

Resource Management Plan Review Actions: Sample Motion and Minutes Language for Technical Review Committee and District Board Meetings

(provided by DCR to SWCDs July 2026)

This document is intended to help Soil and Water Conservation District staff perform Resource Management Plan (RMP)-related review duties and document those actions in their Technical Review Committee (TRC) and District Board (Board) meeting minutes in compliance with Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requirements. It does not constitute a complete set of instructions for the full RMP review process; other requirements are addressed in the RMP regulations (4VAC50-70) and trainings. This document is specifically focused on the documentation of TRC and Board actions.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts fulfill the following roles in the RMP review workflow:

1. Staff review and recommendation (Optional)
If the Board chooses, it is the role of staff to conduct a preliminary review of an RMP request for approval or request for certification before the RMP is submitted to the TRC.
2. TRC review and recommendation (Required)
It is the role of the TRC to review RMPs submitted for approval or certification and to provide a recommendation for action to the Board.
3. Board review for approval, approval with conditions, or return for revisions (Required)
It is the role of the Board to consider the TRC's recommendation and respond with a decision to approve, approve with conditions, or reject the RMP. The Board may also delegate this authority to an individual acting on its behalf.

Actions of staff

While the TRC is required by regulation to review RMPs and recommend appropriate actions to the Board, the Board may authorize staff to conduct a preliminary review before an RMP advances to the TRC. In such cases, the Board must inform staff of the assignment and its scope, by Board-approved motion or policy.

For example, the Board could instruct staff to perform any necessary onsite field visits, review the RMP in the module, and provide a completed RMP Review Checklist to the TRC. If the authorized staff review finds the RMP deficient, staff may return it to the developer through the Conservation Application Suite (CAS) RMP module without formal TRC action. Staff must then report the deficiency to the TRC at their next committee meeting, or directly to the Board if no TRC meeting precedes the next Board meeting. If the staff review finds the RMP adequate, staff will present it to the TRC, which will then vote on whether to recommend it to the Board for approval.

While staff may be given authority by the Board to return an inadequate or deficient RMP submittal, staff cannot be given authority to approve an RMP or to make an approval recommendation directly to the

Board.

The Board may also authorize staff to conduct preliminary reviews of certification requests. This review includes performing the required onsite inspection, reviewing items submitted in CAS RMP module, and completing the Certification Inspection Checklist for the TRC. If the staff review finds the RMP is not ready for certification, staff may return the request through the module without formal TRC action. Staff must then report the deficiency to the TRC at their next committee meeting, or directly to the Board if no TRC meeting precedes the next Board meeting.

Actions of Technical Review Committee (TRC)

RMP regulations require the District Board to appoint a TRC to complete the necessary RMP review duties. TRCs function as other District committees: meetings must be announced, quorum must be met, and minutes must be taken. Because personal and proprietary information is protected from FOIA, the TRC must also conduct its work in a manner that protects participant information.

For both RMP approval and certification reviews, staff present their findings to the TRC, which then votes on a recommendation for action by the full Board. The recommendation must be to approve, approve with conditions, or return for revision. Where the TRC finds the RMP inadequate or deficient, the reason(s) for the return must be provided to the developer. All TRC actions must be documented in meeting minutes.

For RMP approval reviews, samples of TRC minutes can be found in Appendix A. For certification reviews, samples can be found in Appendix B.

Actions of the District Board

The TRC must report any recommendation to the full Board at the next Board meeting, or to the delegated authority if the delegated authority will act before that meeting. The full Board or delegated authority must then vote to approve, approve with conditions, or return the RMP or certification request for revisions. This action must be documented in Board meeting minutes. Where a decision is made by delegated authority, it must be reported to the Board at the next Board meeting and recorded in Board meeting minutes.

Summarizing the TRC report in Board minutes, even with Board approval of that summary, does not constitute a Board action. The relevant checklist – either the RMP Review Checklist or the RMP Certification Inspection Checklist – should be attached to the RMP in the CAS RMP module.

Samples of Board minutes for RMP approval can be found in Appendix C. Samples of Board minutes for RMP certification can be found in Appendix D.

Conditional Approvals

Both TRC recommendations and Board approvals may be conditional, requiring specific corrections or revisions before the RMP advances. When the Board conditions are met, staff may approve the RMP in the CAS RMP module without returning to the RMP to the Board for further action. Conditional approvals should be limited to corrections that are minor and can be completed quickly.

Board motions that approve RMPs with conditions must include a deadline for conditions to be met. If conditions are not met by the deadline, the RMP is considered not approved and staff will document the failure to meet the deadline in the CAS RMP module.

Delegated authority

The Board may assign delegated authority to an individual to make Board-level decisions about an RMP. TRC review cannot be delegated. Delegated authority may be used to approve, approve with conditions, return, certify, certify with conditions, or deny certification.

Pursuant to the RMP regulations, a District has 90 days to review and respond to an RMP submittal and 45 days to review and respond to a resubmittal. These timelines apply regardless of Board meeting cancellations or loss of quorum, and delegated authority may be a useful tool when meeting those deadlines would otherwise be at risk.

