Greene County Conservation District
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GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
February 19, 2019

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Chairman Cowell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at Greene County Conservation District Conference Room, 22 West High St., Waynesburg, PA.

Mr. Mike Belding led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those in attendance were as follows:

GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS AND ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Jim Cowell-Chairman; Commissioner Trader-Vice Chairman; Tom Headlee-Treasurer; Mike Belding-Secretary; Bill Wentzel-Public Director; Dave Shipman-Farmer Director. Associate Directors-Jerry Day; Greg Hopkins; Gay Thistle; Joel Folman; Dominick Barbetta; Becky Salosky; and Spencer Johnson.

STAFF

Lisa Snider-District Manager; Lindsay Kozlowski-Assistant Manager/Environmental Program Specialist; Zack Basinger-Environmental Program Specialist; Ben Schweiger-Conservation Technician; Sarah Hlatky-Conservation Technician; and April Morris-Fiscal Officer.

OATH OF OFFICE

Commissioner Trader administered the Oath of Office to Dave Shipman.
Dave Shipman-Farmer Director, term expires December 31, 2020, Mr. Shipman will finish the term of Bradley Eisiminger.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Tom Headlee to approve the January 15, 2019 minutes. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)

TREASURER'S REPORT

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to approve the treasurer's report. Mike Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)

CORRESPONDENCE AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Pennsylvania Envirothon Volunteer Request

Ms. Snider noted the Pennsylvania Envirothon is looking for volunteers for this year's event in Johnstown, PA.

2019 Appalachian Grazing Conference

Ms. Snider reminded all board, associate board and district staff of the upcoming conference in March 2019. Lisa stated anyone interested in attending the conference, to inform the conservation office, and payment will be submitted for the event on their behalf.

Mr. Cowell stated he would like to attend the conference.

PACD State Budget Information

Ms. Snider stated information was provided in the packet regarding the state budget, more detailed information is available. The state is trying to remove Conservation District Fund Allocation Program (CDFAP) line items, which covers administrative cost, salaries and benefits for manager, first technician and partial Agriculture Conservation Technician (ACT) funding. This will move those items to the Growing Greener Grant Fund and zero out a line item which could cause confusion when a new governor is brought into office and the GG fund was intended for environmental projects, not staffing needs. PA Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) staff are informing the state legislator of the importance of this line item on the state budget.

FFA County Speaking Contest

Ms. Snider noted she received information from Karlie Wright, West Greene FFA Advisor, regarding the FFA County Speaking Contest at West Greene High School on March 13, 2019. Ms. Wright is looking for volunteers to judge job interview and conservation speaking. Anyone interested in participating may contact Ms. Wright at 724-499-5191 x 2281.

STAFF REPORTS

Written reports were included in the meeting packets.

Lindsay Kozlowski – Ms. Kozlowski is currently working on the 2019 Envirothon. Lindsay received a donation from Civil and Environmental Consultants (CEC) of $1,000.00. CEC and Dominion Energy have offered their staff biologist services to help with the Envirothon. Lindsay noted next month the board will judge the t-shirt contest for the 2019 Envirothon logo. Deadline for the t-shirt contest is March 1, 2019 and donation deadline for the Envirothon is March 15, 2019.

Mr. Johnson added he would contact CNX for a possible donation towards the Envirothon.

Ms. Thistle stated the theme for the 2019 Envirothon is Agriculture, Technology, and Sustainability.

Zack Basinger – Mr. Basinger has received smaller sets of plans this year. Zack is working with Ben and Sara on the procedures for plans that are received in the conservation office. Mr. Basinger is

including Ben and Sara on trips out in the field for a hands-on learning experience. Zack also stated West Nile Virus will have weekly tick surveys this year.

Ben Schweiger – Mr. Schweiger finished with the Milesky Farm project and the meeting is February 21, 2019 for state boards approval. Ben mentioned Sara and himself have trainings for E&S program near Harrisburg. Mr. Schweiger wants to help Zack and Lindsay more with E&S projects while continuing with the agricultural aspects of his job.

Sara Hlatky - Ms. Hlatky finished and submitted the Nutrient Management quarterly report on January 11, 2019. Sara stated Ben and herself signed up for upcoming trainings for E&S program. Sara is working with Zack and Lindsay to gain more knowledge of E&S projects. Ms. Hlatky also attends farm visits with Ben to address concerns on projects.

Jared Zinn – Mr. Zinn attended the Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandon Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR) meeting in February 2019. Jared stated there are budgetary issues with the governor and the committee is recommending that conservation districts engage in these issues.

Mr. Zinn has been in contact with several school districts in the area regarding presentations for the Envirothon.

