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

The September 11, 2025, 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
Jack Owens
Robert Clark
Emma Bricker
Mark Huddleston

Associate Directors

Cooperating Agency Representatives & Guests in Attendance:

Debbie Cross, CDC/DCR
Brent Barriteau, NRCS
Felicity Zimmerman, CBF

LFSWCD Staff Members

Allyson Ponn
Ben Loyd
Nick Livesay
Sarah Fleming
Dana Gochenour
Madison Coffey
Lisa Parks

Absent Directors or Staff:

Paul Burkholder
Reid Hoak
Jason Bushong

LFSWCD Board Chair Joan Comanor called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

Introduction of Guest(s):

Felicity Zimmerman with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- She shared information on their upcoming Grazing Field Day



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MOTION: Board approval of the August 14, 2025, Board of Director meeting minutes as presented in the Board Packet. Motion made by Mary Gessner seconded by Randy Buckley. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		

Chairwoman's Report: Joan Comanor

- Reviewed written report.
- The District and Staff were given high compliments at the Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors meeting on 9/9/2025 where Joan, Mary and Dana participating to give a briefing on District happenings.
- Chesapeake Bay update.
- City of Winchester funding update.

Treasurer & Finance Report: Stephanie Shillingburg

MOTION: to Accept and file for audit the Treasurer's Report/Documents for August 2025 (as presented in the Board Packet). Motion made by Randy Buckley, seconded by Bobby Clark. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		

MOTION: approval of the Suggested FY26 Dedicated Reserve Transfers as presented at the 9/9/2025 Board meeting. Motion made by Jack Owens, seconded by Kermit Gaither. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		



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Board Secretary/Administrative Specialist: Sarah Fleming

- Reviewed her written report.
- Reminded Directors of necessary COIA Training needs.

Technical Staff Reports:

Supervising Conservation Specialist, Dana Gochenour:

- Reviewed written report.

Senior Conservation Specialist, Nick Livesay:

- Reviewed written report.
- Overview of Graves Mountain training sessions and highlights.

Conservation Specialist, Madison Coffey:

- Reviewed written report.
- Lots of BMP interest and initial site visits.

Conservation Specialist, Ben Loyd

- Reviewed written report.
- Super busy with field visits.

Conservation Specialist - vacant

Program Support Specialist, Lisa Parks:

- Reviewed written report.

Education and Conservation Specialist, Allyson Ponn:

- Allyson reviewed her written report.
- Lots of exciting upcoming events and happenings.
- Outreach Event scheduled for 11/5/2025 at CREW Center in Mt. Jackson; 4:30 – 6:30pm.

Committee Updates:

Conservation Technical - Mary Gessner

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

Motion to recommend the board approve all tax credits listed below

	13-25-0098	649342	Fred./Afforestation of pasture land	FR-1	\$	178.13			
	13-23-0089	528475	Clarke/ Stream Exclusion with Wide Buffer	SL-6W	\$	486.63			

Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X						*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X						Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X						Jack Owens	X		



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Motion to recommend the board approve conservation plan and cost share for contract 13-26-0017 FR-3.

NRCS	13-26-0017	714504	Shenandoah	Woodland Buffer Filter	FR-3	High	128	20.22	Y	\$	4,993.50
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Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		

Motion to recommend the board approve conservation plan and cost share for contract 13-26-0016 SL-1.

CP-13-25-0014	13-26-0016	713301	Frederick	Long Term Vegetative Cover on Cropland	SL-1	High	102	34.87	N	\$	30,720.00
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Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		

Motion to recommend the board approve conservation plan and cost share for both instances of contract 13-26-0014 WP-4 and WP-4C.

CP-13-26-0011	13-26-0014	712451	Shenandoah	Composter Facilities	WP-4C	High	110	19.87	Y	\$	41,477.70
CP-13-26-0011	13-26-0014	712450	Shenandoah	Animal waste control facilities	WP-4	High	101	8.51	Y	\$	248,970.15

Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		



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Motion to recommend the board send contract 13-26-0015 WP-4 forward to the DCR variance committee for review.

CP-13-26-0013	13-26-0015	712744	Shenandoah	Animal waste control facilities	WP-4	High	100	8.48	Y	\$	756,479.63
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Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		

Motion to recommend the board approve conservation plan and cost share for both instances of contract 13-26-0013 SL-6W and SL-7.

CP-13-26-0010	13-26-0013	683198	Clarke	Stream Exclusion with Wide Width Buffer and Grazing Land Management	SL-6W	Low	95	21.74	Y	\$	67,023.63
CP-13-26-0010	13-26-0013	683214	Clarke	Extension of Watering Systems	SL-7	Low	91	41.56	N	\$	92,232.80

Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		

Motion to recommend the board approve cost share increase for contract 13-23-0089 SL-6W.

	13-23-0089	528475	Clark/Stream Exclusion with Wide buffer	SL-6W	M	148	11.37	Y	\$	10,333.86
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Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		



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Motion to recommend the board approve cost share increase for contract 13-25-0080 SL-1.

13-25-0080	647954	Shenandoah/Cropland Conversion to Long T	SL-1				\$	279.57
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Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		

Motion: to recommend the Board approve letters verifying the conservation plan and NMP for Bushong Equipment TaxCredit. Motion made by Mary Gessner, seconded by Jack Owens. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		

Dam Safety & Conservation Easements - Jim Fagan

- We will perform the Annual Dam inspections this year as a "Self-Inspection". This will take place in the Fall. Once a date has been set it will be shared.
- Dam Owners Association meeting to be held in person at the Augusta Co Government Center on 9/25/2025.

Education & Information – Joan Comanor

- Reviewed the written report.
- There will be an Ed & Info committee meeting after the September 11th Board meeting.

Legislative – Paul Burkholder

- Paul was absent from the meeting.

Personnel – Joan Comanor

MOTION: Board delegates authority to the Personnel Committee Chair to make necessary decisions to move forward with offer of employment to acceptable candidate(s) for the vacant Conservation Specialist position. Motion made by Bobby Clark, seconded by Mary Gessner. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X					*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X					Kermit Gaither	X		
Robert Clark	X					Jack Owens	X		



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Operations – Justin Mackay-Smith

- No new items.

Local Agency Updates:

Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission – Mary Gessner

- No new items to report.

Shenandoah County Water Resources Advisory Committee – Joan Comanor

- No new items to report.

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.
- Virtual meeting policy discussion.
-

Virginia Cooperative Extension: Robert Clark

- Bobby gave an update on related items.
 - Currently reviewing applications for a Warren County Agent.
 - 2 open agent positions being advertised within Clarke and Frederick.

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:



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Adjournment:

MOTION: to Adjourn. Motion made by Randy Buckley, seconded by Kermit Gaither. Motion Passed. Voting Ballot is as follows. * Paul Burkholder, and Reid Hoak 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			
Emma Bricker	X						*Reid Hoak			
Mark Huddleston	X						Kermit Gaither	X		
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: October 9, 2025