



MINUTES
Shenandoah RC&D Council
Shenandoah County Government Center
VCE Conference Room
Woodstock, Virginia
March 9, 2009
10:00 a.m.

Council Members Present:	Jim Nichols, HSWCD Joan Comanor, LFSWCD Linda Campbell, SVSWCD	Jim Lawrence, LFSWCD Bruce Lundeen, SVPure H2O David Frackelton, SVSWCD	Rick Shiflet, HSWCD John Eckman, VCC
Members Absent:	Carl Luebben, FB Esteban Nieto, At-Large	Jill Keihn,, NSVRC Maria Papadakis, At-Large	Bonnie Riedesel, CSPDC
Associate Members Present:	Patrick Felling, Potomac Con. Chris Anderson, Page Co.	Joe Lehnen, DOF	
Staff Present:	Kathy Holm, NRCS/SRC&D Lorraine Cormier, NRCS/SRC&D	Becky Barlow, Marketer – Organic Resources	
Others Present:	Mke Liskey, NRCS Bob Peer, DEQ	Bobby Clark, VCE	

The meeting was **called to order** by Chair, Jim Lawrence. **A quorum was declared** with 8 voting members in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The **minutes** of the January 12, 2009 meeting were distributed. A motion was made by Joan Comanor and seconded by Linda Campbell. The minutes were unanimously approved.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The **treasurer’s report** was distributed to Council. Linda Campbell stated that the treasurer’s report is accepted as read and will be filed for audit. It was seconded by Joan Comanor.

Operating/Administrative Account:

December 2008

Opening Balance:	\$17,403.07
Checks Cleared:	(\$2,893.00)
Deposits Cleared:	\$ 374.52
Balance in Checkbook:	\$14,844.59 (matches statement)
Checks Not Cleared:	\$0
Deposits Not Cleared:	\$0
New Checks:	(\$908.00)
New Deposits:	\$0
Ending Balance:	\$13,976.59

January 2009

Opening Balance:	\$14,844.59
Checks Cleared:	(\$1,024.00)
Deposits Cleared:	\$.49
Balance in Checkbook:	\$13,861.08 (matches statement)
Checks Not Cleared:	(\$96.31)
Deposits Not Cleared:	\$0
New Checks:	(\$82.50)
New Deposits:	\$0

Ending Balance:	\$13,682.27
<i>February 2009</i>	
Opening Balance:	\$13,861.08
Checks Cleared:	(\$252.04)
Deposits Cleared:	\$4,215.44
Balance in Checkbook:	\$17,824.48 (matches statement)
Checks Not Cleared:	(\$1,430.78)
Deposits Not Cleared:	\$0
New Checks:	\$0
New Deposits:	\$0
Ending Balance:	\$16,393.70

Projects Account:

<i>December 2008</i>	
Opening Balance:	\$41,679.39
Checks Cleared:	(\$15,304.25)
Deposits Cleared:	\$10,779.78
Balance in Checkbook:	\$37,154.92 (matches statement)
Checks Not Cleared:	(\$11,861.23)
Deposits Not Cleared:	\$0
New Checks:	(\$1,259.45)
New Deposits:	\$4,037.38
Ending Balance:	\$28,071.62

<i>January 2009</i>	
Opening Balance:	\$37,154.92
Checks Cleared:	(\$13,120.27)
Deposits Cleared:	\$4,080.44
Balance in Checkbook:	\$28,115.09 (matches statement)
Checks Not Cleared:	(\$ 6,138.00)
Deposits Not Cleared:	\$0
New Checks:	(\$13,924.92)
New Deposits:	\$314.09
Ending Balance:	\$8,366.26

<i>February 2009</i>	
Opening Balance:	\$28,115.09
Checks Cleared:	(\$25,483.97)
Deposits Cleared:	\$46,796.25
Balance in Checkbook:	\$49,427.37 (matches statement)
Checks Not Cleared:	(\$477.13)
Deposits Not Cleared:	\$0
New Checks:	\$0
New Deposits:	\$0
Ending Balance:	\$48,950.24

