

# NORTH CAROLINA SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION WORK SESSION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES July 21, 2026

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

| Commission Members        | Online Guests     | Online Guests |
|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Barbara Bleiweis, Chair   | Lisa Fine         |               |
| Gail Hughes               | JD Jorgenson      |               |
| Porche Spence             | Stephanie Alston  |               |
| Matt Reynolds             | Lorien Deaton     |               |
| Patrick Baker             | Shelby Kaplan     |               |
| James Lamb                | Elise McLaughlin  |               |
| Stephen Harris            | Mackenzie R Tenan |               |
| <b>Commission Counsel</b> | Caldwell SWCD     |               |
| Victor Unnone             | Heather Reichert  |               |
| <b>Online Guests</b>      | Samantha Allbee   |               |
| David Williams            | Taryn Thompson    |               |
| Julie Henshaw             | Anne Coan         |               |
| Michael Shepherd          |                   |               |
| Bryan Evans               |                   |               |
| Matt Safford              |                   |               |
| Rick McSwain              |                   |               |
| Kristina Fischer          |                   |               |
| Allie Dinwiddie           |                   |               |
| Tinesha McNeil            |                   |               |
|                           |                   |               |
| Tim Baumgartner           |                   |               |
| Ken Parks                 |                   |               |

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Bleiweis called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.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. May 12, 2026, Work Session Meeting Minutes
- B. May 20, 2026, Business Meeting Minutes
- C. June 16, 2026, Special Called – Business Meeting Minutes
- D. July 9, 2026, Special Called – 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 (Lisa Fine presented in his absence), Joshua Vetter, and Michael Shepherd to present

**A. Supervisor Appointments & Removal Hearing Update:** Kristina presented the following

Stuart L. Baucom, Pender SWCD, filling the appointed position of Trent Talbert for remaining 2024 -2028.

A letter of resignation was received regarding the supervisor that came before the Inquiry committee for neglect of duty; therefore, a hearing is believed to not be necessary.

**B. Supervisor Contracts:** Lisa Fine presented the following chart. Chair, Bleiweis, stated these would be approved by consent at the business meeting unless there were questions. No questions or concerns.

| County    | Contract Number | Supervisor Name | BMP                                    | Contract Amount | Comments                 |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Bertie    | 08-2026-002     | Ron Swain       | Grass Waterway, Field Border           | \$17,500        |                          |
| Currituck | 27-2026-004     | William Powell  | Residue and Tilage Managment           | \$,2705         | DBA: Powell Family Farms |
| Jones     | 52-2026-005     | Kyle Koonce     | Cover Crop                             | \$15,000        |                          |
| Orange    | 68-2026-005     | Richal Vanhook  | Agricultural Road Repair/Stabilization | \$7,832         |                          |
| Scotland  | 83-2026-004     | Tracy Grice     | Cropland Conversion to Grass           | \$2,142         |                          |
| Warren    | 93-2026-014     | Brandon Pernell | Cover Crop                             | \$1,017         |                          |

|        |             |              |                        |          |  |
|--------|-------------|--------------|------------------------|----------|--|
| Warren | 93-2026-014 | Tom Traylor  | Critical Area Planting | \$12,561 |  |
| Wilson | 98-2026-803 | Adam Gardner | Water Supply Well      | \$10,483 |  |

**Total \$69,240**

**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     |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Dustin Brewer  | Durham SWCD     | Submission of completed designs, certifications and skills | Residue and Tillage Mgmt.        |
| Tyler Cornett  | Alexander SWCD  | Submission of comparable NRCS JAA                          | Ag Road Repair and Stabilization |
|                |                 |                                                            | Rooftop Runoff Management System |
| Joseph Huntley | Montgomery SWCD | Submission of comparable NRCS JAA                          | Rooftop Runoff Mgmt. System      |
| Payton Lane    | Johnston SWCD   | Submission of completed designs, certifications and skills | Cover Crops                      |
| Mikey Woodie   | Wikes SWCD      | Submission of comparable NRCS JAA                          | All-Season Agricultural Access   |
|                |                 |                                                            | Heavy Use Area Protection        |
|                |                 |                                                            | Tank or Trough                   |

**D. Technical Specialist Designations:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. Michael Shepherd. Mr. Shepard shared the following recommendation.

Ms. Michaelyn Woodie, Wilkes Soil and Water Conservation District, has requested to be designated technical specialist for the Waste Utilization Planning/Nutrient Management (WUP/NM) category. She has successfully completed the required training, and technical proficiency has been verified by DSWC staff. Therefore, I recommend this designation for approval.

- 7. Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP):** Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. John Beck to present. Ms. Julie Henshaw presented the following in his absence: Subtopics A. B. and C.

- A. Consideration of ACSP Policy Revisions**
  - 1. Grassed Waterway**
- B. Detailed Implementation Plan**
- C. Average Cost List**
- D. District Financial Assistance Allocation**
  - 1. ACSP and impaired/Impacted Allocation**
  - 2. Upper French Broad River Allocation**

Subtopics A- C were discussed at length.

A. SWCC requests clarification for 5c sentence one to ensure that it is not applicable if the cooperator is not an FSA participant.

B. SWCC prefers to edit the stream restoration engineering language in the DIP. Add information about TA rule change.

C. Ms. Henshaw stated that no changes were made, although footnotes were added. No questions were asked.

- 8. Technical Assistance Allocation:** Will take place at the Business Meeting
- 9. Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP):** Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Lorien Deaton to present.
- A. Detailed Implementation Plan**
  - B. Average Cost List**
  - C. District Financial Assistance Allocation**

Ms. Deaton explained the track changes to the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP). Recommendation is 20/80 split, which is the same as last year. Clarification of the language was made.

- 10. Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP):** Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Sam Alibee to present. Ms. Alibee presented a power point with the track changes for the DIP.

- Update CCAP Goals to update and develop JAA Competency exams for six BMP's
- Allow FY2027 Stream restoration designs to be completed by Division engineers or 3<sup>rd</sup> party engineers

- A. Detailed Implementation Plan
- B. Average Cost List

**11. Special Request** – Ms. Julie Henshaw gave a brief explanation and stated that there are two post approval actions needing consideration by the Commission. In each case, work began on the contract before receiving final approval. Letters from each district explaining their request were presented. Representatives for each district will be at the business meeting.

- A. Caldwell SWCD Post-approval for contract 14-2026-801
- B. Iredell SWCD Post-approval for Contract 49-2026-401

**12. Update from Cost Share Committee** – Chair Bleiweis recognized Commissioner Baker and Ms. Julie Henshaw to share and update of the committee. Commissioner Baker gave the make-up of the committee with an emphasis on problem solving. Ms. Henshaw shared the Cost Share Committee website and its new features. Monthly meetings are held on the third Monday of every month at 9:00am.

**13. Current Issues and Opportunities:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Director David Williams to present.

- A. Biochar Grant- Advancing Markets for Producers  
Total award

Director Williams shared that we would be receiving a grant called Advancing Markets for Producers. This grant will support the application of biochar onto the land. He shared the hopes of the program and its affiliates.

- B. UNC Policy Collaboratory Study

David Williams announced an offer from the UNC Policy Collaboratory, to conduct an economic evaluation of North Carolina's Agricultural Cost Share Program.

#### IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

**VI. ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 7:59 p.m.

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David B. Williams, Director  
Division of Soil & Water Conservation, Raleigh, N.C.

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Tinesha McNeil, Recording Secretary

***These minutes were approved by the North Carolina Soil & Water Conservation Commission on July 29, 2026.***