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## MINUTES

The January 8, 2026, LFSWCD Board of Director's Meeting was held, in person, at the Strasburg Community Center, 726 East Queen Street, Strasburg, VA 22657.

Those attending were:

### LFSWCD Directors

Joan Comanor  
Mary Gessner  
James Fagan  
Justin Mackay-Smith  
Randy Buckley  
Robert "Bobby" Clark  
Paul Burkholder  
Reid Hoak  
Jack Owens

### Associate Directors

Stephanie Shillingburg

### Cooperating Agency Representatives & Guests in Attendance:

Debbie Cross, CDC/DCR  
Brent Barriteau, NRCS

### LFSWCD Staff Members

Ben Loyd  
Nick Livesay  
Sarah Fleming  
Dana Gochenour  
Madison Coffey  
Lisa Parks  
Brett Ramer  
Olivia Donachie

### Absent Directors or Staff:

Kermit Gaither  
Emma Bricker  
Mark Huddleston  
Ed Pendelton  
Jason Bushong  
Allyson Ponn

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*LFSWCD Board Chair Joan Comanor called the meeting to order at 10:00 am.*

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- Welcome to the New Year.
- Staff /Baby updates.

**MOTION:** Board approval of the December 11, 2025, Board of Director meeting minutes as presented in the Board Packet. Motion made by Paul Burkholder, seconded by Reid Hoak. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		

**Chairwoman’s Report: Joan Comanor**

- Reviewed written report.
- New Shenandoah County Board of Supervisor Chair is Timothy Taylor, Vice-Chair is Dennis Morris.
- State Budget Highlights
  - \$25 million in funds were cut from Dam rehab.
  - VCAP funding has been removed
    - As a district we need to educate and inform of the importance of the VCAP program to legislators.
  - Debbie added that the Association will seek a representative from the House or Senate to present an amendment to the bill for these items.
- Jim Fagan has been asked if he would be interested in serving on a County Committee. He has made an inquiry with the Ethics Committee to see if there are any issues should he move forward.

**Treasurer & Finance Report: Stephanie Shillingburg**

- The Finance Committee met today 1/8/2026 at 9:30am prior to the Board of Directors meeting.
  - They reviewed the Qtr. 2 Att E, Purchasing Policy, Credit Card Policy and the Desktop Procedures.

**MOTION:** to Accept and file for audit the Treasurer’s Report/Documents for December 2025 (as presented in the Board Packet).

Motion made by Randy Buckley, seconded by Mary Gessner. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		

**Board Secretary/Administrative Specialist: Sarah Fleming**

- Reviewed her written report.



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### **Technical Staff Reports:**

#### **Supervising Conservation Specialist, Dana Gochenour:**

- Reviewed written report.
- Touched base on processes for while she is on maternity leave.

#### **Senior Conservation Specialist, Nick Livesay:**

- Reviewed written report.
- Highlighted that he has given multiple Soil's lesson to area schools.
- He and Madison explained what the Manning's Equation pertains to in relation to our BMP's.

#### **Conservation Specialist, Madison Coffey:**

- Reviewed written report.
- Has initiated gaining I&E Design / EJAA for stream crossings.

#### **Conservation Specialist, Ben Loyd**

- Reviewed written report.
- Obtained EJAA / Water System Design approval increase (2" /5000').

- Discussion had on design software. Specifically, if adding CAD software would be beneficial to Technical Staff. We currently make do with / use Adobe.

- the Board requested staff research software options.

#### **Conservation Specialist – Brett Ramer**

- Reviewed written report.
- Annual Conference participation update.

#### **Conservation Specialist – Olivia Donachie**

- Reviewed written report.
- Annual Conference participation update.

#### **Program Support Specialist, Lisa Parks:**

- Reviewed written report.

#### **Education and Conservation Specialist, Allyson Ponn:**

- In Allyson's absence Nick reminded those in attendance of the Local Envirothon to be held March 25, 2025 at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley.

### **Committee Updates:**

#### **Conservation Technical - Mary Gessner**

- Mary reviewed the CTC Report. Motions are as follows:



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**Motion 1:** Motion to recommend the board ratify tax credits approved at the end of the calendar year.

CP-13-25-0034	13-25-0093	648550	Shen./Stream Exclusion with Grazing Mgmt	SL-6W	\$	3,223.25
CP-13-25-0034	13-25-0093	648554	Shen./Extension of a Grazing Mgmt System	SL-7	\$	1,610.76
CP-13-25-0010	13-25-0012	596141	Shen./Stream Exclusion with Grazing Mgmt	SL-6W	\$	1,782.50
CP-13-25-0007	13-25-0008	592328	Shen./Stream Exclusion with Grazing Mgmt	SL-6W	\$	280.73

**Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Randy Buckley. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		

**Motion 2:** Motion to recommend the board approve cost share for contract 13-26-0098 CCI SL-6W.

N/A	13-26-0098	733490	Shenandoah	Stream Exclusion with Wide W	CCI-SL-6W	High	111	23.75	N	\$	3,662.50

**Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Randy Buckley. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		

**Motion 3:** Motion to recommend the board approve cost share for all SL-8B and SL-8M contracts presented on the agenda.

