

## MINUTES

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

Meeting Number: 3 (District Meeting)

Date: April 6, 2026

Meeting Number: 8 (for State reporting purposes)

**Supervisors Present (In-person):** Talmage Layton- *Chair*; Mark Waller- *Vice-Chair*; David Harris- *Financial Officer*; Kenny Browning- *Secretary/Treasurer*; and **(Online)** 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*, Senff- *Education & Outreach Contractor* and Taryn Thompson- *Regional Coordinator* **(Online)** Celeste Burns- *Open Space and Real Estate Manager*, David Bradley- *Open Space*, , Pam Andrews- *guest* and Wanda Allen- *guest*, and Ben Gordon.

A regular Durham Soil & Water Conservation District Board meeting was held on Monday, April 6, 2026, and called to order at 8:00am 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 David Harris to approve the minutes from March 4, 2026. Mark Waller 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. Kenny Browning seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- 5) **Approval of Agenda**- A motion was made by Kenny Browning to approve the agenda as printed. David Harris seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- 6) **New Business**
  - A. **Cheek Road Development**- Donna Stainback spoke to the board about the Cheek Rd Development issues. David Harris made a motion for the Durham SWCD Board to write a letter about their serious concerns with the Cheek Rd Development. Kenny Browning seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- 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.
      - Cheek Rd Development.
      - Breentag Mid-South, Inc.– Wholesale chemical company. Chemicals dumping into nearby creek.
    - The next EAB meeting is scheduled for April 7.

**B. Upper Neuse River Basin Issues Update-** David Harris reported that there are no new updates. The next meeting is scheduled for April 5, 2026.

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

- **FY26-27 Budget Request for Soil and Water** – The department’s FY26-27 budget hearing with the County Manager was held on March 20th. There were no new requests from the Soil and Water Department for the FY26-27 Budget.
- **Performance Appraisals-** for staff are due by May 31<sup>st</sup>.
- **Eddie Culberson-** will be retiring on June 30. Currently the County has a hiring freeze.
- **Piedmont Conservation Council-** PCC’s Annual Retreat will be held on April 7<sup>th</sup> at Lake Mackintosh.

**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.
- **Retirement Celebration for Eddie-** June 25<sup>th</sup> 2pm-4pm at Redwood Ruritan
- **Southeast National Association of Conservation Districts (SENACD)-** Save the date. NC is hosting SENACD meeting in Cherokee, NC August 9-11.

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

**Informational Only**

**RFP**

David Harris signed RFP for contract 32-2025-526 for \$4968.75 in between meetings

**BETC**

- DSWCD Staff participated in Career Day at Kestrel Heights Charter School in RTP. Students were engaged the entire day as we discussed our individual jobs and the importance of protecting our watershed and the environmental threats that we face in our conservation profession.
- This month the Jordan High School Sustainable Agriculture Students will be participating in an erosion control and invasive removal project at Funny Girl Farm. Students will be planting a variety of native shrubs and trees around the pond for bank stabilization and ecological benefits. This should be a great Earth Day project for the students.
- Trinity School will be participating in Phase II of the riparian buffer project, the first week of May. In Phase II, students will be planting native trees and shrub species in the riparian buffer on a threatened New Hope Creek tributary and Hollow Rock Park.

**319 Contracts-** Need to transfer money to cover grant amount that is withheld. A motion was made by David Harris to move up to \$10,000 from the Stormwater account to the 319#4 account to cover the money that is withheld at the end of the grant cycle. The money will be returned to the Stormwater account once the grant is closed out. Mark Waller seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**F. Ag Cost Share and AgWRAP-** Dustin Brewer

**Informational only**

- All funding has been allocated for FY26
- Spot Checks scheduled for April 29<sup>th</sup>. Meeting at Farm Bureau @8:30am. There will be 11 site visits.
- Nash County is having their annual Bobby Joe Fisher Catfish Luncheon on May 7<sup>th</sup> at 12pm.

**G. Stream Restoration and Stormwater Projects-** Eddie Culberson

- **Eagle/Honeycutt**-Project is complete. Walk through with contractor, landowners, and engineer will be held on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 10:30am.
  - A site visit will be held with the grant funders on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10am
- **Charlestowne Project**-Mobilizing to project this week. We will have weekly construction meetings.
- **Park Place Project**- Sherry Scully has been working hard to get participation from downstream neighbors.

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

**Informational Items**

**Contests**

- NC Speech Contest- will be held May 1 in Randolph, NC.
- K-2nd Bookmark Contest entries are due April 8th.
- 2026 Awards Celebration will be held on May 19<sup>th</sup> at Redwood Ruritan.

**Other Events**

- Resource Conservation Workshop (RCW)- A motion was made by Mark Waller to approve sending applicants #1 and #3 to the RCW at a cost of \$650 each. Kenny Browning approved the motion. Motion carried.

**Envirothon**

- NC Envirothon
  - Three Envirothon teams from Durham qualified for the NC Envirothon Competition. A motion was made by David Harris to approve paying the registration for three teams at \$300 per team. Kenny Browning seconded the motion. Motion carried.
  - Volunteers Needed- Let Lisa know if you want to volunteer and she will send you the link

**I. Agricultural Economic Development-** Sherry Scully

**Agriculture Economic Development Grant (AED)**- All contracts and payments are running smoothly for FY 25 and FY 26. Staff is reviewing program to make recommendations that will be reviewed by Committee.

•**Farmland Protection Advisory Board (FPAB)**- The Farmland Protection Advisory Board met briefly on March 19th to discuss a retreat planned for the afternoon of June 11, 2026, 12-5pm at Durham County William V. Bell Building. Durham County Farmland Protection Easement Program, managed by Division of Open Space, celebrates 25 years! Resolution presented on March 23 to BOCC. Families enrolled in this program and staff attended. Next Meeting – April 16th at 6pm at Durham Farm Bureau.

•**Easement Monitoring** is complete for 10 easements held by District. Presentation of drone photos and footage will be shared.

•**East Durham Development Concerns** expressed by landowners.

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

**K. Regional Coordinator-** Taryn Thompson provided a written report. Staff or board needs to schedule the Annual Program Review with the Regional Coordinator. Staff will send potential dates to Taryn

**Adjourn:** The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:10 am.

**Next Meeting: Durham SWCD Board Meeting – May 4, 2026, at 8:00 am**

Location: 1901 Hillandale Rd Durham, NC 27705

Talmage Layton  
Chair

Lisa Marochak  
Senior Administrative Officer

May 4, 2026  
Approval date