When the Board Chair assigns delegated authority, the assignment must define the conditions under which it applies, the scope of authority, and an expiration date. For example, the delegated authority may be limited to situations where the review deadline cannot be met within the regular Board meeting schedule.

Any action taken by delegated authority must be reported to the Board at the next Board meeting and recorded in the District Board minutes.

TRC meetings, Board meetings, and minutes

RMP regulations require the Board to establish a TRC and a quorum of committee members be present for all TRC meetings. All meetings, both TRC and Board, must be conducted and documented in accordance with FOIA. For guidance on meeting notifications, packets, agendas, and minutes, refer to the Desktop Guide for District Operations.

Minutes for both TRC and Board meetings must document members in attendance and those absent, each motion made and by whom, any discussion of the motion, and the final vote or disposition. TRC minutes must be approved by the committee at its next meeting, or by the full Board if no committee meeting is scheduled in the near future. Board minutes must be approved by the Board at the following meeting.

Following a TRC meeting, the TRC must report to the Board at the next Board meeting. This report must list each RMP brought to the TRC by RMP ID number and state the committee's recommendation for each. Attaching committee minutes to Board materials does not constitute a Board action regarding RMP review or certification - the Board must take its own recorded vote.

All motions and votes regarding RMP approval or rejection must reference the RMP by ID number. The identity of the farm operation or participant must not appear in any minutes.

FOIA Compliance

Several provisions of the Code of Virginia protect RMP-related information from public disclosure. FOIA exempts information of a proprietary nature furnished by an agricultural landowner or operator pursuant to an RMP [§ 2.2-3705.6 (25)]. The Resource Management Plans Act further specifies that any personal or proprietary information collected pursuant to the Act is exempt from FOIA, except where

specifically permitted [§ 10.1-104.7 (E)]. Additionally, § 2.2-220.3 provides that information collected pursuant to voluntary actions taken by the agricultural and silvicultural sectors shall be maintained as confidential and is also exempt from FOIA.

TRC and Board minutes must reference specific RMPs by RMP ID number only. Personal, proprietary, or confidential information may not be included in public meeting discussion or recorded in minutes. A TRC or District Board may use either or both of the following options to discuss an RMP, but the vote on any TRC recommendation or Board action must always occur in an open meeting.

1. The TRC or Board may go into closed session to discuss personal and proprietary information regarding an RMP. This approach minimizes the risk of accidental disclosure and generally produces the most streamlined process. Sample motions are found in Appendix E.
2. The TRC or Board may redact personal, proprietary, and confidential information from the discussion packet and conduct the entire meeting in an open meeting. In this case, the RMP must be referenced by ID number only.

Documentation of Board Action in the CAS RMP module

Once the Board has made a decision regarding approval or certification, staff must document the action in the CAS RMP module. Staff should also attach supporting documents to maintain a complete digital file. For approval actions, the plan review checklist, TRC meeting minutes, and approved Board minutes should be attached to the RMP. For certification actions, attach the Certification Inspection Checklist, the TRC minutes regarding certification, and the approved Board minutes regarding the certification action.

Clarification of common misconceptions:

1. Approving an RMP-1 or RMP-2 VACS practice is not the same as RMP approval or RMP certification. Approving an RMP-1 or RMP-2 only accepts the application for a VACS practice and authorizes its associated cost-share funding.
2. RMP approval is not the same as approval of an RMP certification request. Approval means the Board (or delegated authority) has determined that the submitted plan fully meets the minimum standards in 4VAC50-70-40 and the components specified in 4VAC50-70-50, and that the information provided is accurate to the District's knowledge. The plan itself contains a schedule of BMPs or schedule items to be installed or implemented; approval does not indicate that any of those practices have been carried out. Certification, by contrast, means the Board (or delegated authority) has determined that all required practices in the RMP have been installed or implemented and that no new issues have been identified that would require the plan to be revised.

Appendix A

Sample TRC meeting motions and minutes documentation for recommendation to Board regarding approval, conditional approval, or return of an RMP

1. Recommendation for Approval - The TRC meeting was called to order by ____ at (time) to review RMP (ID #s). Using the RMP checklist, the committee determined that the RMPs address all

requirements and that the committee will recommend this RMP for approval by the SWCD Directors at the (month) Board meeting. ____ made a motion that the TRC recommend this RMP to the Board for approval; motion seconded by _____. The TRC voted to recommend that the Board approve RMP (ID #s) Motion carried unanimously OR motion passed by 3/0 vote.

2. Recommendation for Conditional Approval - Staff presented the following RMP plan to the Committee and stated that the RMP contains minor deficiencies. (list deficiencies) Mr. Smith made a motion, seconded by Mr. Miller, that the TRC recommend this RMP to the Board for conditional approval. The committee voted to support this motion. Motion carried unanimously OR motion passed by 3/0 vote.
3. Return – The TRC committee meeting was called to order by ____ at (time) to review RMP (ID #s). Using the RMP checklist, the committee determined that the RMP does not fulfill all requirements. ____ made a motion that the TRC recommend to the Board that this RMP be returned to the RMP developer with documented deficiencies: motion seconded by _____. The TRC voted to reject RMP (ID #s). Motion carried unanimously OR motion passed by 3/0 vote.