DuPont Community Credit Union - Projects Account

<i>December 2008</i>	
Opening Balance:	\$70,339.54
Dividends	\$131.04
Balance in Checkbook:	\$70,470.58 (matches statement)
<i>January 2009</i>	
Opening Balance :	\$70,470.58
Dividends	\$119.70
Balance in Checkbook:	\$70,590.28 (matches statement)
<i>February 2009</i>	
Opening Balance:	\$70,590.28
Dividends	\$108.30
Balance in Checkbook:	\$70,698.58 (matches statement)

DuPont Community Credit Union - Administrative Account*December 2008*

Opening Balance:	\$25.00
Dividends	\$.06
Balance in Checkbook:	\$25.06 (matches statement)

January 2009

Opening Balance :	\$25.06
Dividends	\$0
Balance in Checkbook:	\$25.06 (matches statement)

February 2009

Opening Balance :	\$25.06
Dividends	\$0
Balance in Checkbook:	\$25.06 (matches statement)

SunTrust Investments*13-month CD (3.68%)*

Opening Balance:	\$5,000.00
Earned Interest:	\$62.39
Ending Balance:	\$5,062.39

25-month CD (3.92%)

Opening Balance:	\$5,000.00
Earned Interest:	\$66.48
Ending Balance:	\$5,066.48

The bank statements for both accounts for the months of December, January, and February were reconciled with the checkbook. Details of the above financial activities are on the reconciliations, which are being distributed. If there are specific questions concerning this activity, you may view statements, reconciliations, and original receipts which are kept in the RC&D office.

The Director's and Officers insurance premium was paid this month. Also, the website hosting fee was paid in February.

COUNCIL OPERATIONS**New Projects****Eastern Bioplastics; Poultry Feathers to Biodegradable Plastics**

The project was reported on by Kathy Holm for Esteban Nieto on the Community Development Committee. The project takes poultry feathers and turns them into agricultural plastic products that are biodegradable. It would create close to 20 jobs in the Shenandoah Valley. The Community Development and Executive Committees both agree that this is a worthwhile project. This would just be conceptual approval pending funding. The Committees are interested in this project and would submit this it as a stimulus project. It needs to be forwarded to Richmond by March 13. Rick Shiflet made a motion to forward this as a stimulus project; it was seconded by Dave Frackelton. After further discussion it was unanimously approved.

Promoting Local Forest Products

This project was reported on by Joan Comanor. This project would be a web-based directory of local wood-related businesses, ranging from artisan products to technical forestry assistance. The Forestry Committee would maintain the website. They are requesting technical assistance. She stated that if some stimulus money comes then maybe they will request funds to do a flier or a bookmark made from local wood to put in libraries or similar locations to promote awareness of the website. The Forestry Committee recommends this project. A motion was made by Joan Comanor to accept this project. It was seconded by Linda Campbell. Jim asked if it will be listed in the yellow pages. Joan said yes and it would be listed in search engines on the net. John stated that this would be a good job for an intern. Joan will check with Maria Papadakis. It was unanimously approved.

Project updates/status changes**Steele's Tavern Research Farm**

Kathy reported on this for Carl Luebben, who was sick. The final report was passed around the room. Carl stated that the project should be declared complete. An electronic copy of the report will be emailed to

Council members. The Council tabled approval of completion until Carl can attend and give more information.

GUEST PRESENTATION

Large Animal Composting

Bobby Clark and Bob Peer, VCE

Bobby Clark stated that Valley Protein is still picking up large animal mortality until March 22. Eventually, they will not accept any beef mortality at all. This is because of a federal regulation from the FDA that says that any animal over 30 months of age cannot be used in any feed of any kind. If you can prove that the animal did not have mad cow disease or if you remove the brain and the spinal cord, they can use it. Renderers are still accepting materials from meat processors because the brain and spinal cord are removed. Some meat processors would like to go with composting. The farmers' choices are to take them to a landfill, if they will accept them. Landfills that are accepting mortality are: Shenandoah County Landfill (they are composting); Frederick/Clarke County Landfill (standard tipping fee \$40/ton = \$20/cow); Page County Landfill (no charge for Page Co. farmers); Warren County can go to Page Co. (however, there is a problem getting them there); Rockingham County Landfill (can take a few). Augusta County Landfill is not taking any at all.

