**Caledonia County NRCD**

**Board Meeting Minutes**

**June 16, 2025**

Present**:** Gillian D’Acierno, Willie Nickerson, Matt Langlais, John Drew, Amber Reed, Karina Morales

Open meeting: Willie opened the meeting at 12:40.

Approve April meeting minutes: John moved to approve meeting minutes, Gillian seconded. None opposed, meeting minutes approved.

Q3 Financials: The Board approved the Q3 financials in April pending Matt’s agreement. Matt will review the Q3 financials for the July meeting.

NRCC Meeting Report: Willie attended the NRCC meeting a few weeks ago. At the meeting, they talked about the legislative appropriation. The NRCC budget will remain the same as last year. NRCC is expecting $612,000, plus additional one-time funding. Willie said they voted to evenly split the one-time funding among all conservation districts, which will mean $52,000 per district. At the meeting, NRCC also formally approved a procurement policy, which existed but hadn’t been formally approved yet. Some in the meeting discussed a concern voiced by staff at ANR and VAAFM that NRCC’s procurement policy doesn’t meet current state standards. The board will likely revise the procurement policy in the future to adhere more closely to state standards.

Meet Karina: Karina Morales, a new Conservation Specialist for CCNRCD, attended the board meeting and introduced herself. There was a brief discussion of how Karina and Taylor might work together moving forward, particularly related to farm properties with riparian restoration projects. The board also had a brief discussion about the practice of strategic wood addition. Several board members expressed interest in a field trip to see this project type in action. Karina will work on setting up a field day.

Local Funding Pool update: Emily provided an update on local fund pool outreach and what other district fund pools were supported. Emily mentioned that there will be a locally led subcommittee meeting organized by NRCS to talk about how the process went this year. The board had a discussion about how to implement this process next year. Everyone agreed that connecting landowners and learning about their priorities was valuable, and we should continue to do that annually. It may not inform a new local fund pool every year, but all the feedback gathered can ultimately inform local fund pool requests in the future. Someone suggested that maybe Taylor could attend a future board meeting to talk about how we want to structure next year’s meeting.

Telework policy discussion: Emily explained our mileage policy and introduced a few ideas related to a potential teleworking policy/stipend to the board. The board had a few questions: does VACD have a mileage policy? Do other districts have telework policy or a mileage policy, and how much is it for? If we just go by the full-time telework policy at VACD ($50 per pay period) and cut it in half, is $25 enough? In theory a telework stipend should follow the cost of living somewhat; can I tie it to something so that it reflects actual costs?

District cell phones discussion: Emily brought up the idea of having work cell phones for staff. The benefit of having cell phones would be that if district phones were subject to a FOYA request, it would be cleaner if all of our work activities were conducted on a single device. Having a work cell phone would also help staff with work/life balance. Emily will research options and bring a possible budget to the board meeting in July.

Open Meeting Law recommendations: Emily presented the board with a guidance document made by Clare Ireland at NRCC. The document has the caveat that we do not have an official determination of whether the CCNRCD Board of Supervisors is an advisory body or a non-advisory body. Depending on the classification, that would mean we’d have to follow different requirements. The board would like to continue this discussion and wait for a determination. Emily will follow up with Clare on two questions: Can it just be an audio recording, or does it have to be audio and video? We can take the recording down after 30 days; do we have to maintain an archive of recorded meetings for a certain length of time?

Plant sale for CCNRD: The board is interested in exploring the idea of an NEK plan sale with one pick-up spot in Barton.

Work with Structural Integrity on Quickbooks re-organization: Emily let the board know that after some discussion with Matt, CCNRCD has decided to contract with Structural Integrity to re-organize our Quickbooks Online. There was a discussion about whether this might mean separating from our current bookkeeping contract. Emily and Matt will continue to discuss the best way to move forward.

Peacham Pond project update: Emily provided an update on the Peacham Pond project.

The board spent some time confirming our summer meeting schedule and the VACD Annual Meeting Dates.

Gillian made a motion to adjourn at 2:25 pm, Willie seconded.