

**MINUTES OF MEETING
STATE SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION COMMITTEE
MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA**

*MEETING DATE: JANUARY 13, 2021
TELECONFERENCE STATE OFFICE
RSA UNION BUILDING, MONTGOMERY, AL*

**Soil & Water Conservation
Committee Board**

Members Present:

Charles Holmes - Chair
Vaughn Poe - Vice Chair
Dr. Carol Knight
Johnny Lee
Ricky Cornutt
Andy Chamness
Dr. Gary Lemme
Dr. Paul Patterson

Other:

Bill Bailey, FPAC
Bob Plaster, ADAI
Rick Pate, ADAI
Cynthia Price, AG Statistics
Brian Harden, ALFA

NRCS:

Ben Malone
Richard Collier
Steve Musser
Christopher Davis
Greg Dansby
Brandon McCray
Shannon Weaver
Caleb Conner
Alice Love
Ginger Rider

Dr. William Puckett
Executive Director

SWCD:

Debbie Clements-Bibb, Phillis Dantzler-Butler, Dorris Skipper-Coffee,
Jack Robertson- Chambers, Tonda Miller-Chambers, Allison O'Neal-Covington, Donna Lake-
Tuscaloosa, Jack Wadsworth-Autauga, Emmie Burke-Houston, Rose Mary Smith-Butler, Angie
Porter-Pickens, Jim Green-Jackson, Mickey Smith- Sumter
Vickie Watkins-Macon, Kim Teel-Tuscaloosa, Jennifer Childers-Marshall/Etowah
Laura Smith-Baldwin, Stephanie Platt-Washington,
Russell Hendrix-Washington, Lorena Wilson, Greene, Jessica Jones, Crenshaw

AACDC:

Rhonda Bryars
Shelly Hyde
Lori Woodfin

AACD:

Sabra Sutton
Courtney Curenton
Casey Fulford
Cayla Jackson

SWCC:

Debra Brooks
Kathy Gotcher
Ashley Henderson
Julia Soohoo
Earl Norton
Perry Oakes

Charles Holmes called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Debra Brooks and Rhonda Bryars recorded the minutes. Prior notice of the meeting was given in accordance with the Alabama Open Meetings Act.

A lawful quorum was present for this meeting.

The meeting was conducted via WebEx and meeting materials were mailed to Committee members on January 6, 2021.

Invocation – Dr. Carol Knight

Roll call of Board Members – Charles Holmes call roll of board members with each member verbally stating their presence. Mr. Holmes asked other participants to type their name and affiliation in the chat box or email their information to Debra Brooks.

Welcome Guest – Charles Holmes welcomed guest.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Dr. Puckett conducted the election for the Chair. Johnny Lee nominated Charles Holmes for chair; seconded by Dr. Gary Lemme; motion carried with no objections. Dr. Carol Knight nominated Vaughn Poe for Vice-Chair; seconded by Ricky Cornutt; motion carried with no objections. All votes on action items were conducted by voice roll call of Board Members and their affirmation of a yes or no vote.

Minutes - Motion made by Rickey Cornutt to approve the minutes of September 9, 2020; seconded by Johnny Lee; motion carried with no objections. Charles Holmes asked the SWCC Board for a roll call vote.

Appointment/Reappointment of District Supervisors - Motion made by Vaughn Poe to approve appointments, reappointments, and resignations; seconded by Johnny Lee; the Committee approved the reappointment of 52 Supervisors, 8 new Supervisors; 1 Supervisor not recommended for reappointment; and accepted resignation of 8 Supervisors. Motion carried with no objections. Charles Holmes asked the SWCC Board for a roll call vote.

COVID-19 Update and District Impacts - Dr. Puckett referred the Committee to the memo in the meeting materials that were mailed out January 6, 2021. The memo was in response to Governor Ivey's Order extending "Safer-at-Home" until January 22, 2021. Dr. Puckett stated that six memos on COVID-19 had been sent to districts since the last meeting. Dr. Puckett also stated that under Safer-at-Home, reopening of districts, staffing, telework, and flexible schedules were up to the local district boards and should be coordinated with NRCS. Dr. Puckett also provided Board members with a copy of a memo to be presented for COVID-19 vaccination. The memo stated that staff, Board members and district staff and boards were in category 1b and mission critical to government payments to farmers.

FY21 Budget Update - Dr. Puckett gave an update on the FY21 Budgets for the Committee. No action needed.

