

**Three Rivers Soil & Water Conservation District**  
**Operations Committee**  
**Minutes**  
**May 14, 2026 @ 8:00 a.m.**  
**Three Rivers SWCD Conference Room, Tappahannock, VA**

Committee Members Present: Sara Henley, OPS Chair, Robert Bland, Board Chair,  
Langdon Townsend, and Bruce Taylor

Ms. Henley, OPS Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m. The committee began by reviewing an updated Three Rivers SWCD Organizational Chart, which detailed Board Members, their committee assignments, and the new Agricultural Administrative Assistant. The Director and Associate Director job descriptions were also reviewed, with no revisions made. Following this, Ms. Carter informed the committee that the At Large Appointed Director position for the Board will expire on December 31, 2026. She explained that a recommendation from Three Rivers SWCD for this position must be sent to the Virginia Soil and Water Board for approval by September 2026 to prevent a vacancy. After discussion, the Committee will recommend Robert T. Bland, IV to continue to serve in this capacity as the At Large Appointed Director for Three Rivers SWCD at the May 19, 2026 Board Meeting.

Additionally, Ms. Carter presented the completed JLARC survey, which was filled out by herself and the technical team, for the committee's review. She requested that the Directors notify her if they are contacted directly by the JLARC commission.

**Operations, Grants, and Financial Outlook** Ms. Carter presented the revised Desktop Procedures for District Operations, outlining both her requested changes and those made by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The document was reviewed in its entirety, and after a discussion of the revisions, it was determined that the document would be presented to the Board at the May 19, 2026 meeting for adoption. Mrs. Carter then presented the Draft Fiscal Year 2027 (FY27) Administrative and Operational Grant Agreement, the FY27 Cost Share Grant Agreement, and the supplemental policies for both agreements. She highlighted that the proposed financial OPS support will increase to \$510,552.00 from FY26 (\$442,000), and the Cost Share grant will increase to \$12,300,000 from FY26 (\$8.9 million). The Committee will recommend both grant agreements for approval at the May 19, 2026 Board meeting, pending approval by the SWCB and the adoption of the State budget. The financial outlook for Fiscal Year 2026 (as of April 30, 2026) and potentially FY27 was presented, Mrs. Carter noted that FY26 will conclude on June 30, 2026, and a detailed report will accompany the budget presentation to the Finance Committee in June.

**Agreements and Memorandums of Understanding** The committee reviewed several ongoing agreements. Mrs. Carter presented the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Colonial SWCD regarding financial support for the delivery of the Virginia Conservation Assistance Program (VCAP) in Essex, King William, and King & Queen Counties. For FY27, there are no changes to the language or the service fee, which remains at the \$13,000 amount requested by Colonial SWCD. She also presented the continuation of the Master Service Agreement for IT Support through Darrell W. Lewis, Computer Service & Networking, LLC for FY26. This agreement remains unchanged and includes the professional pay rate schedule and the IT scheduled upgrade of staff computers as attachments; the computer purchase rotation will be presented with the budget in June. Regarding human resources, Mrs. Carter requested information for the continuation of the MOU with the Berkley Group to support HR guidance on

changing state and federal laws. Although an official intent of continuation had not yet been received from the Berkeley Group, the committee expressed continued interest in securing retainer hours for HR support on an as-needed basis. The Committee will recommend for approval the agreements with Colonial SWCD and Computer Service & Networking, LLC at the May 19, 2026 Board Meeting. When the District is notified of intent by the Berkeley Group, Ms. Carter will present it to the Board of Directors.

**Annual Plans and Purchasing Policies** Even though an Annual Plan of Work is no longer required as a grant deliverable, Mrs. Carter presented the TRSWCD FY27 Annual Plan of Work, which outlines staff workloads derived from Job Performance Expectations, grant agreements, and the Desktop Procedures. Mrs. Carter then introduced the Three Rivers SWCD Purchasing Policy for Fiscal Year 2027, which outlines clear spending thresholds: purchases up to \$10,000 will be procured by the District Manager using sound business practices; purchases between \$10,000 and \$200,000 will require quotes from at least three vendors, with decisions recorded in the Finance Committee minutes and submitted for Board approval; and purchases over \$200,000 will require quotes and a Finance Committee feasibility and funding review before being recommended to the Board. This policy also notes that hardware/software purchases via the Darrell Lewis agreement do not require competitive quotes, defines the technical support provided under the VCAP MOU with Colonial SWCD, references the Berkeley Group HR retainer, mandates credit card usage procedures, and establishes check-signing authority, stipulating that two signatures are required on all operational and cost-share checks. After discussion the Committee will recommend approval to the Board on May 19, 2026 of the Purchasing Policy as presented

**Resolutions, Policies, and Board Recommendations** Mrs. Carter presented a Three Rivers SWCD resolution regarding health insurance coverage options for early retirees not yet eligible for Medicare. Following a brief discussion, the committee decided to recommend to the Board of Directors at the May 19, 2026 meeting that employees who retire with 30 years of service be allowed to remain on the Three Rivers SWCD Local Choice healthcare policy, fully paid by the District, until they reach Medicare eligibility. Next, the committee reviewed a revised Remote Electronic Meeting Policy that has been vetted by the FOIA Council and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG); the committee will recommend its approval at the Board meeting on May 19, 2026. Mrs. Carter noted she will continue working on Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) throughout the year to continue building the TRSWCD operational manual.

**Annual Reviews, Audits, and Adjournment** During the annual review of the District policy for handling Agricultural Stewardship Act (ASA) complaints, it was determined that Mrs. Carter will remain the primary point of contact and Trevor Guy, Conservation & Precision Ag Specialist, will serve as the secondary contact, with both deciding the level of participation for complaints on a case-by-case basis. Recommendation by the Committee will be to approve the document as presented. The Three Rivers SWCD By-Laws were also presented for annual review. Ms. Carter proposed a single change on pages 8 and 18 to grant the Technical Review Committee (composed of staff and agency partners) the delegated authority to review and reject incomplete or non-compliant RMP plans and VCAP applications prior to Board approval; the committee will recommend adopting this language. Finally, Ms. Carter presented a formal letter from Robinson, Farmer and Cox regarding the State Financial Audit findings, which will be presented in its entirety at the May 19, 2026 Board Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Sara Henley, Operations Committee Chair

*Sara Henley*

Date

*5/19/26*

Michelle Carter, District Manager

*Michelle Carter*

Date

*5/19/26*