Bob Peer stated that on-farm mortality composting is allowed without a permit for now. DEQ will be clarifying regulations in about a year. There are guidelines to follow. Farmers cannot create a nuisance. There can be an arrangement made with a few farms to combine composting. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis to be approved. A permit is needed if farmers charge a tipping fee. Slaughterhouses need a permit to compost on site. This requirement is being suspended temporarily. This will also be considered on a case-by-case basis. He and Bobby Clark are looking at a facility now that they would like to approve for composting. Bobby stated that they are electing not to go to Valley Protein because they do not want to pay the liability fee. This farmer should start composting by Wednesday this week.

Bob Peer talked about composting in a litter shed. This is permissible by DEQ. However their local SWCD may not allow this. A farmer should contact their local SWCD to see what their guidelines are. Incineration is another option however not very feasible. Incineration of livestock (not poultry) does require a permit. It also requires monitoring and reporting. It is also a very expensive proposition. Some areas have mobile crematories for horses. The cost is \$700-\$800/horse.

Mike Liskey asked how long it takes to compost a 1,000 pound beef cow. Bobby stated that at the Shenandoah County Landfill they have a recipe that really gets hot and really works. He said that he has turned some in 70-80 days and they are 75% gone. Usually, it takes about 100 days if the recipe works well. After that it can be used as daily cover at the landfill and there will be nothing there to attract coons and buzzards. He then asked if the bones were gone too. Bobby stated not in 100 days.

In harmony with this, Bobby stated that he is going to bring us a flier about disposing of bones. On March 20, there is going to be a tour in Jefferson WV. There is a farmer who swears he can get rid of the bones. He composts for 100 days, and then he turns the pile. Six months later he turns the pile again and in about 18 months they are gone. He stated that he doesn't think that landfills have enough square footage of area to let this stuff lay for 18 months. It needs to be used for daily cover or to re-vegetate areas. It will have to be screened or ground up. Chris Anderson asked about a smell. Bobby stated that there should not be a smell. If there is, then something is wrong with the recipe—mistakes happen. He suggests covering the pile with more woodchips (1-2 feet). This will contain the odor and keep the critters away. The mortality will slowly decompose.

Jim Nichols stated that he feels bad that Valley Protein is losing this business. He feels that composting is a good idea, but he thinks we ought to be able to come up with a way to kill the pathogens by removing the brain stem and spinal cord and have Valley Protein continue to pick up the animals. He said that we could also crush the bones with a piece of machinery like they do at crematories. Jim Lawrence agreed that Valley Protein does a good job in Frederick Co. He also agrees that the pathogens need to be taken care of. Bobby Clark stated that in order to destroy the pathogens, the incinerator needs to be 1,560° F. Valley Protein does not reach that temperature. Linda Campbell asked if when it goes to the landfill or gets composted if the pathogens are killed. Bobby stated that he does not know. It may not. It could leech into groundwater.

Bob Peer and Bobby Clark went to a meeting of Page County farmers on March 2 and talked about these issues. There was also a meeting at the Shenandoah County Landfill and all the Landfills were there. There were also 3-4 meat processors there. With the money that Shenandoah RC&D granted, he has bought some publications; he bought thermometers for demonstrations being planned in Winchester, Rockingham and Augusta. A video has been distributed. They are working on a fact sheet. They are waiting on DEQ. Interpretations need to be made. Demonstrations will be at the Shenandoah County Landfill.

