



## **Greene County Conservation District**

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### **GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

**April 16, 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.

Commissioner Trader 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; Mike Belding-Secretary; Bill Wentzel-Public Director; Dave Shipman-Farmer Director. Associate Directors-Jerry Day; Greg Hopkins; Joel Folman; and Becky Salosky.

#### **STAFF**

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

#### **GUEST AND COOPERATING AGENCIES**

Michal Roup-Farm Service Agency (FSA); Phil Evans-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Mike Hamilton-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS); Robbie Matesic-Economic Development Director arrived at 10:10 a.m. with Bob Junk- Director of Marketing and Sales/Acting General Manager, Republic Food Enterprise and Karen Kuhns-Area Specialist, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*A motion was made by Mike Belding to approve the March 19, 2019 minutes. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)*

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

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

### **CORRESPONDENCE AND UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **Greene County Envirothon – May 9, 2019**

Ms. Snider noted the Envirothon is on May 9. The event begins at 9:00 a.m. and lunch is at 12:00 p.m. Lisa stated that shirt sizes need turned in to Ms. Kozlowski today to place the order.

#### **South West Project Grass Field Day and Pasture Walk – May 17, 2019 10:00 a.m.**

Ms. Snider received an email regarding the event. Lisa stated it is \$15 per person. Fayette County Conservation is sponsoring the event along with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Conservation Districts in S.W. PA and PA Association of Conservation Districts (PACD). The event is being held at Woah Nellie Dairy in Acme, PA.

### **STAFF REPORTS**

Written reports were included in the meeting packets.

**Lindsay Kozlowski** – Ms. Kozlowski added the total Envirothon sponsorships, including grants from PA Envirothon and DCNR, brings the amount to \$9,225.00. Most companies that donated this year plan to continue supporting the event.

Ms. Kozlowski noted the coloring and poster contest entries are to be voted on at the end of the meeting. Board and Associates are to vote. Lindsay stated the teachers would like to receive the theme for the poster contest earlier so they can incorporate it into their teaching plan.

**Zack Basinger** – Mr. Basinger received 23 plans in March. Mr. Basinger, along with Sara Hlatky and Ben Schweiger will be meeting with EQT on Dark Hollow Road to observe the installation of an open cut pipeline stream crossing. Zack added West Nile Virus (WNV) kick off is April 25, 2019 and tick surveying will begin in May 2019.

**Ben Schweiger** – Mr. Schweiger and Ms. Hlatky have attended several trainings including: AG Boot camp, E&S 102/105, and Dirt and Gravel Roads. Ben also attended the Department of Agriculture Event that discussed proposed funding for expansion of meat processing in the PA Farm Bill.

**Sara Hlatky** - Ms. Hlatky noted in addition to the above trainings, she also attended Nutrient Management trainings. Sara has been participating in more field visits this past month.

**Jared Zinn** – Mr. Zinn had nothing further to add and will discuss the Growing Greener Grant later in the meeting.

**Lisa Snider** – Ms. Snider submitted her quarterly reports for Dirt and Gravel Roads and Low Volume Roads Programs. Lisa noted currently \$204,006.88 remains of the previous 5-year agreement for the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program, these funds are to be spent by June 30th. With the projects that are moving forward Lisa will have no issue spending these funds in time so the 2019 allocation is not decreased. Ms. Snider included, on the report, updates on where each project is in regards to progress on work. To date, Lisa currently has \$111,486.31 not committed to projects, this does not include the 2019 allocation the district should receive in July.

The Low Volume Road program account has \$20,054.17 remaining of the previous 5-year agreement that is to be spent by June 30<sup>th</sup>. No funds are available to contract, as of now for the program, due to the LVR program being over contracted by \$17,832.19, additional funds are expected this July.

Ms. Snider has been meeting with qualified townships to review projects that are eligible for the 2019 application submission. Currently, the district is accepting 2019 applications for both Low Volume and traditional Dirt and Gravel Road grants. Ms. Snider and Ms. Kozlowski would like to arrange a meeting with municipalities that are eligible to apply for funding. The meeting will review the details of applying for a grant so that a more complete application can be received which may diminish the need for project amendments.

