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722-B East Queen Street
Strasburg, VA 22657
(540) 465-2424, Ext. 5
www.lfswcd.org

MINUTES

The July 9, 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
Emma Bricker
Mark Huddleston
Cynthia Fairbanks
Paul Burkholder
Reid Hoak

Associate Directors

Ed Pendelton

Cooperating Agency Representatives & Guests in Attendance:

Debbie Cross, CDC/DCR
Marian Dalk, VCE
Jenna Wiles

LFSWCD Staff Members

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

Absent Directors or Staff:

Jason Bushong
Robert Clark
Kermit Gaither
Stephanie Shillingburg

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



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Chairwoman Comanor opened the meeting with an Introduction of Guests:

- Jenna Wiles

- Jenna introduced herself and gave a description of her background, education, and interest in filling the remaining term for the vacant Frederick County Board of Director seat due to the resignation of Jack Owens. Her term would run through December 31, 2027.

- Chairwoman Comanor opened the floor to discussion followed by accepting Jenna's request.

MOTION: Board approves to forward the nomination of Jenna Wiles, to fill the current term for the Frederick County LFSWCD Board of Directors seat to the Soil and Water Board. **Motion made by Emma Bricker, seconded by Reid Hoak. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** **Kermit Gaither was absent at the time of vote.*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Joan Comanor	X				Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X				Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X				Paul Burkholder	X		
Emma Bricker	X				Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X							

- Marian Dalke, SARE State Program Assistant, VSU Small Farm Agent w/ Virginia Cooperative Extension

MOTION: Board approval of the June 11, 2026, Board of Director meeting minutes as presented in the Board Packet. **Motion made by Mark Huddleston, seconded by Mary Gessner. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** **Kermit Gaither was absent at the time of vote.*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Joan Comanor	X				Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X				Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X				Paul Burkholder	X		
Emma Bricker	X				Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X							

Chairwoman's Report: Joan Comanor

- As Lisa Park's will be leaving our team on July 31st, Joan wished her well and thanked her for the excellent work she has done while with the District. She will be missed.
- Reviewed written report.
- Charles French would like to serve as an Associate director and Conservation Tech. Committee (CTC) member.
 - Joan and Madison gave an introduction of his background as he was unavailable for today's meeting.

MOTION: Board approves the nomination of Charles E. French, Jr. as an Associate Director for LFSWCD. **Motion made by Paul Burkholder, seconded by Mary Gessner. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** **Kermit Gaither was absent at the time of vote.*

<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>		<i>Name</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Abstain</i>
Joan Comanor	X				Randy Buckley	X		
Mary Gessner	X				Justin Mackay-Smith	X		
James Fagan	X				Paul Burkholder	X		
Emma Bricker	X				Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X							



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Treasurer & Finance Report: Stephanie Shillingburg

- Next Finance item will be Suggested Dedicated Reserves / approvals. Due to DCR by 9/30/2027.
- The Finance Committee will need to meet prior to the September Board for review of Suggested Reserves. A time will be set and the committee will be notified at the August board meeting.

MOTION: to Accept and file for audit the Treasurer's Report/Documents for May 2026 and June 2026 (as presented in the Board Packet). **Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Emma Bricker. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.** *Kermit Gaither was 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	X				Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X							

Board Secretary/Administrative Manager: Sarah Fleming

- Reviewed written report.
- Gave thanks to Staff for all their help and the board for their support during her medical leave.

Technical Staff Reports:

Supervising Conservation Specialist, Dana Gochenour:

- Commended staff for their hard work to finish the PY26 program year.
- Reviewed written report.

Senior Conservation Specialist, Nick Livesay:

- Reviewed written report.
- Highlighted the Conservation Speed Dating Event held in Fort Valley. Had a really good turnout, met potential new BMP Participants.

Conservation Specialist, Madison Coffey:

- Reviewed written report.
- Lots of field visit and end of year wrap up.
- Highlighted the Silvopasture training event attended.

Conservation Specialist, Ben Loyd

- Reviewed written report.
- Also highlighted the Silvopasture training event.
 - Specific species tree planting discussion in connection with Silvopasture guidelines.

Conservation Specialist – Brett Ramer

- Reviewed written report.
- Lots of pre-construction meetings and water system design work.

Conservation Specialist – Olivia Donachie

- Reviewed written report.
- Has completed all but 1 needed training for her Conservation Planner Certification. Hopes to complete this Fall/Winter.
- Will be taking over Lisa's VCAP responsibilities with assistance from Nick and Allyson.