Joe Lehnen asked if it is possible for the landfills to compost all animal carcasses, even the ones VDOT picks up off the road. Bobby stated that if they go to composting, they will compost all animal carcasses. There is a question as to whether they will stay with composting or not. Maybe farmers will compost more. He said the most important thing is what will we do if there is a outbreak of a highly contagious disease on the farms. On-farm composting will be the only option to keep them in one spot and deal with it there.

John Eckman asked if there has been any exploration into bio-waste or hazardous/toxic waste.

Mike Liskey asked what the mortality rate is on farms. Bobby stated that it was 1-2%. He stated the biggest thing we are losing with Valley Protein is the convenience factor. He asked if on-site composting for one animal a problem for farmers. Bobby stated that it could be a problem because cattle farmers probably don't have any material to use as feed stock. Bob Peer stated that dairy farmers are in a better situation. John Eckman stated that joint composting by a number of farmers would be a good idea. Bob said that a co-op is being considered for approval. He also asked is anything being done to get rid of the brain stem and the spinal column. He says he did not pursue keeping Valley Protein in the loop because they have been considering getting rid of rendering large animals anyhow. That is why the composting issue has arisen. He assumes that it was not profitable for them.

Updates/Additional Business:

Agua Fund 2007/08 and Grant Expenditures for Projects Review (Charts)

Kathy Holm presented this information. The grant charts were distributed. Agua Fund 08/09 for \$55,000 has been approved. However, we are not sure when it will come.

Agua Fund 07/08: Executive Committee met and discussed that there are still a few projects on the books that have not been completed: On-Farm Biodiesel, and Organic Dairy Systems. The Executive Committee sent a letter to both of them requesting some feedback including a plan of action, timeline for completion, and quarterly updates. This money could be used for other projects if the new Agua Fund money does not come. Maria has requested additional funds (\$285) for the Energy Audit Project. There is a Pilot Audit Program that she will receive funds from (\$250/ea.). She would like Council to approve to pay the additional funds owed and then she will reimburse Council. A motion was made by John Eckman and seconded by Dave Frackelton. Linda Campbell stated that it would help if dates of approval were on these charts. Jim Lawrence stated that a key person from Council needs to be the project lead on all projects to keep Council abreast of what is going on with a project. It was unanimously approved.

Livestock Fencing: Council needs to send 1099 forms out to farmers for cost-share. 1099 forms are late in being sent out because we were unaware of the filing requirements. The bookkeeper will prepare these and send these out. Linda suggested that Lorraine call Donna Shaffer or Megan Dalton and ask about what may be needed for an audit. Dave Frackelton stated that the IRS also likes to see W-9s in the file that are filled out by the farmers. The bookkeeper will send out and request these.

WSF-II: Becky Barlow

Becky Barlow reported on this project. She stated that she was at the 2009 Virginia Farm Show in January and had a lot of good interaction with people. She has been working with some VCE on developing some compost training workshops for master gardeners in the Valley in April. They are planning an in-service training for VCE on manure uses and BMPs in June. A Poultry Growers meeting has been scheduled for March 19. She is going to feature the hotline and good reasons to call it. She distributed a report on the hotline activity. This meeting will also feature the new regulations that are coming out on poultry litter. Bob Peer and Betsy Bowles will be there to talk about this. She is continuing to track litter movement from the North River Watershed. Joe Lehnen asked that since demand is exceeding supply by about six-fold, is she seeing an increase in the price of litter. She said that prices have come down some. She said that some people have ideas of what poultry litter is worth and they are not willing to pay anywhere near the price of

commercial fertilizers. John Eckman asked about the WSF Steering Committee. Kathy stated that they continue to meet and give more attention to ag issues in the Valley and band together to get grants.