Travel approval for SWCC Board and Staff - Both the 75th NACD Annual Meeting and the NACD Spring Fly-in were both cancelled due to COVID-19. No action needed.

Update on Irrigation, Feral Swine, and Regional Conservation Partnership Program

Projects - Ms. Henderson updated the Board on the Middle Tennessee River Watershed Project, Choctawhatchee-Pea Rivers Watershed Project, Middle Alabama River Watershed Project, Alabama Feral Swine Control Program, and information on the new RCPP grant applications. Ms. Henderson also updated the Board on working with Alabama Stormwater Association and Erosion and Sediment Control Partnership to help with urban conservation issues.

Updates on District & Cooperator Agreements and Financial Assistance Program

– Rhonda Bryars updated the board on the District Agreements stating all have been fully executed with NRCS. Cooperator Agreements are key components and were requested that NRCS and Districts encourage participation. FY20 CIP will be completed in February 2021 unless extensions are requested. The FY21 CIP program has obligating \$469,000 through February 2022. DAC trainings and programs are offered monthly. These are recorded and saved as training reference on SharePoint to all Districts.

Erosion and Sediment Control – Earl Norton reported of his retirement and thanked the Board for his 19 years of service with SWCC. Perry Oakes replaced, Mr. Norton as the Erosion and Sediment Control Program Coordinator for the Alabama Soil and Water Conservation Committee on January 1, 2021. Mr. Norton will assist Mr. Oakes as an Erosion and Sediment Control Specialist. Mr. Oakes updated the board on current activities. Mr. Oakes informed the board that Clear Water Alabama 2021 will be held in Cullman, AL, September 16-17 at Camp Meadow Brook.

AACD Areas I and VI appointments for Committee Members expire 10/25/2021

– Dr. Puckett reminded the Board that AACD Areas I and VI needed to nominate three Supervisors for consideration for appointment to the State Committee. Nominations are due by September 2021.

Statement of Economic Interest due April 30, 2021 – The Board was reminded to complete and submit their statement of Economic Interest to the Alabama Ethics Commission.

Partner Updates:

FPAC - Bill Bailey reported on FPAC activities.

Natural Resources Conservation Service - Ben Malone reported that Kelvin Norton will serve as acting Under Secretary and Terry Cosby, of Ohio will be acting Chief of NRCS. Mr. Malone stated Alabama will receive 16 more employees to fill the vacancies of retirements and resignations.

Alabama Forestry Commission - No report. AFC personnel not in attendance on the teleconference.

AG Statistics Service – Cynthia Price, USDA-NASS, Alabama Statistician gave an update on the current Census of Agriculture.

Alabama Department of Agricultural and Industries - Bob Plaster, Assistant Commissioner, reported on activities at the Department of Agricultural.

Auburn University Water Resources Center - No attendance on the teleconference.

Alabama Association of Conservation District - Sabra Sutton, gave an update on AACD upcoming events in 2021. She stated that the SENACD meeting will be held in August 2021 in Gulf Shores, Alabama. Ms. Sutton stated the Johnny Lee is the new President for AACD. Legislative Day at the State House and the Legislative dinner were cancelled this year due to COVID.

ACDEA – Debbie Clements reported that the ACDEA meeting will be held in Gulf Shores, Alabama, August 4-6, 2021. Quarterly meetings are still virtual due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Debbie requested if you are holding an area meeting virtual or in person and would like for her to attend please contact her by email.

ALFA - Bryan Hardin stated that he appreciated working with SWCC staff. He was pleased with the progress of the Feral Swine Program and the irrigation programs in Alabama.

Other Business - Dr. Gary Lemme reported on his retirement in April 2021. Andy Chamness thanked the Board for their help with the Ag-Science Education Program. Dr. Puckett mentioned to the Board that new WebEx equipment will be used for the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:56 am.

Next Scheduled Meeting – The next meeting will be at the RSA Union Building, Room 300 on May 5, 2021, at 9:00 am.

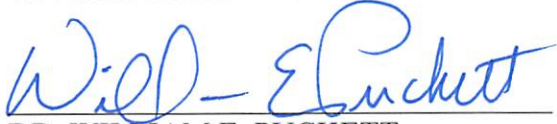
Submitted by:



CHARLES A. HOLMES, CHAIRMAN
STATE SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION COMMITTEE

5-5-2021

DATE



DR. WILLIAM E. PUCKETT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

5-5-2021

DATE



DEBRA BROOKS
RECORDING SECRETARY

5-5-2021

DATE