Program Support Specialist, Lisa Parks:

- Reviewed written report.
- Working on EOL inspection items prior to her departure.



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Education and Conservation Specialist, Allyson Ponn:

- Reviewed written report.
- Employee Association / Prepping for Graves Mountain Training
- Looking ahead: Outreach Event and Annual Luncheon preparation

Committee Updates:

Conservation Technical - Mary Gessner

- There was no CTC meeting in July
- Mary reviewed items of which she signed for with delegated authority. Please view the motions ratifying her signature.
 - Motions are as follows:

Motion: Board ratifies the delegated authority approval of tax credits (as presented at the July 9, 2026 Board meeting).

Cons Plan	Contract	BMP ID	County/Practice Name	Practice Code	Eligible Tax Credit Amount
CP-13-23-0017	13-23-0080	525162	Shen./Stream Exclusion with Wide Buff	SL-6W	\$ 594.00
CP-NRCS	13-24-0099	586509	Fred./Stream Exclusion with Wide Buff	SL-6W	\$ 2,040.44
CP-13-25-0004	13-26-0012	670303	Shen./Long Term Vegetation on Cropla	SL-1	\$ 312.90
Total Tax Credits presented for approval:					\$ 2,947.34
Total Tax Credits Approved:					\$ 2,947.34

Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Paul Burkholder. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.

*Kermit Gaither was 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	X			Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X						

MOTION: to ratify delegated authority signature on the Carry-Over report dated June 30, 2026. (as presented during the Board meeting). Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Mark Huddleston. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. *Kermit Gaither was absent at the time of vote.

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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	X			Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X			*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X						

- Madison Coffey shared with the Board that we have had several calls asking for guidance on the Valleylink North transmission project and how it may affect BMP's in the path of the lines.
- One participant had requested an informational letter explaining the contractual obligations held by the participant should the BMP be damaged/destroyed by the construction.
- Permission was asked to create such a letter for LFSWCD BMP(VACS) participants that may be affected and request such information.
- After board discussion it was decided to delegate authority to Board Chair, Joan Comanor to review and sign such information letters addressed to participants.



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MOTION: to delegate authority to the Board Chair to review and sign informational letter to participants being affected by the Valleylink North Transmission line project. Motion made by Paul Burkholder, seconded by Reid Hoak. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows.

**Kermit Gaither was 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	X				Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X							

Dam Safety & Conservation Easements - Jim Fagan

- Thanked Lisa for all her help with the dam documents during her time with the District.

Education & Information – Joan Comanor

- A committee meeting will be held directly following the August Board.

Legislative – Paul Burkholder

- Reviewed his written report.

Personnel – Joan Comanor

- Interviews will take place on July 16, 2026, for the upcoming vacancy of Program Support Specialist.
- The LFSWCD Personnel Policy was distributed via the Board packet for FY27 review. Directors and Staff completed an updated signature page confirming their review.

Operations – Justin Mackay-Smith

- No new items.

Local Agency Updates:

Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission – Mary Gessner

- Next meeting August 20, 2026.

Shenandoah County Water Resources Advisory Committee – Joan Comanor

- Data center discussion.

Shenandoah Pure Water Forum – VACANT

- No report.

Cooperating Agency Reports:

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Brent Barriteau

- Maili Page gave an update of NRCS happenings in Brent's absence.

Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation: Debbie Cross

- Debbie reviewed her written report highlighting key items of importance.
- Discussion of special called meeting of the VSWB to approve budget and finalize FY27 Grant Agreements.



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MOTION: to delegate authority to the Board Chair to sign FY27 Grant Agreements once available from DCR. Motion made by Paul Burkholder, seconded by Reid Hoak. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. *Kermit Gaither was 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	X				Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X							

Virginia Cooperative Extension: Cynthia Fairbanks

- Cynthia gave an update of VCE happenings.

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:

- Marian Dalke gave an update on SFOP happenings.

Adjournment:

MOTION: to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting. Motion made by Mark Huddleston, seconded by Cynthia Fairbanks. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. *Kermit Gaither was 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	X				Reid Hoak	X		
Mark Huddleston	X				*Kermit Gaither			
Cynthia Fairbanks	X							

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:33 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Fleming

Board Secretary

Approved by the Board through motion on: 8/13/2026