

**NORTH CAROLINA
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION
WORK SESSION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
May 12, 2026**

Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
Division of Soil & Water Conservation
Virtual through Microsoft Teams

Commission Members	Guests	Guests
Barbara Bleiweis, Chair	Lisa Fine	
Gail Hughes	Pabitra Aryal	
Porche Spence	Heather Reichert	
Matt Reynolds	Amber Rights	
Patrick Baker	Stephanie Alston	
James Lamb	Josh Myers	
	Anne Coan	
Commission Counsel	Allie Dinwiddie	
Phillip Reynolds	Levi Preston	
Guests	Madeline K Loman	
David Williams		
Julie Henshaw		
Michael Shepherd		
Matt Safford		
Rick McSwain		
Delmon Hardee		
Rachel Smith		
Tinesha McNeil		
John Beck		
Lorien Deaton		

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Bleiweis called the meeting to order at 4:00 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.

III. BUSINESS:

- 1. Approval of Agenda:** Approval of agenda will take place at the business meeting.

2. **Approval of Minutes:** Will take place at the business meeting.

INFORMATION ITEMS

3. **Division Report**
4. **Association Report:**
5. **NRCS Report:**

ACTION ITEMS

6. **Consent Agenda:** Rick McSwain, John Beck, and Micheal Shepard presented the following in succession. Items 6A, B, C & D will be voted on in the business meeting

A. Supervisor Appointments:

- Eugene White, Alexander SWCD, filling the appointed position of Myles Payne for remaining 2024 -2028.
- (JD) Scott Sink, Alexander SWCD, filling the elected position of Eugene White who moved to vacant appointed seat, for the remaining 2022-2026.
- William F. Brown, IV, Burke SWCD, filling the elected position of Evan Crawly for remaining 2024-2028
- Arnold Weatherman, Davie SWCD, filling the appointed position of Kevin Marion for the remaining 2024-2028
- Noah Greenway, Vance District, filling the appointed position of George Pegram, Jr., for the remaining 2022-2026.

B. Supervisor Contracts:

County	Contract Number	Supervisor Name	BMP	Contract Amount	Comments
Bladen	09-2026-111	Edward Hester	Water Supply Well	6,646	
Clay	22-2026-003	Glen Cheeks	Agricultural Road Repair/Stabilization	\$18,883	Applicant: Herbert Cheeks
Henderson	45-2026-001	Wayne Carland	Non-Field Farm Road Repair	\$5,152	DBA: Carland Farms INC Supplement to 45-2025-008
Pasquotank	70-2026-007	Glenn Harris	Residue and Tillage Management	\$2,253	

Scotland	83-2026-003	Tracy Grice	Cropland Conversion to Trees	\$2,602	
Wayne	96-2026-009	Thomas Uzzell	Cropland Conversion to Grass	\$5,741	Applicant: Thomas Uzzell Farms Inc

Total \$41,277

Total Number of Supervisor Contracts:6

C. Job Approval Authority Applicants for Consideration:

APPLICANT NAME	EMPLOYER	TYPE OF JAA REQUESTED	JAA RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL
Justin Bledsoe	Yadkin SWCD	Submission of comparable NRCS JAA	Livestock Exclusion Fence
			Trough or Tank
			Conservation Cover
			Cover Crops
			Critical Area Planting
			Cropland Conversion - Grass
			Cropland Conversion - Trees
			Field Border
			Filter Strip
			Heavy Use Area Protection
			Livestock Exclusion Fencing
			Pasture Renovation
			Prescribed Grazing

Gabriela Castaneda	Davidson SWCD	Submission of comparable NRCS JAA	Residue and Tillage Management
			Riparian Buffer
			Sod-based Rotation
			Stripcropping
			Trough or Tank
David Latta	Orange SWCD	Submission of completed designs, certifications and skills	Critical Area Planting
			Field Border
Caleb Lippard	Orange SWCD	Submission of completed designs, certifications and skills	Field Border
Chelsea Ricks	Fishing Creek SWCD	Submission of comparable NRCS JAA	Cover Crops Livestock Exclusion Fencing Residue and Tillage Management
Lauren White	Pitt SWCD	Submission of completed designs, certifications and skills	Cover Crops

D. Technical Specialist Designation Recommendations: Micheal Shepherd shared the following:

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

Mr. Jonathan Miller, Agriment Services Inc, has requested to be designated technical specialist for the Waste Utilization Planning/Nutrient Management (WUP/NM) category. He has successfully completed the required training, and technical proficiency has been verified by DSWC staff. Therefore, I recommend this designation for approval.

7. Additional Items Submitted Since Work Session:

- 8. Streamflow Rehabilitation Assistance Program (StRAP) Round 2 and 3 Allocations:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. Matt Safford to present. Mr. Safford presentation (attachment 8) is included as an official part of the meeting.

9. Request for Exception to Criteria For Extension of Previous Program Year Contracts Policy:

Chair Bleiweis recognized Ms. Julie Henshaw to present. Ms. Henshaw presented the following. A vote will take place at the business meeting.

The Criteria for Extension of Previous Program Year Contracts Policy states that on June 30 of each program year all outstanding third year contracts automatically expire and all funds encumbered to those contracts are returned to state accounts. The commission recognizes that to a very limited extent some contracts should be extended one additional year....If the request for payment is not received by the day before the July commission meeting, a district supervisor must appear before the commission to request the extension.

Division staff respectfully request consideration of the following items:

1. Policy exception of the District Supervisor requirement to attend the first Commission meeting of the new fiscal year.

2. Delegation of extension authority to the Division Director.

Districts will still follow the process to request a contract extension as described in the policy and use the online request form: <https://fs3.formsite.com/ncdswc/extension/index> for all requested contract extensions. This form must be submitted by June 30, 2026.

10. Inquiry Committee Findings:**11. Managing Nutrients in NC: Watershed Rules, Achievements, & New Directions**

12. District Special Request – John Beck gave a brief explanation and stated that a protentional of 3 post approval will be presented at the business meeting.

A. Edgecombe post-approval for contract 33-2026-001

B. Bertie post-approval for Contract 08-2026-001

13. TRC Information Items: Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. John Beck to present. Mr. Beck presented these informational items. These presentations will be an official part of the minutes.

A. Grassed Waterways BMP Policy Update

B. Maintenance Period Reduction Request

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Commissioner Patrick Baker shared a letter sent to him regarding a districts' concern for a "proposed 90-day policy review".

The Commission discussed the proposal to provide districts with advance notice of proposed policy changes to allow sufficient time for review and feedback, recognizing that many boards do not meet monthly.

Members generally supported the goal of increasing district engagement and transparency. Staff noted that improvements are already in place, including designated district representatives, a public partnership calendar, and open committee meetings.

Concerns were raised that a formal 90-day review period could significantly delay policy revisions, particularly for time-sensitive issues such as disaster response. Members agreed that emergency situations would likely require exceptions.

Patrick Baker will distribute the draft proposal for further review. The Commission agreed to continue discussing options that improve district participation while maintaining an efficient policy development process.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 5:32p.m.

David B. Williams, 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 July 29, 2026.