

February 4, 2026

MINUTES

Watauga Soil & Water Conservation District
971 West King Street, Boone NC 28607

February 04, 2026

Present:

Denny Norris, Chair
Nate Coppenbarger
Bill Moretz
Jennifer Hanifan
David Tucker

Michelle Kasey
Brian Bonville
Samantha Dame
Jessica Janc

1. Denny Norris called meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.
2. Denny Norris opened the meeting in prayer.
3. Ethics Awareness and Conflict of Interest Reminder:
In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every board member to avoid both conflicts of interest and appearances of conflict. Does any board member have any conflicts of interest or appearances of conflict with respect to any matters coming before the board today? If so, please identify the conflict or appearances of conflict and refrain from any undue participation in the particular matter involved.
4. Statement of Professionalism:
Supervisors are reminded of their responsibility to uphold the laws of the United States and North Carolina and their constitutions. Business is to be conducted in a professional manner, free of bias, of interactions that violate policies or individual liberties and that address business issues only. Interactions are to be held with integrity, courtesy, honesty and in compliance with the highest ethical standards.
5. Approval of the minutes
Bill Moretz made a motion to approve the minutes; Jennifer Hanifan 2nd Motion. Minutes approved.
6. Approval of the agenda

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Bill Moretz made a motion to approve agenda with changes. Nate Coppenbarger 2nd the motion. Agenda approved.

7. District Report: Brian Bonville

New Applications: None

Contracts needing approval: None

Contract Updates:

A. ACSP:

95-2023-001 Scott and Dawn Jensen – Engineers will be paying for project minus the drinkers.

95-2023-003 Ronnie Joe Brown – Brown needs well driller. Project needs to be complete by May 2026.

95-2024-003 Charles Norris – Project has not been started. Bonville can't reach him by phone. Denny Norris told Bonville to mail him a letter.

95-2024-006 Valley View Land Company – Ag Road Repair. Project needs to be complete by May 2026. It has been roughed out.

95-2024-007 Al Zimmerman – Construction to begin in February.

95-2025-001 Will Kulczyk – Ag Road Repair. Waiting on completion and need Andrew Cox, the JAA to do final check on project.

95-2025-002 Holland Whitesides – Project not started.

95-2025-003 Larry Kitchens – Waiting on preliminary project design from engineer.

95-2025-004 Diane Deal – Need to do pre-build meeting.

95-2023-004 Greene – Need to send letter.

95-2026-001 Moretz – Field visit with engineers 1-28-26. Site was deemed suitable. Project is a spring tank, spring development and exclusion about \$16,000.

95-2026-002 Whitesides – Ready to start after weather.

95-2026-003 Kulczyk – Waiting on JAA field visit.

B. AgWrap updates:

95-2025-802 Daniel Brown – Processing reimbursement. Received engineer letter.

95-2026-801 Moretz – Site visit 1/28/26. Trailer hooked up to spring. Need to call Division on how to make compliant. Denny Norris asked Bonny to check if you can have two systems on one spring

C.

D. CAP updates:

95-2022-502 Blue Ridge Conservancy – Engineer drafting designs. Beaver making dam bigger.

95-2024-501 New River Conservancy (at Green Valley Park). Waiting on spring planting and after the fact approval from the Commission.

95-2025-501 Kellwoods 1 Townhomes POA – Waiting on stamped designs and permits from engineers.

E. StRAP:

2022 Funds – Successfully tolled over to 2024.

2024 Funds – Targeted start date is May 2026 because of a Trout Moratorium. Waiting for stamped engineering designs.

2026 Funds – Waiting on fund allocation. Potential projects with Valle Crucis and the Town of Boone.

F. EWP Updates:

1 site visit per week. Paperwork is ready to send to NRCS.

G. Bonville stated that supplements are needed for Kulczyk, Kitchens and Whitesides.

Kitchens needs additional funding to complete ag. road about \$22,000.

Whitesides needs to do a repair on their ag. road; project approximately \$5,000.

Denny Norris stated that these supplements need to be ranked and new applications were needed for supplements.

8. Brian Bonville:

Trout Unlimited donated trees for stream bank restoration. Bonville giving them away to various residents and organizations.

9. NRCS Samantha Dame

EWP – NRCS has 25-30 DSR's for the County that total between \$4.5-\$5 million. The application process closed 1/15/26.

There is a new program coming: Regenerative Ag using EQUIP money and CSP. It's a 5-year contract requiring a soil health test in the first and fifth year to see changes. There are 15 EQUIP contracts this year. No CSP contracts.

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Denny Norris asked if there will be another sign up> Samantha Glass stated that there isn't one scheduled but they will take applications and hold them in case that happens.

