NORTH CAROLINA
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION
WORK SESSION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
September 08, 2026

Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Division of Soil & Water Conservation
Virtual

Commission Members	Online Guests	Online Guests
Barbara Bleiweis, Chair	Teresa Furr	Daphne Cartner
Gail Hughes	Beth Pugh Farrell	Emily F Bateman
Porche Spence	Steven Ward	Matthew Morrison
Stephen Harris	Anne Coan	Conor McKearney
Patrick Baker	Lisa Fine	Kent Vaughan
James Lamb	Brandy Myers	Sydney Kirkpatrick
	Rick McSwain	Todd See
Commission Counsel	Mackenzie R Tenan	Jessica Wilson
Victor Unnone	Joshua Vetter	
Online Guests	Shelby Kaplan	
Tim Baumgartner	Debbie Cahoon	
Julie Henshaw	Paula Day	
Taryn Thompson	Elizabeth Spence	
Bryan Evans	Samantha Allbee	
Matt Safford	Caleb Lippard	
Rick McSwain	Lindsay R. Edwards	
Kristina Fischer	Stephanie Alston	
John Beck	Chad Spence	
Tinesha McNeil	Heather Reichert	
Ken Parks	Alexandra Dinwiddie	
Lorien Deaton	Steven Porsen	
Ken Parks		

DRAFT Work Session

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Bleiweis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

II. PRELIMINARY: Chair Bleiweis charged the Commission members to declare any conflict of interest, or appearance of conflict of interest, that may exist for agenda items under consideration, as mandated by the State Ethics Act.

Welcome – Cell phones set to silent

III. BUSINESS:

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Will take place at the Business Meeting

2. **Approval of Minutes:** Will take place at the Business Meeting

- A. July 21, 2026, Work Session Meeting Minutes
- B. July 29, 2026, Business Meeting Minutes

INFORMATION ITEMS

3. **Division Report:** Will take place at the Business Meeting

4. **Association Report:** Will take place at the Business Meeting

5. **NRCS Report:** Will take place at the Business Meeting

ACTION ITEMS

6. **Consent Agenda:** Chair Bleiweis called Kristina Fischer, John Beck, and Joshua Vetter and to present

A. **Supervisor Appointments:** Kristina presented the following

Harrison Jenkin, Iredell SWCD, filling the appointed position of Tracy Jenkins for remaining 2024 -2028.

B. **Supervisor Contracts:** John Beck presented the following chart**.** Chair Bleiweis asked if there were any questions for John. No questions or concerns.

County	Contract Number	Supervisor Name	BMP	Contract Amount	Comments
Johnston	51-2027-001	John Landdon	Rock-lined Outlet	$2770	Supplement to 51-2024-015
Orange	68-2027-003	Richal VanHook	Agricultural Road Repair/Stabilization	$10,081	Tropical Storm Chantal project
Person	73-2027-002	Eugene Berryhill, Jr	Grassed Waterways, Field Borders, Diversions	$24,691	Applicant: DBA Hill of Berrys

Total $37,542

C. **Job Approval Authority Applicants for Consideration:** Joshua Vetter shared the chart below for the commission's consideration.

APPLICANT NAME	EMPLOYER	TYPE OF JAA REQUESTED	JAA RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL

DRAFT Work Session

Elizabeth Spence	Lenoir SWCD	Submission of completed designs, certifications and skills	Residue and Tillage Mgmt.
Jeffrey Stone	Robeson SWCD	Submission of completed designs, certifications and skills	Cover Crops
			Cropland Conversion - Grass
Justin Blodstone	Yadkin SWCD	Submission of completed designs, certifications and skills	Rooftop Runoff Mgmt. System

7. **Job Approval Authority Technical Competency Requirements:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Racheal Smith to present. Ms. Smith presented the following:

   Due to changes to the BMP Policy for Grassed Waterway at the July Commission Meeting, the JAA Committee has recommended the addition of a controlling factor-Drainage – Job Class II – Subsurface Drain.

8. **Supervisor Training:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. Bryan Evans and Ms. Kristina Fischer to present.
   - **A.** Supervisor Approval of Supervisor Basic Training Agenda
   - **B.** Consideration of Approval of Supervisor Training Credits for External Training Events

   Mr. Evans shared the agenda for the 2027 Supervisor Basic Training Agenda and gave a brief description of the items. Attachment 6D

   Ms. Fischer shared that GS 139-7.2 requires supervisors to complete 6 clock hours of training per term on conservation and district duties. With supervisors needing more opportunities to fulfill their hours the recommendation is to expand eligibility so supervisors can earn **Supervisor Training Credits (STCs)** from events sponsored by four key external organizations:

- The North Carolina Foundation for Soil & Water Conservation (FSWC)
- The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD)
- The National Association of State Conservation Agencies (NASCA) and
- The National Conservation District Employees Association (NCDEA).

DRAFT Work Session

9. **Agriculture Cost Share Program: Technical Review Committee Recommendations: Approval of Biochar - Chair** Bleiweis recognized Mr. John Beck to present. Mr. Beck's presentation will be a part of the records.

   Biochar – Soil Carbon Amendment BMP

   Action: Approve addition of the Biochar – Soil Carbon Amendment BMP to the ACSP Detailed Implementation Plan and Biochar average costs as presented for inclusion in the ACSP Cost List.

10. **Agriculture Cost Share Program Financial Assistance Allocation –** Director Tim Baumgartner. During the meeting, Tim Baumgartner proposed a compromise to withhold **$150,000** for biochar incentives instead of the originally planned $300,000, directly responding to a district survey that showed a nearly 50/50 split and clear reservations about the larger amount. This alternative directs the reduced funding exclusively to districts interested in biochar, so they do not have to redirect funds from existing local projects, while also serving as an economic incentive to offset higher local implementation costs. Under this proposal, any of the withheld funds that remain unused would be automatically released and reallocated back into the general pool in **March** during the standard supplemental allocation process. Discussion was had concerning the comments from the districts.

11. **Special Requests –** John Beck stated that there are two special requests for consideration. The Commission Letters from each district explaining their request were presented. Representatives for each district spoke on their behalf. Letters are attached for official records.

    A. ACSP Contract on Government – Owned Property. Beth Pugh Farrel and Dr. Todd See presented.
    B. Hyde SWCD Post-approval for Contract 48-2024-002 Chad Spencer represented the county for the explanation.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS: None

VI. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

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Tim Baumgartner, Director
Division of Soil & Water Conservation, Raleigh, N.C.

Tinesha McNeil, Recording Secretary

These minutes were approved by the North Carolina Soil & Water Conservation Commission on November 18, 2026.

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