VARC&DC Surplus Funds

Joan reported on this. There was a \$32,000 profit made from the Southeastern Association Meeting. They are asking for suggestions on how to spend this money. The VARC&DC Ad-Hoc Finance Committee suggested that some project categories be set up that all RC&Ds in Virginia could draw from. They were Green Infrastructure, Alternative Energy/Energy Efficiency, and Forestry. The State Association would provide feed money on either a reimbursable or direct payment basis up to whatever amount is decided. Another suggestion made was to set aside \$5,000 for a rainy-day fund. Also, dues could be waived for an applicant area that is unable to pay. The final recommendations from the Ad-Hoc Finance Committee will be presented at the April VARC&DC meeting. If there are other ideas forward them to Joan. Jim Nichols stated that another idea would be to use interest earned to provide scholarships to young people. Jim Lawrence asked Joan to forward Jim's idea also.

National Economic Stimulus Plan – Forwarded RC&D Projects

State Submissions: Joan stated that the projects that were forwarded on the State level were Eastern Bioplastics: Poultry Feathers to Biodegradable Plastics; An Alternative to Sustainable Agriculture; and On-Farm Energy Audits. She suggested sending a letter to the Secretary of Agriculture since there were so many projects posted on website. Jim Lawrence asked Joan if she would draft and send that letter. She agreed to do this.

NRCS Submissions: A list of projects that will be submitted was distributed. Other suggestions should be submitted to Kathy Holm by March 11. This is for projects already on the books and that need to be expanded. John suggested adding VCC as a partner. Kathy will forward to NRCS in Richmond by March 13.

Leadership Forum

Jim Lawrence, Joan Comanor and Chris Anderson attended is meeting in February. They were told to expect level funding for this year and look for an increase in next fiscal year's budget. This was before the President's budget came out. However, at this point, RC&D has been zeroed out for Fiscal Year 2010. This was based on President Bush's budget, because Obama did not have his political appointees in place, so they just carried forward what the Bush team had been developing. The language is exactly the same as last year. Therefore, we will have to rely on Congress to once again restore the program for next fiscal year. Letters were written by Council members and faxed to area legislators by March 6 requesting that funds be restored to the RC&D program. Joan stated that the future of RC&D does look better for next year. Linda stated that she would send a letter for SVSWCD to Donna and Megan to Fax to legislators. Reminder letters to legislators should be sent out in the fall. Chris Anderson entered a drawing and received a free registration for the Legislative Forum.

COUNCIL INFORMATION

Coordinator's Report

The Coordinator's Report was distributed for information only. Kathy will be on annual leave April 4 – 10.

Linda suggested the Council use this website for teleconferences for small groups: www.freeconferencecall.com; she suggested people use their cell phones to make the call.

Announcements

Joan Comanor reported that she attended a Wind Energy Conference. For more details:

www.shenandoahforum.org

April 17
Coldwater Summit
Waynesboro County Club
9:30 – 3:00
Waynesboro, Virginia

Fly Fishing Festival
Constitution Park
Waynesboro, Virginia

March/April
Date - TBA
TDR Program Workshop

Pure Water Forum
See Newsletter for updated events/announcements.

March 28
Third Annual Tree Planting
Winchester/Frederick County
9:00 – 12:00

April 2/April 4
Stormwater Management in Your Backyard
An announcement will be sent out
There is also a train the trainer program

March 22
Karst Workshop
1:00 – 4:00
Luray Caverns

April 18
Arbor Day Celebration
For Page Co. residents

April 25
Earth Day Celebration
For Page Co. residents

Linda stated that Khimaira Webhosting is offering free webhosting for RC&D projects. (Forestry)

VARC&DC Annual Spring Meeting
April 29 – May 1
The Inn at Berry Hill
South Boston, Virginia
Hosted by: Old Dominion RC&D

Next Meeting
Monday, May 11, 2009, 10:00 a.m.
Augusta County Government Center
Upstairs Training Room - Verona, Virginia

Motion to Adjourn - Jim N/John

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lorraine M. Cormier
Administrative Assistant

UPCOMING EVENTS

VARC&DC Annual Spring Meeting

April 29 – May 1

The Inn at Berry Hill

South Boston, Virginia

Hosted by: Old Dominion RC&D

National Association of RC&D Councils Conference

June 2009

Albuquerque, New Mexico