



## **Greene County Conservation District**

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### **GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

#### **REGULAR MEETING**

#### **MINUTES**

**APRIL 25, 2017**

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

In the absence of Chairman Bradley Eisiminger and Vice Chairman Archie Trader, the board voted to appoint Jim Cowell as the pro tem. Mr. Cowell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at the Greene County Conservation District Conference Room, 22 West High St., Waynesburg, PA. Those in attendance were as follows:

#### **Greene County Conservation District Directors and Associate Directors**

Jim Cowell-Secretary; Tom Headlee, Treasurer; Greg Hopkins-Director; Bill Wentzel-Director-Environmental Program Associate; Jeff Rode-Associate Director; Dave Shipman-Associate Director; and Gay Thistle-Associate Director.

#### **Guests and Cooperating Agencies**

Michal Roup-FSA; Phil Evans-NRCS

#### **Staff**

Lisa Snider-District Manager; Lindsay Kozlowski-Resource Specialist; Karlie Wright-Ag Technician; April Brummage-Resource Specialist; Jared Zinn-Watershed Specialist; and Becky Salosky-Fiscal Officer.

Ms. Kozlowski, Ms. Brummage, Mr. Basinger and Mr. Zinn attended a portion of the meeting.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*A motion was made by Tom Headlee to approve the minutes of the March 21st, 2017 meeting. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)*

#### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

*A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to approve the treasurer's report. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)*

#### **CORRESPONDENCE AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

##### **State Ethics Forms for Director Completion by April 30, 2017**

The State Ethics Forms are to be completed by all GCCD directors.

##### **Greene County Envirothon – May 3, 2017 – Hunting Hills**

This year's competition will begin, at a new location, at approximately 9:15 a.m. Testing will run through the morning, with lunch expected to be served around 12:30 p.m. Following lunch, awards will be presented and photos will be taken.

### **Tree Plantings at Waynesburg Borough Parks**

As noted by Bill Wentzel, at the last GCCD meeting on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017, a grant was obtained by Waynesburg Borough to plant several trees in the parks near Waynesburg University. With the assistance of Margaret Belle Miller Middle School students, the plantings will be done on Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at approximately 12:30 p.m. GCCD directors are welcome to attend the event.

### **West Greene Future Farmers of America (FFA) Chapter**

The Chapter's annual parent member banquet will be held on May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at 6:30 p.m. at the high school cafeteria. Anyone interested in attending must RSVP by April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Mr. Cowell noted that both the Waynesburg FFA and West Greene FFA will be judging cattle at his farm on April 28, 2017.

### **Discussion of Staff Reports**

#### **STAFF REPORTS**

**Lindsay Kozlowski** – Final plans are being made for this year's Envirothon, scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The t-shirts, completed by Mark IV, turned out very well. Yesterday, Ms. Snider and she visited Hunting Hills to make final plans for the event.

**Zack Basinger** – He will be attending training for pesticide application for the West Nile Virus (WNV) Program in May. Michaela Hildreth, one of the interns who will be working this summer in the WNV program, will begin work on May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017. He may begin mosquito trapping next week before her arrival. Regarding the 102/105 program, plans have been coming in at a steady rate, pre-construction meetings have been held, and inspections have been made.

**Bill Wentzel** – Erosion problems have been occurring on a timber harvest site in the New Freeport area. A dispute between the logger and the landowner has made it difficult to correct those problems and PA DEP is now involved.

**April Brummage** – A pasture walk on the Glenn Moyer Farm will be held following the next Project Grass Meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Anyone interested in attending, should contact the office. Ms. Wright and she will be assisting the Greene County Cooperative Extension office with a Child Safety Day on May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Possible workshops being considered include a No-Till Drill/Lime Spreader demonstration and a manure management workshop, a series on spring developments, and a grazing/streambank fencing workshop. There has been a steady demand for the rental of the no-till drill.

**Jared Zinn** – Two individuals have registered to attend rain barrel workshops that will be held later this year. An additional person is participating in the CATFish program. The Pike Run Walking Tour, which was discussed at our last GCCD meeting, has been scheduled to be held on June 22, 2017.