Lisa Snider – Ms. Snider has several Dirt and Gravel Road projects (DGRP) out to bid through townships. Multiple projects have been awarded: Jackson Township has two projects with three crossings. Lisa received notice Jackson Township was starting today on these projects. Monongahela township-Robena Road project, Lisa met with the township and engineer, who would like to begin April 2019. Ms. Snider stated she has a large sum of money she needs to spend by the end of June 2019. Lisa noted she generally does not submit fifty percent payments up front to townships for projects, but would like to meet with townships she has listed to inquire about completion dates. Ms. Snider does not want to lose upcoming funds by not spending current funds. Once projects are completed, she can then send final payments. Some townships have had projects since 2015 that have not been completed due to unforeseen circumstances.

Mr. Cowell asked about Greene Township and whether they inquired about funding for a road that was washed out. Ms. Snider stated she does not believe that specific road qualifies as a Dirt and Gravel Road or a Low Volume Road so funding would not be available for that project.

Ms. Snider stated Wayne Township's contract was returned due to rock found under the project they are unable to remove. Working to remove the rock is not included in the Dirt and Gravel Road spectrum of qualified funded items.

OLD BUSINESS

Burwell Cemetery - Bald Hill Church Road – no update

Mr. Shipman questioned how the Burwell Cemetery could be updated. Ms. Snider stated that obtaining permits from all parties involved and a culvert are current issues standing in the way of completion for this project.

Mr. Hopkins noted a call with Mr. Rick Kalsey (realtor) regarding East Franklin School being for sale. Mr. Hopkins opened a discussion about possibly purchasing this building and land to use for business purposes. Greg stated with a collaborative effort between Conservation District, the extension office, Farm Bureau and Department of Preservation, it may be suited for the needs of these departments. The building has an agricultural background and about 10 acres available. Mr. Hopkins has the plans with a layout of the area. The school district owns the property and it is currently being rented. The cost is $554,000.00 with the only downfall being asbestos. The asbestos would be a problem if the building would be disposed of for any reason. Greg stated it would take some effort to get all items together. Mr. Hopkins noted other agencies would need involved due to the size and cost so the Conservation District is not taking this project on alone.

Mr. Cowell mentioned putting a committee together to look into attaining this building. Mr. Cowell noted Conservation District may run into a problem with Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) taking over permits and that portion of funding no longer being available. Jim stated working with the county on obtaining this may be an option. Mr. Cowell believes this may be a good idea as a working facility for the Conservation District. The current Conservation Office is under the county realm as far as clearing sidewalks and parking lots. Mr. Cowell does not want to sever ties with the county if a new building is purchased for the Conservation District to move to. Jim asked Commissioner Trader to mention this possibility to Commissioner Zimmerman and Commissioner Coder.

Mr. Belding included that classes could be held there that are pertinent to the Conservation District.

Land Committee: Greg Hopkins, Mike Belding, Gay Thistle, Spencer Johnson, and Lisa Snider, along with help from the county.

NEW BUSINESS

Request for Assistance

There were no requests for assistance to bring before the board.

PACD Staff Conference

Ms. Snider requested to send all available staff to this conference. Ms. Snider wanted to inform the board that conservation staff will be out of office February 26-28, 2019. Lisa will be in the office during that time frame, except for attending a meeting on February 28.

Commissioner Trader mentioned that a staff member from the commissioner's office may be able to answer phones in office in case of emergency.

A motion was made by Bill Wentzel to send conservation staff to PACD Staff Conference February 26-28, 2019. Commissioner Trader seconded. (Motion Passed)

Marketing Material Estimates
Ms. Snider included cost estimates from Direct Results and Communications Development Company, LLC to update conservation logo on various items. Items may include: business cards for staff, marketing materials and annual reports. Ms. Snider spoke with Toby Fancher from Communications Development Company, LLC regarding the setup of the annual report. The price is more expensive than Direct Results costs, but after the initial setup the fee will decrease. Lisa intends to use the best pricing from either company for the item she is purchasing. Ms. Snider added she would like to obtain patches with the new conservation logo to add to clothing items for staff and board members, as needed.

2019 Committee Appointments
The 2018 committee list and outline were included in the meeting packet.

Ms. Snider stated she had not removed any names from committees and mentioned that no more than three directors should be on a single committee to avoid conflict. Lisa passed the committee list around the room for members to sign up or decline available positions.

Mr. Cowell noted he would like individuals to volunteer for a committee they are interested in so he does not have to appoint members.

