

**NORTH CAROLINA
SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION
Special Called
BUSINESS SESSION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
July 9, 2026**

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

Commission Members	Guests Online	Online Guests
Barbara Bleiweis, Chair	Shelby Kaplan	Chris Love
Gail Hughes	Paula Day	Tinesha McNeil
James Lamb	Mackenzie Tanan	Lorien R Deaton
Stephen Harris	Stephanie Y Alston	
Patrick Baker	Lorien R Deaton	
Porche Spence	Sam Edwards	
	Heather Reichert	
Commission Counsel	Matt Walker	
Victor Unnone	Lisa Fine	
Guests Online	Steven Porson	
David Williams	Tyler Ross	
Julie Henshaw	Taryn Thompson	
Michael Shepherd	JD Jorgensen	
Bryan Evans	Camryn Smith	
Matt Safford	Ken Parks	
John Beck	Levi Preston	
Kristina Fischer	Pabitra Aryal	

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Bleiweis called the meeting to order at 9:01 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:** Chair Bleiweis asked for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Gail Hughes moved to approve the agenda, and Commissioner Patrick Baker seconded. Motion carried.

- 2. StRAP Supplemental Funding Award:** Chair Bleiweis recognized Mr. Matt Safford to present. His report (Attachment 2) is included as an official part of the minutes. Votes are as follows:

The Division requests that SWCC delegate authority to the Division Director to award reserved funds as sites become eligible for StRAP.

- Funds would be treated as reserved for the grantee but would not be officially added to the grantee's contract until FEMA status is determined and scope of work is updated.
- Would provide flexibility in awarding funds in a timely manner as site visits are completed and updates are received from FEMA.
- Grantees would not need to wait for next SWCC meeting for funds to be added to their contract.
- DSWC would ensure all sites are eligible for StRAP before being funded.

Commissioner Steve Harris motioned to approve. Commissioner Porche Spence second. Motion carried.

The Division requests that the Commission approve the following:

- \$2,328,283 in funding to selected applications with deferred sites that have now been confirmed to be StRAP eligible.

Commissioner Patrick Baker motioned to approve. Commissioner Steve Harris second. Motion carried.

The Division requests that the Commission approve the following:

- \$6,609,770 in supplemental funding for selected applications.

Commissioner Gail Hughes motioned to approve. Commissioner James Lamb second. Motion carried.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

VI. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.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.