Ms. Snider spoke with Attorney Dennis Makel regarding legal issues in Wayne Township that are the result of a landowner grading and cutting slopes below their township road causing the road to slide. The project was completed without permits that should have been obtained by the landowner from the district. After Lisa and Dennis discussed permitting issues, they came to the conclusion it may be a good idea to have a round table with solicitors, code enforcement officers and possibly supervisors to discuss types of permits that are required from our department regardless of zoning and/or township permitting requirements. It was also suggested to invite Lou Lewis, Chief Assessor to discuss how building and zoning permits are utilized by the county for townships benefits.

Ms. Snider noted that the annual report was completed and mailed. Anyone that did not receive the report please give Lisa their mailing address so it is added to the mailing list.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Funding for Expansion of Meat Processing in the PA Farm Bill and Informational Session--Republic Food Enterprise Center**

Robbie Matesic, Economic Development Director, introduced Bob Junk, Director of Marketing and Sales/Acting General Manager of Republic Food Enterprise, and Karen Kuhns, Area Specialist, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development. Ms. Matesic stated Governor Wolf and Secretary Redding approved additional funding for farmers to receive and help increase profits in the South West Region of PA.

Mr. Junk stated Republic Food Enterprise is working on outreach programs to help local farmers understand available programs. Republic Food Enterprise is looking for vegetable farmers on a large scale to produce vegetables that will be available during the winter months. Republic Food Enterprise responds to the economic, environmental and nutritional needs of the Appalachian Region by stimulating agricultural production, producing value-added products, distributing local produce and developing retail outlets with the region.

The enterprise buys from local farmers which makes fresh produce available to underserved populations and provide extensive support to local entrepreneurs and stimulate the economy by creating jobs and markets for agricultural production and sustainability. Currently, the enterprise is working with goat and sheep producers and local vegetable producers.

Ms. Kuhns works with the Value-Added Producer Grant Program which is placed under the Farmer Market and Local Food Program on the 2018 Farm Bill. The program helps farmers increase customer base and become more profitable by creating new marketing opportunities by transforming their agricultural commodities into value-added agricultural products. The grant is a 50/50 match and workshops are in place to help farmers write grants. The grant offers planning and working capital grants for producers.

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

Ms. Snider along with Mr. Basinger will be meeting with Bill Kcenich, PADEP, to review the site and figure out exactly what work needs completed to have this site restored and stabilized. Ms. Snider has been reaching out to local companies and agencies to assist with the work.

### **Truck Sale**

Ms. Snider stated that the Redevelopment Authority has purchased a vehicle and are no longer interested in our district truck. It was explained to the board that all work concerning vehicle purchases has been put on hold until the board decides the direction to take.

Commissioner Trader stated there is a leasing program available through the county for county offices and instead of buying a vehicle the board should be given more information about the lease program and also look into possibly renting the vehicles needed for short term use. Ms. Snider will contact Jeff Marshall and Jeff Novak to obtain information to make a more informed decision concerning obtaining additional vehicles.

#### **Board Member Letter**

Mr. Belding stated a letter should be sent to the commissioners regarding the absenteeism of board members. The board agrees it's not fair to hold a member spot for someone who does not participate when there are associate board members who attend every meeting.

***A motion was made by Mike Belding to draft a letter regarding the absenteeism of board members with attendance sheets to present to the commissioners. Commissioner Trader seconded. (Motion Passed)***

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **Request for Assistance - Deborah Springer-Jefferson Township 50 acres**

Mr. Schweiger visited with Ms. Springer who has a farm that is currently utilized for hay production. Ms. Springer would like to increase the size of the hay field that currently exists and currently donates the hay to Save A Horse Farm, a horse rescue farm.

***A motion was made by Mike Belding to approve assistance for Deborah Springer. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)***

##### **2019 Coloring Contest and Poster Contest**

Ms. Snider noted everyone in attendance should vote for their top three favorite coloring contest pictures and one poster contest picture. The winner will be announced the week of May 5, 2019, Conservation District Week.

