

## MINUTES

### Durham Soil and Water Conservation District 201 E Main St/floor 5, Durham, NC 27701

Meeting Number: 2 (District Meeting)

Date: March 4, 2026

Meeting Number: 7 (for State reporting purposes)

**Supervisors Present (In-person):** Talmage Layton- *Chair*; Mark Waller- *Vice-Chair*; David Harris- *Financial Officer*; Kenny Browning- *Secretary/Treasurer*; and Ja’Nell Henry -*Supervisor*.

**Staff and Others Present (In-person):** Eddie Culberson- *Director*, Lisa Marochak- *Senior Administrative Officer*, Sherry Scully- *Ag Development Coordinator*, Dustin Brewer- *Natural Resources Coordinator*, and Jack Brown- *Agri Business & Environmental Services Manager*, Shelby Kaplan- *Cost Share Specialist*, Gerry Cohn- *resident and Dwane Brinson- Assistant County Manager (Zoom)* Elicia Senff- *Education & Outreach Contractor*.

*A regular Durham Soil & Water Conservation District Board meeting was held on Monday, March 4, 2026, and called to order at 8:02am by the Chair, Talmage Layton. The meeting was held on Zoom.*

- 1) **Conflict of Interest**– (*Read by Sherry Scully*) No conflicts of interest.
- 2) **Statement of Professionalism** – was read by Supervisors in attendance.
- 3) **Minutes** – A motion was made by Kenny Browning to approve the minutes from February 2, 2026. David Harris seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- 4) **Acceptance of the Financial Report**- A motion was made by David Harris to accept the financial report as presented. Mark Waller seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- 5) **Approval of Agenda**- A motion was made by David Harris to move Item A under “New Business” prior to “Business” on the agenda. Also, add Gerry Cohn (Farmland Protection Plan) to the agenda under “New Business” and approved everything else as printed. David Harris seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- 6) **New Business**
  - A. **Program Review**- Shelby Kaplan with the NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation went over the 2026 Program Review that was conducted with the Board and Staff. No major issues were found.
- 7) **Business**
  - A. **Environmental Affairs Board (EAB)**- Mark Waller
    - Provided an EAB update. Below are some of the guest speakers from the last EAB meeting.
      - Celeste Burns and David Bradley talked about wildlife connectivity for developers.
      - Plans for Old Durham Athletic Park (DAP). Three plans to preserve DAP have been proposed by City Staff and will be voted on this Spring by the City Council.
    - The next EAB meeting is scheduled for April 7.

**B. Upper Neuse River Basin Issues Update-** David Harris provided a handout and update to everyone in attendance at the Durham SWCD Board meeting.

**C. Directors Report-** Eddie Culberson reported the following:

- **FY26-27 Budget Request for Soil and Water** – The department’s FY26-27 budget request has been submitted to the County. There was no new request from the Soil and Water Department for the FY26-27 Budget. The Budget hearing with the County Manager is scheduled for March 20.
- **Eddie Culberson-** will be retiring on June 30

**D. Administrative Report-** Lisa Marochak reported the following:

- **2026 Pond Clinic** – May 16, 2026, hosted by Durham and Orange SWCD. The Pond will be held in Orange County. Registration is due by 4/30.
- **Video on Soil and Water Education Programs**– Check out the phenomenal video that features Elicia Senff discussing the Durham Soil and Water Educational Programs. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJa9SXZz2xk>
- **Durham Environmental Coalition-** Lisa Marochak will be doing a presentation on March 9<sup>th</sup>
- **Professional District Employee Program (PDEP)-** During the Area 4 Spring Meeting Dustin Brewer was presented with the Associate and Associated Standard awards of the PDEP Program from the NC Conservation District Employees Association (NCCDEA) President, Lisa Marochak.

**E. Community Conservation Assistance Program-** Jack Brown reported the following:

**Informational Only**

**Request for Payment (RFP)-** David Harris signed one RFPs between meetings

- Contract # 32-2026-526 for \$463.60 (Interlocal)

**Application for Assistance (AFA)**

A motion was made by David Harris to batch and approve the two AFA as presented. Kenny Browning seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- Contract #32-2026-506 for Streambank Stabilization in Neuse River Watershed (ISIP)
- Contract #32-2026-507 for Streambank Stabilization in Neuse River Watershed (ISIP)

**Contracts**

- A motion was made by David Harris to approve Contract #32-2026-506 for \$14,708 – Streambank Stabilization (ISIP) District Ranking 160- Qualified in Neuse River. Kenny Browning seconded the motion. Motion carried
- A motion was made by David Harris to approve Contract #32-2026-507 for \$3230 – Streambank Stabilization (ISIP) District Ranking 170- Qualified in Neuse River. Kenny Browning seconded the motion. Motion carried

**Spot Checks (Informational Only)**

- April 22 or 29

F. **Ag Cost Share and AgWRAP** – Dustin Brewer reported the following:

**Ag Cost Share**

**Informational Only**

- Surveying pond site tomorrow that was previously approved by the Durham SWCD Board.
- All ACSP funding has been allocated for FY26

