

**PASQUOTANK COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
MARCH 21, 2013**

The Pasquotank County Board of Commissioners met with the Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors and staff on Thursday, March 21, 2013 at 12:00 noon at the Pineapple Cafe.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jeff Dixon, Chairman
Joseph S. Winslow, Jr., Vice-Chairman
Cecil Perry
Frankie Meads
Gary G. White
Dr. William R. Sterritt

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Lloyd E. Griffin, III (*Out of Town*)

OTHERS PRESENT:

Randy Keaton, County Manager
R. Michael Cox, County Attorney
Karen Jennings, Clerk to the Board

Also present were the Pasquotank Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisors and staff. Mr. Steve Harris, Chairman of the Pasquotank Soil & Water Conservation District, welcomed everyone. Following lunch hosted by the Soil & Water Conservation Service everyone introduced themselves.

Mr. Dwane Hinson, Soil & Water Technician for Pasquotank County, said he would like to share with the Board of Commissioners the role that the Pasquotank Soil & Water District has had in the land use changes in the county's history and the services it has provided to the people of Pasquotank County. He said he also wants to highlight some new projects the district hopes to bring forth in a collaborative effort with the Board of Commissioners.

He said this district was among a group of districts that were the first in the nation. He said it was formed during the Dust Bowl Era to address the mismanagement of land use in the United States. He stated that the Pasquotank District did not have issues regarding blowing soil, but had drainage issues. In the 1960's Congress and the states stepped in to address drainage. During the land-clearing era about 55,000 acres of land were cleared in Pasquotank County and Soil & Water helped land owners design drainage systems, lay out ditches, and size pipes to meet the needs of the public. Mr. Hinson stated in the late 1970's the schools in Pasquotank County had significant drainage issues and the district brought in the expertise to design the drainage systems, worked collaboratively with the Board of Commissioners, lined up the funding, and basically solved most of the drainage issues that were surrounding the older school systems in the county. He said also in the 1980's Pasquotank County started having significant issues with the state regarding septic system design and it had almost gotten to the point that the state was going to stop development. The district supplied the soils expertise and a lot of the engineering expertise, and in working with the local health officials was able to develop the sand line trench systems. Mr. Hinson explained that there was a water quality era during which the Chowan River and the Pamlico River were significantly impacted. He said the drainage systems and the land uses employed over the years resulted in a lot of significant pollution problems. He stated that the counties north of the Albemarle Sound started the North Carolina Ag Cost-Share Program as part of the effort to clean up the rivers. He said over the years they have worked with the Pasquotank County land owners employing different practices for water control and animal waste to try to solve many of the conservation issues. Mr. Hinson explained that during the stormwater era the county had significant flooding rains. Through the efforts of the Soil & Water District many of the drainage regulations and systems currently in place in the county were developed to protect property owners. Mr. Hinson stated that the district provided the technical expertise during the planning for the Wal-Mart construction project to ensure there were no drainage issues. Mr. Hinson stated that in the Newland area the district recommended the establishment of water management districts and special use districts to try to address flooding in the Newland area. He said the district is probably going to bring to the Board this year some other land use concerns. He noted that Little River is currently undergoing some of the same issues that the Chowan River dealt with. He said once the algae bloom begins, it will be very hard to stop and will take years to intervene. He stated that the issues cannot be ignored.

He stated that a water quality monitoring system needs to be put in place and some buffers also need to be established along the river. He said there are many drainage inlets into the Little River and they are not filtered at all. He stated that they would like to employ some mechanisms to try to control water and possibly redesign some filters. Mr. Hinson said these issues will be brought to the Board later and another issue they will be bringing to the Board is to subdivide the Upper Pasquotank Special Use Water Management District. He stated that there are some land owners who are interested in doing this now. Mr. Hinson explained that the Pasquotank Soil & Water District over the years has addressed most of the land use needs in the county and wants to continue to collaborate with the Board of Commissioners and bring forth issues to serve the people of the county.

Mr. Steve Harris stated that G.S. §139 which was enacted in the 1930's enabled the soil and water districts to be formed. He explained that Pasquotank County is part of the only multi-county district in the state. He said Eastern North Carolina does not have the problems with soil erosion like areas in the piedmont and mountain areas have, however it does have rivers, creeks and the Albemarle Sound that need to be protected. Mr. Harris thanked the Board for coming today. He also thanked the Board for its assistance over the years and he requested the county's continued financial support of Soil & Water Conservation.

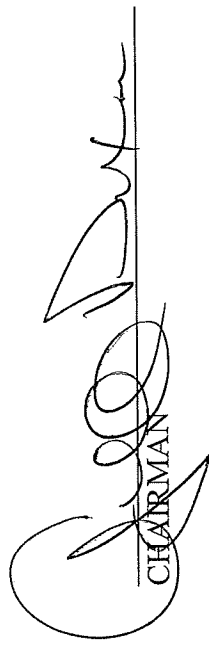
Mr. Maurice Berry, a member of the Soil & Water Conservation District Board, said they would like to arrange a tour at a later date and actually show the Commissioners some of the projects for which they receive cost-share money, such as water control structures, no-till farming, land shaping, constructed wetlands, education programs, and other projects.

Chairman Jeff Dixon mentioned that the Board of Commissioners passed a resolution Monday night opposing the disposal of fracking waste by injection into deep wells in Eastern North Carolina. He said it is hoped that every county in District I will support the resolution. He stated that this is unheard of and it is important to get the word out to everyone to oppose the proposed legislation that will allow fracking.

Chairman Dixon stated that the Board appreciates everything the Soil & Water Conservation Service is doing.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:03 PM.


CLERK TO THE BOARD


CHAIRMAN