10. RC&D Report – Jessica Janc

Janc stated that the Jensen project is finished. An extension for the Valle Crucis paddle access is needed to complete signage and plantings.

A new project downstream from this access should begin in May.

There is also a new project starting in April at the Middle Fork Greenway. BRRC&D is also working on wildfire risk mediation with our NC Forestry rangers.

Janc stated that they are holding a Live Stake training soon. Blue Ridge RC&D will be doing the live stake giveaway in late winter in Ashe, Wilkes, Alleghany and Watauga. Link to sign up is on their website.

11. Division Report – Elise McLaughlin

The Division Update meeting was postponed due to weather.

The Association is asking for donations to support the Educational Coordinator position.

March 3 there will be a Basics of Surveying class. There will be an on-line prerequisite training on March 2nd.

March 12 is the Spring Meeting.

The SE NACD Meeting will be held in Cherokee in August.

12. Bonville told the Board that Soil & Water owns a Weed Wiper that hasn't been used in years. This particular weed wiper is for flat terrain and doesn't work well here in the mountains. Stokes County Soil & Water has indicated that they need this piece of machinery. Bonville asked the Board if he could give it or loan it to Stokes County. David Tucker made a motion to loan it to Stokes County. Bill Moretz 2nd the motion. Motion passed. Bonville to reach out to Stokes County.

Bonville also stated that there is a Nutrition for Live Stock Training tonight, 2/4/26 in the Ag Building held by Kendra Phipps, Livestock Agent, Watauga County Cooperative Extension Agent.

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Bonville told the Board that he was lecturing at Appalachian State on February 12th on plants of the Blue Ridge. This is a classroom lecture not open to the public. He will be using his own time for this.

Bonville also told the Board that the Town of Beech Mountain reached out to Soil & Water Staff asking for a person to give a 2-hour talk/walk during their Naturalist festival June 6th or 7th. Bonville will be doing the talk.

Bonville will also be doing a Soil Care talk – open to the public and told the Board that he was offered money to speak. After some discussion, it was suggested that Bonville give the money to the intern who will be assisting him.

13.Admin Report: Michelle Kasey

Spring Meeting Registration is ongoing. Kasey asked Board if anyone planned on attending. Denny Norris, Nate Coppenbarger and David Tucker all asked to be registered by Kasey.

Education Outreach Position – An email went to all Counties asking to support this position. Kasey asked Board if they were willing to contribute to this position. Denny Norris asked for this to be tabled until the February meeting.

RCW Camp – An email with the flyer and application for this camp was received. Kasey forwarded these to the Asst. School Superintendent and the High School teachers of Ag and Science to ask if they had a student that was leaning toward a career in conservation. Kasey asked Board if a vote was needed to sponsor a student this year and was told by Denny Norris that the money was in the budget and no vote was needed.

Buildfest Planning Committee – Kasey was asked to sit on the Buildfest Planning Committee. This event is in April and Kasey and Bonville plan to have a space and make seed bombs with the kids this year.

Poster Contest Complete – The Poster contest is complete and Kasey asked the Board for approval to request the \$420 to pay for the kids' cash prizes.

Jennifer Hanifan made a motion for Michelle to request the money from the County; Bill Moretz 2nd the Motion. Motion carried.

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Kasey is holding a Contest night on February 19th to hand out the prizes along with having pizza, chips and cupcakes for the winners. Kasey asked the Board if anyone was available to help with this event – from 5-7pm. Jessica Janc volunteered to help that evening.

Contest winners:

Clara Boylan	\$55
Hadley Combs	\$55
Alberta Ferrell	\$50
Bradley Tunstill	\$55
Evelyn Held	\$55
Norah Witt	\$40
Henry Asma	\$20
Olivia Combs	\$15
Faraday Hendren	\$15
Sydney May	\$20
Aubreigh Sweeney	\$15
Haven Miller	\$25
Total:	\$420

Board voted to go into closed session. David Tucker made a motion to go into Closed Session, Nate Coppenbarger 2nd the motion. Motion Carried. Pursuant to General Statute 143-318.11(2)(1) for personnel matters.

Closed session began: 9:07am.

David Tucker made a motion to open the meeting at 10:29. Bill Moretz 2nd. Motion carried and the meeting opened.

Bonville told the Board that Appalachian State had secured a grant and included Soil & Water, on Farm Soil Practices. Discussion followed.

Bill Moretz made a motion to adjourn. David Tucker 2nd. Meeting adjourned at 10:50am.

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Meeting was adjourned at 10:50 am.

Next meeting will be February 11, 2026. Specially called meeting for Personnel items.

Minutes submitted by: Michelle Kasey


Denny Norris, Chair

Signed

2-25-20

Dated

DRAFT