**Lisa Snider** – The Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) training for the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program, originally scheduled to be held in March, has been rescheduled and will be held May 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24, 2017. Approximately 60 people are registered to attend. The program's administrative manual has been revised and may allow another road surface material (other than Driving Surface Aggregate) to be used. This should be beneficial to Greene County, since it is difficult to obtain a certified mix in this area. An official from the center is scheduled to visit with her tomorrow for further discussion. She and other staff members have been meeting with township supervisors to discuss GCCD programs. Last week, she attended a meeting to discuss Ryerson Station State Park. The swimming pool is nearly beyond repair and most likely will be replaced next year. Other improvements are also planned at the campgrounds, etc.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Burwell Cemetery – Bald Hill Church Road**

Mr. Zinn gave the following update on this matter. Bill Kcenich, who works with restoration projects for PA DEP, was working on this project, however; excessive flooding in north central Pennsylvania has changed his schedule and he can only work on this project as time allows.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Request for Assistance** – There were no requests for assistance to bring before the board.

### **Ag Enhancement Program**

At the last GCCD meeting held on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017, a committee comprising of Mr. Jim Cowell and Mr. Mike Belding was appointed to discuss this matter and assist in drafting program guidelines. On April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2017, a committee meeting was held and the program was discussed. Below are some of the items that were discussed.

- This program will be separate from GCCD's current Mini Grant Program. The Mini Grant Program will be for non-agricultural related projects.
- The program will be funded, utilizing Unconventional Gas Well Funds received through the Pennsylvania Utility Commission (UGWF/PUC) and through GCCD's General Fund. It is estimated that up to \$58,000 of general funds may be needed.
- Landowners with animals, including active farmers, farmers who rent property and new farmers will be eligible to apply.
- The application period will be from June 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. The applications will be presented to the GCCD board for consideration at the September meeting.
- There will be no restrictions on the number of applications submitted as long as the practices are viable.
- Conservation plans will not be required for smaller practices such as cost sharing for lime and fertilizer. A plan will be required for larger projects (fencing, watering systems, grazing plans). A cooperator farm map and a manure management plan will be required.
- The standards and specifications of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will be followed for streambank fencing. Other fencing practices will be at the judgement of GCCD.
- In the beginning, the cost share rates, categories, ranking system, etc. of West Virginia's conservation districts will be followed.
- Numeric values for landowners with conservation plans, preserved farms in the Farmland Preservation Program, etc. will be determined.
- Soil testing will be required and will be completed by GCCD staff. It will be the landowner's responsibility to obtain the soil test kit.
- At this time, winter feeding and invasives will not be cost shared through the program.
- Agricultural lime suppliers will be contacted regarding lime certification.

The following decisions need to be made.

- Will cost sharing be allowed for all farm fields, both cropland and pastureland?
- Will cost sharing be allowed for frost seeding practices, pasture management practices, special projects?

Mr. Cowell noted that GCCD hopes to work with our cooperating agencies (NRCS, FSA) to provide a program to assist the agricultural community. Ms. Snider noted that this program, as well as NRCS and FSA programs, can be promoted at the upcoming workshops. Ms. Thistle noted that there were few forestry practices included. Ms. Snider noted that special projects could be forestry practices.

Mr. Cowell noted that he feels that a conservation plan should be required and that cost sharing for lime and fertilizer on deer food plots should not be made. It was noted that since animals are required to apply for cost sharing of lime and fertilizer, this should not be an issue. Another committee meeting will be scheduled soon to finalize the guidelines to present to the County Solicitor and to the GCCD board. Hopefully, then the guidelines can be in place and the program can be promoted at this year's fairs.

Michal Roup was invited to attend the next meeting, which will be advertised in accordance with the Sunshine Law. Since she only has one staff member, it can be difficult to leave the office, but she will try to attend.

#### **William Cree, Jr. – Conservation Plan**

The Cree conservation plan was presented for review and approval. His existing plan was updated to include another parcel that he has applied for a conservation easement under the Farmland Preservation Program.

***Following discussion, a motion was made by Bill Wentzel to approve the William Cree, Jr. conservation plan as presented. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)***

#### **Coloring & Poster Contests**

Following today's meeting, the board was asked to vote on the coloring and poster contest entries. This year's prizes for the poster contest will be as follows: 1<sup>st</sup> place - \$100, 2<sup>nd</sup> place - \$75, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place - \$50. Bicycles and helmets will be awarded to the top three entries in the coloring contest.