##### **UGWF Special Project Agreement Amendment (GRACE)**

Ms. Snider explained that while reviewing the expenditures for the Unconventional Gas Well Funds and UGWF CDFAP funds spent to date there was a need to reclassify some expenses that would qualify for these funds. Currently, the district has approximately \$240,000.00 available to cover costs for staffing, administration and other district expenses. This total includes Conservation District Fund Allocation Program (CDFAP) and Agriculture Conservation Technician (ACT) allocations along with UGWF well count funds. Due to staffing changes, funding has become available to utilize for additional district expenses. Ms. Snider requested part of this funding pay for the previously purchased lime spreader of \$16,000.00 and an additional \$4,000.00 towards extra practices for the GRACE Special Project Agreement total of \$20,000.00.

***A motion was made by Commissioner Trader to approve amendment of the UGWF Special Project Agreement to allow the addition of the lime spreader purchase and additional funding for practices of the GRACE program. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)***

**Growing Greener Grant**

Mr. Zinn stated the grant is in its second year and began with five landowners. Currently, two of those landowners are unable to continue with the program. The other three landowners still participating, one is to begin construction in May 2019 and the other two are obtaining permits. Mr. Zinn is finding more participants for the program.

**Contract for 4.5 Ton Lime Spreader**

Mr. Cowell worked with Ms. Hlatky on updating the contract for the new 4.5-ton lime spreader. A few changes from the previous contract are as follows: 75 HP requirement on tractor and a notice to idle down before engaging PTO.

***A motion was made by Mike Belding to approve recommended changes to contract. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)***

**Washington Township Park Mini-Grant**

Ms. Snider along with Ms. Kozlowski visited Washington Township Park regarding issues with the stream encroaching on both softball fields and their walking trail. Lisa and Lindsay made suggestions how to help fix the current issues. Mr. Walter Stout completed a mini-grant application for the purchase of stone in the amount of \$4,987.50 to help with creek stabilization for a 220-foot area.

Ms. Snider noted if approved this would be the second mini-grant this year and the Conservation District approves five a year.

***A motion was made by Bill Wentzel to approve Mini-Grant for Washington Township Park. Mike Belding seconded. Commissioner Trader and Dave Shipman abstain from voting due to residing in township. (Motion Passed)***

**CONSERVATION DISTRICT OUTREACH**

Nothing additional to add.

**REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES**

Michal Roup of Farm Service Agency (FSA) currently waiting for Farm Bill to pass. Changes to Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) have put a hold on accepting new enrollments, however, reenrollments are still open. Michal stated there is a new dairy program being implemented.

Phil Evans of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) stated the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has been funded and approvals need made by April 30, 2019. Mr. Evans is attending the Wetland Reserve Enhancement program training.

Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) applications are being accepted by May 10, 2019. The CSP program will be revamped as of 2020. Mr. Evans attended a field visit with Mike Pierce. CSP is money used to help maintain the projects already completed with the EQIP program. Phil noted the 2017 AG census was released recently.

Mr. Cowell noted he was asked to submit his name for Director of State Conservation Commission.

Ms. Kozlowski added that Mr. Christopher Bence, Wildlife Conservation Officer, came into the office to introduce himself and will be attending the Envirothon.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

There was no need for an executive session.

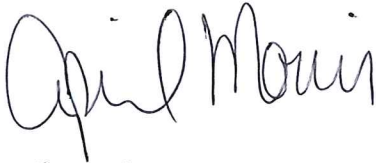
**NEXT REGULAR MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 10:00 a.m.

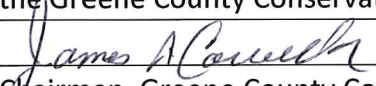

**ADJOURNMENT**

*With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Dave Shipman to adjourn the meeting at 11:31 a.m. Mike Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)*

Respectfully submitted,



April Morris  
Fiscal Officer

<b><u>MEETING MINUTES CERTIFICATION</u></b>
We, the undersigned, agree that the minutes taken above were approved in their entirety by the Greene County Conservation District on <u>5/14</u> , 2019.
 Chairman, Greene County Conservation District
 Secretary, Greene County Conservation District