

GEORGIA SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
Macon, GA
January 24, 2014

Participating were Chairman Garland Thompson, Vice-Chairman Dennis Brown, Commission Members Carl Brack, Hal Haddock, and David Hays. Participating from Commission staff were Executive Director Brent Dykes, Deputy Executive Director Dave Eigenberg, and Executive Manager for Water Policy Bob Hanner. Also present from Commission staff were Urban Water Resources Program Manager Lauren Zdunczyk, Regional Representatives John Loughridge, Robert Amos, Rahn Milligan, Keegan Malone, and Luke Crosson, Communications Specialist Mike Wald, Metering Program Manager Jake Fleming, and Administrative Assistant Cynthia Wilbur. Guests included Walton County District Supervisor Dan Bennett, Cobb County District Supervisor Woody Snell, DeKalb County District Supervisors Dell MacGregor and Larry Danese, Gwinnett County District Supervisor Ellis Lamme, and Jon Huffmaster from Georgia Farm Bureau. Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order and asked Executive Director Dykes to give an invocation.

On a motion by Dennis Brown and second by Carl Brack, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the December 12, 2013, Board Meeting.

On a motion by David Hays and second by Dennis Brown, the Board approved the re-appointments of Lower Chattahoochee River district supervisors Ralph Balkcom, Jr., Hiram Bob Beard, Bert Strange, Bill Bowen, Richard Morrison, and Andy Payne.

Chairman Thompson called for an update on the District Supervisor Elections. Ms. Wilbur reported that Georgia HB310 had expedited the 2014 elections timeline in order to ensure that state elections and federal elections timelines coincide. In order to meet the new deadlines, all of the 2014 GSWCC election contracts had been mailed out to the respective counties by the third week in January, and incumbents would be contacted by the last week in January. District supervisor qualifying will take place the week of March 3-7th along with other non-partisan candidate qualifying; district supervisor races will be on the General Election ballot in November.

At this time, the Board called on Mr. Dykes to give the Executive Director's report. Mr. Dykes began with the Commission Personnel Report. Due to the recent vacancy in the administrative assistant position in the Region V office, the Commission is contracting with Focus Staffing Services to temporarily fill that position. Ms. Lance Wyant, who has previously served in that capacity in the Dawson office, will be working as the administrative assistant in the interim while that position is being advertised. Additionally, Ms. Gilda Ivory is also working through Focus as the receptionist in the Athens office. Lastly, job offers are being made in both the Region I E&SC Specialist positions and the 319 project coordinator positions.

Next, Mr. Dykes updated the Board on the current legislative session. To-date, no changes are being proposed for the Commission's amended FY14 budget. In regards to the FY15 budget, Mr. Dykes reporting that he recently met with Department of Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black to discuss the Commission's transition to the Department. Mr. Dykes informed the Board that Mr. Black had also requested to speak during the Business Session of the upcoming GACDS Annual Meeting. Mr. Dykes thanked the Board for their continued support during this possible transition, and reiterated that the proposed reductions to the FY15 budget and staffing levels were still in the draft stages and subject to change. Mr. Dykes also updated the Board on additional legislation of interest, including SB213, regarding the Flint River Basin, SB297, involving ethics and financial disclosure statements, as well as HB755 regarding forestry land and ad valorem tax assessments.

Next, Mr. Dykes presented the Board with the dates of the 2014 NACD Washington D.C. Legislative Spring Fly-In. This year's Fly-In will be held March 24th-26th, and the Commission is again planning on partnering with GACDS and NRCS to form a Georgia Natural Resources team to attend. Mr. Dykes encouraged the Board to participate and ensured that additional plans would be forthcoming.

At this time, Mr. Dykes turned the meeting over to Mr. Walt McBride, with the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government, to present a brief proposal and discussion for updating the Supervisor Training curriculum. On a motion by Carl Brack and second by David Hays, the Board approved signing a contract with the CVIOG for the curriculum updates.

At this time, the Board called on Mr. Dave Eigenberg to give the Deputy Executive Director's Report. Mr. Eigenberg informed the Board that 2013 water-use letters will soon be going out to producers. Mr. Eigenberg also introduced the possibility of using a smartphone app that will allow producers to self-report metering data. This application would also allow the Commission to see self-reported data in real-time. Mr. Eigenberg explained that development of such an app would be a cost-effective alternative to the current postcard method that has had low rates of return, but that the accuracy of the data will need to be researched. Lastly, Mr. Eigenberg informed the Board that Dr. Rick Lanford would be retiring as Chaplain for GACDS at the end of this year's Annual Meeting. The Board expressed their appreciation for Dr. Lanford and his support for both GACDS and the Commission.

At this time, Mr. Hays initiated discussion regarding current erosion control plan review policy. The Board asked that Mr. Dykes send a memo to all districts via the regional representatives re-iterating that plan review process guidelines can be set by the local conservation districts.

At this time, Chairman Thompson opened up the floor for public comments.

Mr. Dykes reminded the Board that their next meeting was scheduled for March 20th. Mr. Brown requested that the meeting be re-scheduled to accommodate travel arrangements for the upcoming Washington, D.C. trip. The suggestion was made and the Board agreed to move the meeting date to April 17th, with tentative plans to meet in Southwest Georgia.

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There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by:

Cynthia Wilbur

Approved by:



GSWCC Chairman Date



GSWCC Executive Director Date

**NOMINEES FOR THE POSITION OF DISTRICT SUPERVISOR
TO BE APPOINTED BY GEORGIA SOIL and WATER CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

REGION	DISTRICT	COUNTY	NAME	CITY	%	FUTURE TERM WILL EXPIRE	
IV	Lower Chatt	Quitman	1. Ralph Balkcom, Jr.	Georgetown	83%	11/25/15	
			2. Frank Redding				
			3. Matthew Self				
			Randolph	1. Hiram Bo Beard	Shellman	79%	11/25/15
				2. Terry Torbet			
				3. Stewart Arnold			
			Schley	1. Bert Strange	Ellaville	63%	11/25/15
				2. amuel Lee			
				3. Kenneth Brown			
			Sumter	1. Bill Bowen	Americus	85%	11/13/15
				2. Merle Smith			
				3. Tony Norman			
			Stewart	1. Richard Morrison	Lumpkin	82%	11/25/15
				2. Sib Fort			
				3. Shaun Harris			
			Webster	1. Andy Payne	Preston	55%	11/25/15
				2. Gordon Alston			
3. Phillip Jones							