***Following a brief discussion, a motion was made by Greg Hopkins to allow the GCCD staff to take care of the prizes for the coloring and poster contests. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)***

#### **Conservation Leadership School**

Each year, GCCD sponsors one or more students to attend the Conservation Leadership School held at State College, PA. To date, two essays have been received from students interested in attending this year. The board delayed making a decision on this matter until after next week's Greene County Envirothon.

#### **Gestation Wheels**

Some time ago, Chairman Eisiminger discussed with Ms. Snider, the possibility of printing gestational calendars for cattle reproduction. After doing some research, she found that a wheel could be made to include several farm animals (cows, goats, sheep, swine). The following prices were obtained from Shelly Brown of Direct Results.

- \$3.96 - 4-inch wheel with one color
- \$4.56 - 4-inch wheel with two colors
- \$4.15 - 5-inch wheel with one color
- \$4.85 - 5-inch wheel with two colors

All prices are per item and is based on printing 250 copies. There will be an additional charge of \$50 for the setup fee. The wheels would include GCCD's contact information and could be distributed at agricultural events.

***Following discussion, a motion was made by Greg Hopkins to approve the maximum expenditure of \$1,500.00 to purchase 250 of the 5- inch gestational wheels. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)***

### **Greene County Farm Bureau Donations for the Kansas Wildfire**

Mr. Hopkins noted that the Greene County Farm Bureau is accepting donations of fence posts, hay, etc. to help the farmers in the Kansas area who have been affected by the wild fires. Mr. Cowell noted that their goal is raise approximately \$8,000.00 to pay to transport a tractor trailer full of fence posts. Any additional donations would be used to purchase replacement supplements for orphaned calves. Hay donations have been received, but transporting them has been a problem. Plans are to display a banner at this year's Greene County Fair to include all of the donor's names.

Mr. Hopkins asked if GCCD could donate to this cause. Ms. Snider will check with the State Conservation Commission (SCC) to see if GCCD can make a donation.

### **Soil and Water Stewardship Week**

The Greene County Commissioners, at their meeting on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, proclaimed the week of April 23<sup>rd</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>, 2017 as Soil and Water Stewardship Week.

### **REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS**

**Phil Evan** – The deadline for the first round of funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding is May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. A surplus of funding may be available for additional projects. At the March 21, 2017 GCCD meeting, Chuck Shrump distributed, for our review, a copy of the Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners Checklist that is part of the Cooperating Working Agreement between NRCS and GCCD. The signatures of all GCCD directors are required to acknowledge our compliance with the civil rights requirements.

**Michal Roup** – At one point in time she was the only employee covering the Greene and Washington County office, which restricted her from attending many meetings. In addition to herself, her office employees one permanent employee and one temporary employee, who will be with them until the end of June. Some of the duties of FSA include most programs included in the U.S. Farm Bill. The first step in participating in any federal agricultural programs, is to visit their office to register the farm and receive a farm and tract number. Currently, they are working update their database. There is an ongoing application period for the Conservation Reserve Program Grasslands. The program pays a flat fee of \$15 an acre for hay land or pastureland. In Washington County, two applications, out of a total of seven made it through the ranking process. She offered her assistance to GCCD.

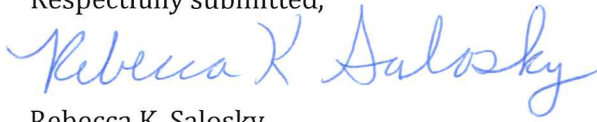
**EXECUTIVE SESSION**--There was no need for an Executive Session.

**The Next Regular Meeting will be July 18th, 2017 at 10:00 a.m.**

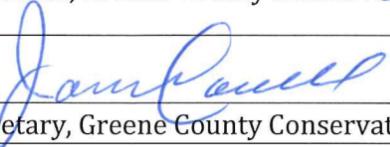
### **ADJOURNMENT**

***A motion was made by Jim Cowell to adjourn the meeting at 10:45 a.m. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)***

Respectfully submitted,



Rebecca K. Salosky  
Fiscal Officer

| <u>MEETING MINUTES CERTIFICATION</u>   |
|--|
| We, the undersigned, agree that the minutes taken above were approved in their entirety by the Greene County Conservation District on <u>June 20</u> , 2017. |
| <br>Chairman, Greene County Conservation District                           |
| <br>Secretary, Greene County Conservation District                          |