

**Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board  
Allocation Subcommittee  
Wednesday, October 23, 2019  
Department of Forestry  
Charlottesville, VA**

**TIME AND PLACE**

The meeting of the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board Allocation Subcommittee was held at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, October 23, 2019 at the Department of Forestry in Charlottesville, Virginia.

**SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Adam Wilson, Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board, Subcommittee Chair  
Keith Balderson, Three Rivers SWCD  
Gray Coyner, Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board  
Darryl Glover, Director, Division of Soil and Water Conservation, DCR  
Martha Moore, Virginia Farm Bureau, ex officio

**SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT**

Mario Albritton, Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board  
Kelly Snoddy, Peter Francisco SWCD

**DCR STAFF PRESENT**

Russell W. Baxter, Deputy Director, Dam Safety/Floodplain Management, Soil and Water Conservation  
Christine Watlington, Policy and Regulatory Coordinator  
Michael Fletcher, Board and Constituent Services Liaison

**OTHER PRESENT**

Charles Newton, Shenandoah Valley SWCD, VSWCB  
Anne Coates, Thomas Jefferson SWCD  
Dr. Kendall Tyree, Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts  
Greg Wichelns, Culpeper SWCD  
Steve Hill, Culpeper SWCD  
Thomas Turner, John Marshall SWCD

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. Wilson convened the meeting to order and asked for introduction.

**REVIEW AND EXPLANATION OF AGENCY'S REQUESTED BUDGET DECISION PACKAGES**

Ms. Watlington reviewed the agency budget decision package process for the purpose of clarifying the sources of technical assistance funding provided to Districts. She noted that for several years, the Department has attempted to include a baseline amount of technical assistance (TA) funding in the Administration and Operations funding provided to Districts.

The current amount of administration and operations funding is at \$7.1 million. This is a fixed amount and remains stable from year to year. Each District receives a portion of the total amount provided.

The General Assembly has typically approved that amount.

The second decision package is for an \$83 million deposit for the Water Quality Improvement Fund (WQIF). Additional technical assistance funding is included in this deposit request.

The final source comes from the recordation revenue. Unless there is more than \$10 million in revenue, \$1.3 million is allocated for technical assistance.

The approval of these agency proposals would mean that those three sources of funding would impact the total amount that districts have available for technical assistance funding.

The amounts of each of the sources are set in the state budget. The Soil and Water Conservation Board has the authority to determine how funds are distributed.

The agency budget packages represent a total of \$10.97 million in TA funding in addition to the anticipated \$1.3 million from the recordation revenue.

Ms. Watlington advised that to provide a recommendation on the baseline funding to the Subcommittee, DCR staff reviewed the information submitted from the Districts via the 2019 budget template. With a base level funding of \$35 million, the projected total need of the Districts for technical assistance funding was \$5.8 million. Utilizing the Department recommendation base funding amount of \$4.55 million, plus the additional \$1.3 million provided through the recordation revenue, Districts would be funded at their estimated needed amounts.

The DCR recommendation provides at least \$35,000 in base funding to each District.

Mr. Wilson suggested that this process be reviewed every 2-3 years.

Mr. Coyner asked how \$35,000 was justified for districts who have little or no technical needs.

Ms. Watlington replied that the amount recommended is linked to the amount of cost-share funding a District receives. The department recommendation:

1. Utilizes data the Districts submitted to administer a \$35 million program. The budget package is based on this.
2. For the most part, each district receives a significant increase.

It was noted that there appeared to be discrepancies in the amount of funding needed per position among Districts. The hope is that the minimum funding will help Districts retain their most experienced staff.

Ms. Watlington noted that Districts submit the budget template on an annual basis. She noted that the Board could choose to revise the base funding levels based on budget templates more frequently than had been done in the past.

Updating this process every two years would allow for adjustments in inflation and staff experience. It would also reflect the most recent Non-Point Source Assessment priorities.

Ms. Moore noted that there needed to be an agreed upon formula regarding documenting positions to reduce the administrative discrepancies between Districts.

Mr. Peterson advised that while the process was not perfect, it was close enough to accept and to recommend a review occur every two years.

The subcommittee came to a consensus to review the numbers every two years (every odd year). The next review cycle would begin in calendar year 2021 for the FY2022/2023 budget process.

#### **SUBCOMMITTEE ACTION**

Mr. Peterson moved that the Subcommittee recommend that the proposal developed by DCR staff be approved and forwarded to the Soil and Water Conservation Board, and further that the process will be reviewed every two years. Mr. Glover seconded and the motion carried.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

#### **NEXT MEETING**

No additional meeting was scheduled. Mr. Wilson will present the recommendation at the Soil and Water Conservation Board meeting in Norfolk on December 11, 2019.

#### **ADJOURN**

There was no further business and the meeting adjourned at 11:28 a.m.