Appendix B

Sample TRC meeting motions and minutes documentation for recommendation to Board regarding certification/certificate deficiency of RMP implementation

1. Recommendation for certification - The TRC committee meeting was called to order by ____ at (time) to consider RMP (ID #s) for certification. Using the RMP certification inspection form, the committee determined that all required items in the RMP have been installed or implemented and that the committee will recommend this RMP for certification by the SWCD Directors at the (month) Board meeting. ____ made a motion that the TRC recommend this RMP to the Board for certification; motion seconded by _____. The TRC voted to recommend that the Board approve RMP (ID #s). Motion carried unanimously OR motion passed by 3/0 vote.
2. Recommendation for Conditional Certification - Staff presented the following RMP plan to the Committee and stated that there are minor issues associated with certification, but recommended certification when and if the following conditions are met (list certification issues). The TRC voted to recommend that the Board conditionally certify the RMP. Motion carried unanimously OR motion passed by 3/0 vote.
3. Not Recommend - The TRC committee meeting was called to order by ____ at (time) to review RMP (ID #). Using the RMP certification inspection form, the committee determined that not all requirements of the RMP have been implemented or installed. ____ made a motion that the TRC not recommend this RMP for certification and that documented deficiencies be provided to the owner or operator; motion seconded by _____. The TRC voted to not recommend the RMP (ID #) for certification. Motion carried unanimously OR motion passed by 3/0 vote.

Appendix C

Sample Board meeting motions and minutes documentation for review of an RMP for approval, conditional approval, or return

1. Board Approval of RMP - At the (date) TRC meeting, the committee voted to recommend that the Board approve RMP-00-00-0001. ____ made a motion to approve this RMP. Seconded by _____, the Board voted to approve RMP-00-00-0001. OR Motion passed by 4/0 vote.
2. Conditional Board Approval of RMP - The Board conditionally approves RMP # for approval, pending the following conditions being met: list of specific conditions and staff verification of the full implementation of the stated conditions. These conditions must be met within (specify timeline). If conditions are not met by the deadline, the RMP is considered not approved and staff will document the failure to meet the deadline in the CAS RMP module. Motion was made by ____; seconded by ____; motion carried.
3. Board Return of RMP -
At the (date) TRC meeting, the committee voted to recommend that the Board return (RMP ID #) for correction or revision. With this recommendation, a motion was made by ____ to return (RMP ID #) and seconded by _____. The Board voted to return (RMP ID #). Motion carried unanimously, OR Motion passed by 4/0 vote.

Appendix D

Sample Board meeting motions and minutes documentation for certification/certificate deficiency

1. Board Approval of Certification Request - At the (date) TRC meeting, the committee voted to recommend that the Board certify RMP-00-00-0001. ____ moved to certify this RMP. Seconded by _____, the Board voted to certify RMP-00-00-0001. Motion carried unanimously. OR Motion passed by 4/0 vote.
2. Conditional Approval of Certification Request - The TRC recommended conditional certification of RMP____, pending the following certification conditions being met (list specific conditions). A motion was made by Mr. Miller to certify RMP #00-00-0000, upon staff verification that these conditions have been met. These conditions must be met within (specify timeline). If conditions are not met by the deadline, the RMP is considered not certified and staff will document the failure to meet the deadline in the CAS RMP module. Motion seconded by Mr. Smith. Motion passed by 4/0 vote.
3. Rejection of Certification Request –
At the (date) TRC meeting, the committee voted to recommend that the Board deny the certification request for (RMP ID #). ____ made a motion to deny the certification request for (RMP ID #) and seconded by _____. Motion carried unanimously, OR Motion passed by 4/0 vote.

Appendix E
Closed Meeting

_____ Soil and Water Conservation District
District Director's Meeting
Motion to Enter Closed Session
[Date]

The District Directors for the _____ Soil and Water Conservation District hereby resolve to discuss the following subject matter in closed session; discussion and consultation regarding review of an RMP for approval or certification. This subject matter is exempt from open meeting requirements under Va. Code § 2.2-3711(A)(1) & (A)(8).

ADOPTED in OPEN MEETING by a vote of ____ Ayes to ____ Nays, with ____ Abstentions.

CERTIFIED COPY:

Chair

Date

EXIT POLL

TO THE CLERK OR SECRETARY: Poll each member of the Public Body by name and record each member's answer in the minutes "yes" or "no" or "abstain"):

To the best of your knowledge, did the Board restrict its hearing, discussion, and consideration in closed session to: (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the chapter and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened?

	Aye	Nay	Abstain	Absent
_____ Chair	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____ Vice-Chair	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____ Treasurer	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____ Secretary	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____