

- March 21, 2016 UCSWD Board Meeting
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- Present:
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- Laurel Schaafsma - Chair
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- Duke Emerson - Treasurer
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- Pete Cameron - Secretary
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- Buddy Finley - Supervisor
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- William Schretzmann - Advisory Member
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- Jay Tucker - Forestry Agent
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- Monica Jones - NRCS Representative
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- Scott Tucker - FDACS/WMD Representative
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- Charlene Richburg - State AFCD Coordinator
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- The board currently is maxed out at five voting supervisors. Pete Cameron volunteered to contact Delbert Smith about surrendering his supervisor position so that William Schretzmann can become the fifth supervisor. Delbert, if he agrees, would become an advisory member without voting privilege.
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- The minutes from the February meeting were approved.
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- Duke Emerson reported on the Bradford County fair at which he and Laurel, sharing a table with the Bradford County SWCD, passed out crayons and coloring books donated by the NRCS office.
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- Pete Cameron reported on the progress of the Hazen/Howard Pritchett and Shadd phosphate mining initiative. He briefly recounted the events leading to the current state, in which the Union County Commission is strongly considering a one-year moratorium on a go/no-go decision. Proponents of the mining say that it will be a clean operation, without noise or water pollution, undue water extraction, or

excessive trucking on county roads. They say that the land will be returned to almost current state shortly after mining each segment of the overall proposed tract. Opponents say the technology to be used for the mining is not proven, and hence there will be health and environmental risks.

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> Buddy Finley brought up the issue of the illegal monitoring wells on the proposed mining land, for which the owners must pay a small punitive fine. Board members wanted to know the purpose of the wells but no one knew.

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> Laurel showed the group a large map of the county area with the actual county borders outlined in red marker. She pointed out areas where the phosphate mining would be.

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> Our board may take a position yea or nay on the proposed phosphate mining as soon as more facts are known. This raised the issue of the board taking a position on any issue and then subsequently having legal problems because of it. It was concluded that the board should solicit the advice of the county attorney in cases where a position taken might lead to a lawsuit.

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> Laurel wanted to know about soil types found in UC and wanted to see samples. Jay Tucker told her to contact Ken Morgan, who would be able to show her actual soil samples.

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> Charlene Richburg, the new AFCD State Coordinator, then quickly went through state requirements for all SWCDs and promised to send out these requirements in a follow-up email to each member. She mentioned the April and July AFCD meetings as a good opportunity to receive supervisor training and hear what projects other county SWCDs are doing. She also mentioned the requirement for each SWCD to have a website. Scott Tucker noted that Weebly.com will host, but will not design, a website for free. Another option, he said, is to use the FDACS IT person, who would help design a website if time allows. In this case the UC website could piggyback on the AFCD website, paying a yearly maintenance fee of \$180..

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> Monica Jones reported that there were two NRCS EQIP grants to Union County in the forestry area and that April will be the deadline for cost share initiatives such as planting longleaf pine, constructing a barrel nursery and other developments that NRCS is sponsoring.

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> Jay Tucker reported on a forestry-sponsored initiative to reduce the southern pine beetle problem by granting assistance in the areas of replanting, burning, thinning and general vegetation control. There is a preference for longleaf planting. Sign-up is in May for this cost share.

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> Scott Tucker reported that the CARES dinner will be May 5 this year. All are encouraged to show up for this free meal where awards are presented to farmers who have done well on their BMPs.

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> An FDACS project to cost-share soil moisture probes is being well received by farmers anxious to reduce excess irrigation. Another project with the same goal of water conservation is to pay farmers to stop irrigating and use the land for other things, such as hay or cattle.

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> It was voted to pay the yearly AFCD dues of \$350 and then the meeting was adjourned at around 8:15.

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