

Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District
6969 Fox Hunt Lane
Gloucester, VA 23061
August 27, 2026

Those Present:

Amanda Armstrong, Chairman, Gloucester
Frank Long, Secretary, VCE Appointed
Richard Hicks, Mathews
Jean Howard, Mathews
William Richardson, Jr., At-Large Appointed

LaVerne Calhoun, District Manager
Meredith Rose, Conservation/Education Specialist
Debbie Billings, Conservation Office Assistant
Olivia Leatherwood, DCR Coordinator

Absent:

Amy Maloney, Vice Chairman, Middlesex
Keith Horsley, Treasurer, Gloucester
Ronnie Lewis, Associate Director

Call to Order:

A. Armstrong, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:41 pm in the office conference room at 6969 Fox Hunt Lane; Gloucester, VA 23061.

F. Long made a motion to approve the July 23, 2026 board meeting minutes. Seconded by J. Howard, the motion carried unanimously.

F. Long made a motion to approve the July 23, 2026 Finance Committee Meeting minutes. Seconded by R. Hicks, the motion carried unanimously.

Chairman's Agenda:

A. Fleet, Youth Conservation Camper, was unable to attend the meeting, but hopes to make it to the September meeting.

O. Leatherwood, DCR Coordinator, reviewed the FY 25-26 DCR Administrative and Operational Assessment with TSWCD receiving all "A's," fully satisfied in all categories. The FY 25-26 Cost Share and Technical Assistance assessment was reviewed with TSWCD receiving all "A's," fully satisfied in all categories.

L. Calhoun reviewed the FY 26-27 DCR District Administrative/Operational (\$279,200.00) and the Cost Share (\$5,584,765.00) and Technical Assistance (\$754,039.00) grant agreements and the Virginia Soil & Water Conservation Board Policies. W. Richardson, Jr. made a motion to approve the FY 26-27 DCR District Administrative/Operational (\$279,200.00) and the Cost Share (\$5,584,765.00) and Technical Assistance (\$754,039.00) grant agreements. Seconded by F. Long, the motion carried unanimously.

L. Calhoun announced preparation is underway for the FY25/FY26 audit on December 3, 2026.

A. Armstrong, Chairman, shared that the Finance Committee discussed funding for hiring a temporary part-time employee. R. Hicks made a motion to transfer \$23,400.00 from DCR District Operations to Support Services. Seconded by W. Richardson, Jr., the motion carried unanimously.

L. Calhoun reviewed the District policy for handling Ag Stewardship Act complaints. F. Long made a motion to approve that the policy remain the same with M. Rose as primary point of contact and L. Calhoun as secondary, and joint investigations with VDACS. Seconded by W. Richardson, Jr., the motion carried unanimously.

M. Rose suggested the District submit Renee Hypes for VASWCD Conservation Education Teacher of the Year. She established Gloucester High School's Envirothon team, which has qualified for the state competition every year since its inception. Her students engage in meaningful, hands-on conservation projects, including oyster cultivation, nutrient management studies, native plant propagation, and Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional-Associate certification training. F. Long made a motion to submit Renee Hypes as VASWCD Conservation Education Teacher of the Year. Seconded by R. Hicks, the motion carried unanimously.

M. Rose announced the 2026 Youth Poster Contest for students, kindergarten through 12th grade, residing in Gloucester, Mathews, and Middlesex Counties. The theme this year is "Soil. Where it all Begins" and deadline is September 23, 2026.

R. Hicks shared pictures and brochures from his trip to the Southeast NACD Meeting in Cherokee, NC. The main topics were Biochar and invasive species. He took a tour on an open train through the mountains.

D. Billings requested that the directors collect items for the VASWCDEF Annual Auction that will be held at the Annual Meeting. All donations collected can be brought to the office and Debbie will register and deliver the items.

Reports:

The Treasure's Reports, Visa Credit Card Report, and the Outstanding Check Report were reviewed and filed for audit. The certificate of deposit at Chesapeake Bank will mature September 8th. It was the consensus of the Board to renew the certificate of deposit at Chesapeake Bank.

M. Rose Conservation/Education Specialist reported that the Cost-Share sign-ups have been completed and provided an update on the NFWF Grant. She will highlight TSWCD on the radio for the "Rooted Here Campaign" that recognizes agricultural work done in our area.

O. Leatherwood, DCR Coordinator reported that end of year return of funds invoice will be coming out soon. She reviewed the new July 1 FOIA requirements. As of July 1, 2026, all agendas must be posted on the public body's official government website.

F. Long Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent reported that September 10th is the Eastern VA AREC Soybean Field Day. October 7th is the Middlesex Farm Day at Corbin Hall for elementary 3rd graders. A sponsorship letter was included to help support the on-site restrooms and lunch for volunteers. J. Howard made a motion to provide \$300.00 donation to the Middlesex Farm Day. Seconded by R. Hicks, F. Long abstained, the motion carried. The spotted lanternfly, an invasive species from Asia has been seen in Middlesex and Mathews.

The York River Steward's report was reviewed.

Other Business:

There being no further business, W. Richardson, Jr. made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 pm. Seconded by F. Long, the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Armstrong 9/24/2026
Amanda Armstrong, Date
Chairman

Debbie Billings 9/24/2026
Debbie Billings, Date
Conservation Office Assistant