N/A	13-26-0051	733922	Shenandoah	Small Grain and Mixed Cover C	SL-8B	High	109	24.78	Y	\$	1,268.40
N/A	13-26-0043	733911	Shenandoah	Small Grain and Mixed Cover C	SL-8M	High	96	20.88	Y	\$	4,288.50

**Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Robert Clark. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		



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<b>Motion 4:</b> Motion to recommend the board approve cost share for contract 13-26-0043 NM-6.											
N/A	13-26-0043	733475	Shenandoah	Manure Injection	NM-6	High	71	31.73	N	\$	4,288.50

**Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Robert Clark. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		

<b>Motion 5:</b> Motion to recommend the board approve conservation plan and cost share for contract 13-26-0097 FR-3.											
CP-NRCS	13-26-0097	732912	Frederick	Woodland buffer filter area	FR-3	Medium	111	23.82	Y	\$	6,659.00

**Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Paul Burkholder. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		

<b>Motion 6:</b> Motion to recommend the board approve cost share for all SL-8H contracts presented on the agenda.											
N/A	13-26-0099	733884	Shenandoah	Harvestable Cover Crop	SL-8H	Low	85	45.94	N	\$	362.20
N/A	13-26-0099	733769	Shenandoah	Harvestable Cover Crop	SL-8H	Low	80	39.51	N	\$	1,130.60
N/A	13-26-0099	733898	Shenandoah	Harvestable Cover Crop	SL-8H	Low	80	45.30	N	\$	454.80
N/A	13-26-0099	733787	Shenandoah	Harvestable Cover Crop	SL-8H	Low	80	46.40	N	\$	346.40
N/A	13-26-0099	733897	Shenandoah	Harvestable Cover Crop	SL-8H	Low	80	47.09	N	\$	260.00
N/A	13-26-0099	733790	Shenandoah	Harvestable Cover Crop	SL-8H	Low	79	47.39	N	\$	139.80
N/A	13-26-0099	733895	Shenandoah	Harvestable Cover Crop	SL-8H	Low	76	47.05	N	\$	191.20

**Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Paul Burkholder. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		



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<b>Motion 7:</b>	Motion to recommend the board send VCAP contract 13-26-002 CL-3 to the state steering committee.					
	13-26-002	Frederick		CL-3	\$	7,000.00

**Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		

<b>Motion 8:</b>	Motion to recommend the board approve letters verifying NMP and conservation plan for Grand View Dairy Equipment Tax Credit.					

**Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Robert Clark. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of vote.

Name	Yes	No	Abstain	Name	Yes	No	Abstain
Joan Comanor	X			Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X			Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X			Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker				Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston				*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X			Jack Owens	X		

**Dam Safety & Conservation Easements - Jim Fagan**

- There will be a Desktop Exercise in April 2026 w/ the Town of Woodstock regarding to the Woodstock Dam – Emergency Action Plan.
  - If you are interested in being included on the informational emails contact Jill Jefferson at the Town of Woodstock.
- Dana received and update from Shen Valley Conservancy (SVC) on the inspections of our co-held easements. There were no issues found.

**Education & Information – Joan Comanor**

- No new items.

**Legislative – Paul Burkholder**

- Has spoken with all of our representing State Delegates and Senator French to wish them well in the upcoming assembly and to answer any questions they may have for/about the District and its programs.

**Personnel – Joan Comanor**

- Staff reviews will be held on January 14, 2025.

**Operations – Justin Mackay-Smith**

- Committee Chairs be looking ahead to the review of the Annual Plan of Work and Strategic Plan which will take place in the upcoming months.



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**Local Agency Updates:**

**Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission – Mary Gessner**

- Highlighted the newly launched Septic Pump-Out Program

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

- No new items to report. – There are no meetings taking place currently.

**Shenandoah Pure Water Forum – Jack Owens**

- No new items to report.

**Cooperating Agency Reports:**

**Natural Resources Conservation Service: Brent Barriteau**

- Brent gave an update on NRCS happenings.

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

- Debbie reviewed her written report, highlighting items of varied importance
- State mileage rate increased to \$0.725 as of 1/1/2026

**Virginia Cooperative Extension: Robert “Bobby” Clark**

- Bobby gave an update on related items.

**Virginia Department of Forestry: Matt Wolanski**

- Not in attendance.

**Chesapeake Bay Foundation: Matt Kowalski**

- Not in attendance.

**Department of Environmental Quality: Sara Jordan**

- Not in attendance.

**Other:**

- Group discussion on drought.
- Group discussion on possible or happening effects to Cover Crops due to drought conditions.

**Adjournment:**

**MOTION: to Adjourn. Motion made by Robert Clark, seconded by Justin Mackay-Smith. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. \*Kermit Gaither, Emma Bricker, and Mark Huddleston were absent at the time of 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>
Joan Comanor	X				Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X				Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X				Paul Burkholder	X		
*Emma Bricker					Reid Hoak	X		
*Mark Huddleston					*Kermit Gaither			
Robert Clark	X				Jack Owens	X		

**The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:40am.**

Respectfully submitted,  
*Sarah R. Fleming,*  
 Board Secretary

Approved by the Board through motion on: February 12, 2026