**AgWRAP**

**Informational Only**

- Contracts under Construction
- All Funding has been allocated for FY26

**Spot Checks (Informational Only)**

- April 22 or 29

G. **Stream Restoration and Stormwater Projects** – Eddie Culberson reported the following:

- **Eagle/Honeycutt Project**
  - Construction is halfway done and should be completed by the end of May.
- **Charlestowne Apartment Stream Restoration Project**
  - We received the requested DWR contract extension.
  - Revised agreement with Reinvestment Partners. A motion was made by David Harris to approve the revised agreement with Reinvestment Partners that was made between meetings. Kenny Browning seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- **Park Place HOA Project in conjunction with PCC**
  - Still working on finding additional contacts to help enlarge the project.
- **Woodcroft HOA III Project in conjunction with PCC**
  - A motion was made by David Harris to approve the \$340,000 grant that was submitted to NCLWF for this project. Ja'Nell Henry seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- **PCC Project in Halifax** – Eddie has been working with Halifax SWCD and Halifax Community College to address some stormwater issues the college is having.

H. **Ag Development/Farmland Board** – Sherry Scully reported the following:

**Informational Items**

- **Agriculture Economic Development Grant (AED)**
  - Ag Economic Development Committee met on February 4<sup>th</sup>. Maintenance Checks of five percent of active contracts were performed and found in compliance. There are currently 200 contracts with active maintenance periods.
  - Staff is reviewing program to make recommendations that will be reviewed by Committee in May.
- **Farmland Protection Advisory Board (FPAB)** - met on December 15, 2025 and January 12,
  - The Farmland Protection Advisory Board met on February 12<sup>th</sup> following breakfast.
  - Durham County Farmland Easement Program, managed by Division of Open Space, celebrates 25 years! Resolution will be presented to BOCC.
  - Farmer and Landowner Breakfast held on February 12, 8-10am at Durham Cooperative Extension was a success. 45 people registered with 36 in attendance. Topic ideas for 2027 Breakfast Series are being accepted!
  - Next Meeting – March 19<sup>th</sup> at 6pm at Durham Farm Bureau.

I. **Environmental Education** –Elicia Senff and Lisa Marochak reported the following:

**Informational Items**

**Contests**

- Conservation Contests – we had several Area winners.
- K-2nd Bookmark Contest entries are due April 8th.
- We are accepting nominations for the Conservation Education Teacher of the Year Award. Nominations are due March 27th.
- Regional Speech contest will be held on April 6 prior to the Durham SWCD Board meeting.
- 2026 Awards Celebration will be held on May 19<sup>th</sup> at Redwood Ruritan.

**Other Events**

- Resource Conservation Workshop (RCW)
  - Applications for RCW have opened. Applications and a letter of recommendation are due March 31st. Please send this information along to anyone you think would be interested.
  - The Board will vote at their April meeting for the applicant(s) they would like to send to the weeklong camp held at NCSU in June.
- Creek Week Tabling event at the Durham Farmers Market- March 14<sup>th</sup>

**Envirothon**

- Area 4 Envirothon- March 19th at Ownes Park in Louisburg
    - Durham has 6 HS teams registered to compete in the Area competition.
- NC Envirothon- April 24 and 25 at Cedar Rock Park in Burlington
- NC Envirothon Volunteers Needed- Let Lisa know if you want to volunteer and she will send you the link

**Tree Sale**

- Tree Sale pick-up was held on February 24th-26th at Waller Family Farm. Thank you to Mark Waller for allowing us to hold the pick-up at his farm.

J. **NRCS Update** – Olivia Plant provided a NRCS update and written report.

K. **Regional Coordinator**- Taryn Thompson provided a written report

8) **New Business** (continued)

- B. **Master Agreement Contract Amendment**- A motion was made by David Harris to approve the 2025-2026 Master Agreement Contract Amendment as presented. Mark Waller seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- C. **Matching Funds**- A motion was made by David Harris to approve the Matching Funds form as presented. Mark Waller seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- D. **Gerry Cohn**- Introduced himself to the Durham SWCD board. He will be hired to complete the update to the Farmland Protection Plan.

**Closed Session**

A motion was made by David Harris to go into closed session at 9:55am. The Board has the right to go into closed session based on the G.S. 143-318.11, for personnel matters. The following people can stay for the closed session: The five Durham SWD Board Supervisors, Assistant County Manager, Dwane Brinson, and Durham Soil and Water Director, Eddie Culberson. Mark Waller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

No action was taken during the closed session. A motion was made by David Harris to go back into the regular board meeting. Mark Waller seconded the motion.

**Adjourn:** The Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:43 am.

**Next Meeting: Durham SWCD Board Meeting – April 6, 2026, at 8:00 am**

Location: 1901 Hillandale Rd Durham, NC 27705

Talmage Layton  
Chair

Lisa Marochak  
Senior Administrative Officer

April 6, 2026  
Approval date