



Richland Soil and Water Conservation District (RSWCD)
2020 Hampton Street, Room 3063A
Columbia, SC 29204
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March 13, 2023 • 6pm
Lizard's Thicket, 7938 Garners Ferry Rd, Columbia, SC 29209

Commissioners Present

Kenny Mullins, Chair
Jeff Laney, Vice Chair
Tim McSwain

Associate Commissioners Present

Charles Weber
Mary Frances Hendrix
Logan Richardson

Others Present

Chanda Cooper
Val Morris
Jennifer Mancke
Matt Cornwell
Sarah Burnham
Gary Spires
Diana Llaca-Curiel
Virginia Grace Laney
Darvis Jordan

Welcome and Call to Order: Mullis called the meeting to order and McSwain gave the invocation at 6:01pm.

Approve Agenda and Minutes: Laney moved to approved the agenda and minutes. The motions were seconded by McSwain and passed unanimously.

Special Presentation:

Matt Cornwell and Gary Spires with Farm Bureau spoke to the group about their outreach programs and the new land trust easement project. Cornwell gave the group information about the educational curriculum for teachers regarding agriculture, leadership development for the youth, new farmers and various other outreach programs they offer. Spires spoke of Farm Bureau land trust, which is the newest affiliate they have incorporated with the state of South Carolina, beginning in late October 2022. Still in its beginning stages thus far, they have over 20 potential farmers who are interested in putting their property under an easement with Farm Bureau.

Financial Report: Cooper provided the following financial overview:

Operating Account (02/28/23 Statement)

- Starting Balance: \$78,650.55 (02/02/23)
- Deposits and Credits: \$4,588.26
- Expenses and Debits: \$11,766.99
- Ending Balance: \$71,471.82 (02/28/23)

Credit Card (03/05/23 Statement)

- Starting Balance: \$1,554.72
- Payments: \$1,554.72
- Purchases: \$2,585.68 Ending Balance: \$2,585.68 (03/5/23) <paid in full (03/13/23)

Easement Stewardship Account (02/28/23 Statement)

- Starting Account Value: \$51,226.05 (02/01/23)
- Ending Account Value: \$51,303.40 (02/28/23)

SCACD Contribution Agreement Account (02/28/23 Statement)

- Starting Account Value: \$16,734.49 (02/1/23)
- Ending Account Value: \$252.51 (02/28/23)

PayPal Account (02/28/23 Statement)

- Current Balance: \$250.00 (02/28/23)

Friends of RSWCD Report: Since the last board meeting on 02/13/23, two Friends have renewed and we have one new Friend with total contribution of \$250. RSWCD has 41 current Friends.

Pinewood Lake Park Pollinator Garden Report: No report available.

NRCS:

Programs:

EQIP

- On Active Contracts
 - Working on practice checkouts, contract reviews and modifications.
 - Working on practice design and establishments
 - Reviewing new EQIP practices and standards
- EQIP FY23
 - Working on site visits and planning to complete assessments and ranking.

CSP

- Active CSP
 - Working on payments for producers that picked calendar year 23 for payments
 - Working on contract reviews and certifications.

General:

- Completed trainings and attended virtual meetings and teleconferences.
- Working on practice design and implementation

- New Employee: Soil Con Tec Marcus Moody from Eastover

SCDNR: The SC Envirothon will be held on April 28, 2023. They have hired an administrative assistant that will start on Monday, March 20, 2023. The commissioners' license plates are still being processed; it is taking longer than expected. The 2021 Conservation District Annual Report was chosen as a notable state document.

Richland County Conservation Commission (RCCC): Weber reported the grant presentations for the Natural Resources Committee (NRC), FY23-24 grants were completed and have been forwarded to County Council for readings and approval. In addition, NRC has completed about 30 land easements and are proceeding with a Forest Stewardship Plan and a Climate Change Plan for Richland County.

Education Report:

- Richland County Ag + Art Tour – June 10-11, 2023
- RSWCD has recruited \$11,650 in sponsorships of a \$15,000 sponsorship goal. As of 3/9/23, the Richland County planning committee has documented \$10,795 in matching funding.
- Fifteen tour sites will be featured on the Richland County tour. Twelve will participate all weekend; two are Saturday only; one is Sunday only.
- Artisan recruitment is ongoing; artisan applications are due 4/28/23 at 5pm.
- An Ag + Art Tour Kickoff Event will be held at Clemson Sandhill Research and Education Center from 2-6pm on Tuesday, 5/30/23. The event will feature the Sandhill Farmers Market, Ag Combine Simulator, crafts and games for kids, and two wagon-ride farm tours at 2:00 and 3:30pm. The farm tours have reserved seating.
- The Seed Sanctuary has received 500 requests for seeds-by-mail since 2/1/23. 2,141 seed packets have been distributed since 1/1/23, through the mail program and the two in-person locations at Richland Library Eastover and the Richland County Administration Building. RSWCD hosted a pop-up event at Cottontown Art Crawl on 3/11/23. WLTX featured the Richland Library Eastover's Seed Sanctuary in a recent news story.
- RSWCD awarded five spring Conservation Education Mini-Grants totaling \$3,750. It received seven requests totaling \$6,750. WACH Fox featured two of the grants in a recent news story.
- Mancke helped install the Farmstand hydroponics tower at Webber Elementary this morning! She also mentored two science fair projects at Dutch Fork Elementary School and was a science fair judge. She led a school gardening program at St. Joseph Catholic School. Cooper led a composting program at Longleaf Middle School, and a Pollinator Conservation/About RSWCD program for the members of the Mimosa Garden Club. Cooper and Mancke staffed an RSWCD exhibit at Cottontown Art Crawl.
- Entries are due for the RSWCD "One Water" poster contest on 4/14/23. RSWCD is providing up to 24 sheets of poster paper per school, by request.
- RSWCD's Adopt-A-Stream kit is being used by two community groups each month.
- RSWCD is providing planning support for the Environmental Education Association of SC's annual conference, which will be held 6/21/23-6/24/23 at the Penn Center in Beaufort, SC.

Advocacy Report: NA

Old Business: NA

New Business: NA

Public Input: NA

Next Meeting: The next board meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 10, 2023 at 6pm at Lizard's Thicket, 7938 Garners Ferry Rd, Columbia, SC 29209.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kenny Mullis, Chair

Val Morris, Conservation Administrative Assistant