Mr. Hopkins spoke about the agriculture committee and an incentive program Middletown Tractor is involved with in the Fairmont area. The program, a West Virginia state wide effort, gives an individual use of a tractor for either one year or up to 200 hours of use. At the end of the usage period the individual may choose to purchase the tractor or return to Middletown Tractor. Mr. Hopkins suggested when the award for cooperator of the year, with the aerial photo and plaque, is given to possibly have an item such as a lawn tractor, chain saw or another farming item. Greg stated that the Conservation District could partner with a local business to donate the item, for use, by the winner that year.

Mr. Cowell noted the agriculture committee may look into adding this item as part of the award.

Dirt and Gravel Road Contract Updates
Ms. Snider stated she had previously updated the board with information on the contract with Wayne Township Wrights Run Road. The township has returned the contract due to finding rock under the area they were to begin work. Removing rock is not an item covered by the contract and Wayne Township will not participate in the program.

Watershed Stewardship Week
Ms. Snider asked for ideas how to promote the Conservation District. The conservation office currently submits information at the commissioners meeting and issues press releases. Ms. Snider noted a billboard may be of use as a promotion item. Mr. Belding added the cost is usually between $600-$800 for a month rental and will decrease the longer you advertise.

Watershed Stewardship Week happens in April 2019. Ms. Snider would like promotion suggestions at the next monthly meeting.

Mr. Cowell inquired if advertisements are on the radio. Ms. Snider stated Mr. Schweiger will be recording a commercial regarding GRACE with WANB during the same time period as the Watershed Stewardship Week. Lisa also noted the poster contest happens the same week.

State Conservation Commission/District Manager State Committee

Ms. Snider was invited to sit on the State Conservation Commission/District Manager State Committee. Due to a disconnect between the Conservation Districts, State Committee and the State Commission. A committee of 12 districts, out of 66 within Pennsylvania, has been created. The committee will help with decision making regarding conservation issues, not including budget items. The 12 districts have conference calls to discuss any issues that may arise through-out the state conservation districts. Ms. Snider noted a decrease in the 105 permitting and how this decrease could negatively affect the conservation office. This is one of many items that will be discussed among the districts involved in this committee.

A motion was made by Commissioner Trader to approve Ms. Snider appointment to the committee. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)

Ms. Snider added Congressional briefings being held March 18-22 for Board Members and Managers regarding Surface Mine Control Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA). The information was distributed by Western Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR). The meeting will bring board members and managers up to date on current situations. Ms. Snider will attend a meeting on February 28, 2019 to find out more information on funding. Greene County has AMD sites and impacted streams that could benefit from funds available by this program.

Summer Interns

Ms. Snider stated at the Greene County staff meeting Rebecca Harris, Human Resource Director, is opening applications for summer interns. Ms. Snider will advertise for two interns for West Nile Virus project and would like to include an intern on Dirt and Gravel Roads. Ms. Snider believes the intern can check current projects, take photos, update status and check on questions. Lisa would like a new survey done of current Dirt & Gravel Roads versus paved roads. A similar survey was completed back in 2006-2007. Due to Oil and Gas companies entering the county there are more Low Volume roads than what is listed on the GIS system and will need updated. Once GIS is updated Conservation District should receive more funding for Low Volume roads.

A motion was made by Mike Belding to employee three interns at the Conservation District. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

Vehicle Purchase/Sale

Ms. Snider noted at the Greene County staff meeting Lisa was asked about the county purchasing the current conservation truck. One of the vehicles used by the district must be a truck with a cap for West Nile Virus projects due to the chemicals. Ms. Snider stated she

would like to make this exchange with the county and purchase a new truck for the district along with a small car to use on smaller projects.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT OUTREACH

Ms. Snider stated Toby from Communications Development Company, LLC. Is working on the annual report.

Ms. Snider noted Mr. Schweiger is working on advertisements with WANB for Agriculture, E&S and Manure Management Workshops along with GRACE Program. Lisa would like the GRACE Program advertised now through July to get the word out. The advertisements are on the radio and on Facebook.

REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES

No one in attendance from cooperating agencies.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Cowell requested an executive session to discuss personnel matters.

A motion was made by Bill Wentzel to enter an executive session to discuss personnel matters. Mike Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)

A motion was made by Mike Belding to end the executive session and reconvene the meeting. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

The next meeting will be held on March 19th, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Tom Headlee to adjourn the meeting at 10:54 a.m. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)

Respectfully submitted,

April Morris

April Morris
Fiscal Officer

MEETING MINUTES CERTIFICATION
We, the undersigned, agree that the minutes taken above were approved in their entirety by the Greene County Conservation District on March 19, 2019.
James A Cowell
Chairman, Greene County Conservation District
Michael A Belding
Secretary, Greene County Conservation District