation of Authority to the Chairman of the Board for the signing of the MPPP MOA after the participation of the June 15, 2021, MPPP Webinar and upon review and recommendation of the CTC Chairs.**

**Motion made by Joan Comanor, seconded by HB Simpson. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.**

*\*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		

**Dam Safety Committee:**

- Mr. Fagan was absent from the Board meeting

**Education and Information Committee:**

- Ms. Comanor had nothing to add, but reminded the minute were included in the written report.

**Finance Committee:**

- Mr. Webb had nothing to add to his written report.
- Mr. Hoover asked where we stand on the Budget. Jim Martin responded that it needs to be updated and presented to the Board to include changes made at the June 7, 2021 Personnel Committee Meeting & Staff Reviews.
- The Finance Committee will meet and complete a Budget Proposal to submit to the Board for approval at the July 8, 2021 meeting. Mr. Webb will contact Committee members to hold a meeting to address the Proposed Budget items.





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**Legislative Committee: Paul Burkholder**

- Mr. Burkholder was absent from the Board meeting.

**Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Committee: Wayne Webb**

- Mr. Webb added he would be attending the upcoming meeting.

**Operations Committee: Justin MacKay-Smith**

**Motion for Approval of the Annual Plan of Work as presented by the Operations Committee to include the mentioned changes to page 8 as requested by Mr. Hoover. Motion made by Wayne Webb, seconded by Joan Comanor. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** *\*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting. Kitty Hockman-Nicholas was not in participation at the time of discussion or vote.*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				*Kitty Hockman-Nicholas			
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		

**Personnel Committee: HB Simpson**

- Mr. Simpson stated the Personnel Committee met on June 7, 2021 @ 9:00am. Followed by Staff Personnel Reviews to start at 9:30am. He expressed his thanks to the Staff for all they do under the circumstances.
- The Personnel Committee recommends pay increases for the FY2022 to be as follows: 5% COLA increase for the Administrative Specialist, and a 7% increase for Tech Staff (to include a 5% COLA and a 2% Merit increase). The merit increase was given to Tech Staff for their added work effort throughout the year. The Administrative Specialist just came on board the end of February 2021. Sarah (Admin. Spec.) expressed that she feels this is fair and she does not feel slighted in this decision.





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- Kitty Hockman–Nicholas suggested a fund drive with the Cities and Counties. Debbie Cross agreed that our Counties need to be giving larger contributions and that they are giving much lower amounts than most communities.
- Corey Childs asked if it was known of what other Districts were doing to see if we were comparable. Debbie gave a report that some Districts were doing increases and some not, where others are understaffed and just planning to fill current open positions.

**Motion to approve the Personnel Committee recommendation of a FY2022 Staffing Pay Increase as follows: a 5% COLA salary Increase to be given to the Administrative Specialist and a 7% (5% COLA and 2% Merit) salary increase to be given to the Tech Staff. Motion made by HB Simpson, seconded by Kitty Hockman-Nicholas. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither			X
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb			X

- The Personnel Committee recommends the hiring of an additional Tech Staff Member (Conservation Specialist) to help manage the upcoming workload due to increased FY22 State funding.

**Motion to approve the Personnel Committee recommendation of proceeding with the hiring of one (1) additional staff member with a 3-year term. Motion made by HB Simpson, seconded by Kitty Hockman-Nicholas. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb			X



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**Motion to approve the Minutes of the June 7, 2021, Personnel Committee Meeting. Motion made by HB Simpson, seconded by Kitty Hockman-Nicholas. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		

**Shenandoah County Water Resources Advisory Committee: Joan Comanor**

- Ms. Comanor had nothing to add.

**Shenandoah Pure Water Forum: Dick Hoover**

- Mr. Hoover had nothing to add.

**Urban BMP Committee: Kermit Gaither**

- Mr. Gaither had nothing to add.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service: Brent Barriteau**

- Brain Brezinski addressed the Board in Brent Barriteau’s absence. He stated that Brent had sent out an email in relationship to the USDA/NRCS MOA. Dr. Martinez our State Conservationists and Dr. Tyree(VSWCD) along with NASWCD are still in negotiations. Therefore, the memorandum of understanding is on hold until further notice.

**Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation: Debbie Cross**

Debbie Highlighted a few items on her report

- Quarterly Reports
- Grant Deliverables due by June 30, 2021
- Self-Assessment Questionnaire to be completed by staff



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- Attachment D due by July 15, 2021 (needs Board Approval)
  - VACS updates were done this past week
  - Tracking end of year wrap up
  - July Trainings for staff
  - QuickBooks training available to all who desire (Sarah will be participating all 4 classes offered)
  - **When the State of Emergency has been lifted the Districts may no longer be able to use that as a reason to meet virtually. Rumored to be happening June 30, 2021.**
  - She is still teleworking but able to attend Board meetings.
  - Please view her report for other upcoming dates and trainings
  - Debbie Thanked Jim for his years of service to the District

**Virginia Cooperative Extension: Corey Childs:**

- June 22, 2021 – Webinar – Livestock Transportation update
- Elm Zig-Zig Saw Fly; new invasive pest found in Clarke County. Not sure yet of its impact.
- VA Tech Plant ID Lab is making some changes to their fees starting this Fall
  - There will now be a \$35 fee for Plant Identification at the Virginia Tech level
  - Local Ext. Offices/Agents will still be able to assist in identification free of charge

**Virginia Department of Forestry: Matt Wolanski**

- Not in attendance.

**Chesapeake Bay Foundation:**

- Not in attendance.

**Department of Environmental Quality: Sara Bottenfield**

- Not in attendance.

**Other:**

- Mr. Hoover asked Wayne Webb to lead off a discussion on the need to place a better priority on BMP cost share “practices which help reduce nutrients and sediment getting to streams.”
  - Wayne gave a short presentation on river nutrient numbers in respect to the number of cattle in the Valley. At this time, he would like to do more research before presenting a more in-depth report.
- Dana Gochenour addressed the issue of needing to pay fees for the Community Room use and Committee Meetings for those committees larger than the office conference room will hold.



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The fee is now \$45/hour of use. Suggestions were made to check with Towns and Counties for available spaces. The Strasburg park pavilions are \$25 for half day use.

**Motion made for the approval of Rental, by all Committees and the Board, to conduct a 2-hour meeting to at the Community Center until further options/arrangements are found. Motion made by Wayne Webb, seconded by Kitty Hockman-Nicholas. Motion passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.**

*\*James Fagan and Paul Burkholder were absent from the Board Meeting.*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		

- **The July 8, 2021, Board of Directors meeting will be held in person at the Strasburg Community Center Room located next to the LFSWCD Offices. Covid restriction guidelines will be followed.**

**Motion to Adjourn: Motion made by Wayne Webb, seconded by Kitty Hockman-Nicholas. Motion passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \* Kitty Hockman-Nicholas and Wayne Webb were absent from the Board meeting.**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Richard Hoover	X				Kermit Gaither	X		
Joan Comanor	X				Kitty Hockman-Nicholas	X		
Ira Richards	X				HB Simpson	X		
Corey Childs	X				*Paul Burkholder			
Mary Gessner	X				Justin MacKay-Smith	X		
*James Fagan					Wayne Webb	X		

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00noon.

Respectfully submitted,

*Sarah R. Fleming*