



Greene County Conservation District

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MINUTES

Regular Meeting

September 21, 2010

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Eisiminger at 10:00 a.m. at the Mezzanine Conference Room of the Fort Jackson Building, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Directors present were Bradley Eisiminger, Chairman; Archie Trader, Vice Chairman; Tom Headlee, Treasurer; Jim Cowell, Secretary; Pam Snyder, Commissioner Representative; Jim Kenney, Director; Theresa Matscherz, Director; J. Robert Rice, Director Emeritus; Greg Hopkins, Associate Director; and Bill Wentzel, Associate Director and Environmental Program Associate. Guests and District staff in alphabetical order included Chris Hardie, Planner, Economic Development; Lindsay Kozlowski, Resource Specialist; Chuck Kubasik, Field Representative, Department of Environmental Protection; Julie Maxwell, Watershed Specialist; Laurel Rush, Ag Technician; Becky Salosky, Fiscal Officer, and Lisa Snider, District Manager.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Archie Trader, the minutes of the August 17, 2010 were approved as mailed. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed).

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

On a motion by Theresa Matscherz, the Treasurer's Reports were approved with the following addition. Archie Trader seconded. (Motion Passed).

General Fund

Ck 747 Scotty's Pizza – District Meeting Lunch - \$70.50

V. EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no need for an Executive Session.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Lisa reported that notification was received regarding our fiscal year 2010/2011 allocation for the Conservation District Fund Allocation Program (CDFAP). The allocation for the District Manager will be \$24,085; the First Technician will be \$16,500, and the administrative assistance will be \$1,610. An advanced payment of \$10,267.50 will be received for the program. It was noted that the administrative assistance portion was reduced by \$2,230 from last year.

VII. REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

There were no Request for Assistance forms received.

At this time, Laurel noted that the lime spreader is currently being rented.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. As reported at last week's Farmland Preservation Board meeting, letters were mailed to oil and gas, coal, and related industries seeking funding to administer the program. Lisa said that she did speak to Consol and Alpha Resources who indicated they would pass the information on to the proper officials for consideration.

She also said that last year's applicant, Bill Milesky, has withdrawn his Easement Purchase Application; consequently, the application period has been re-opened until October 5, 2010. Letters were sent to all participants in Agricultural Security Areas (ASA), a newspaper article is planned, as well as the placement of information on the county web site. The deadline to encumber last year's funds is December 31st, 2010. Lisa noted that four requests for applications have been received.

After receiving an inquiry from John Cantoni and checking with Register and Recorder Tom Headlee, it was learned that an Agricultural Security Area (ASA) was recorded in Morgan Township in 1993. Lisa said that work will be needed to ensure that the landowners are the same, etc.

Mr. Trader noted that the Farmland Preservation By-Laws have been revised to include an updated "Greene County Areas of Importance" map, a change in the scoring value; application period and appraisal fee and sent to the PA Bureau of Farmland Preservation State Board for review.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- a. The first item discussed under New Business was the endorsement of a Marcellus Shale Severance Tax. Lisa said that she received word last week from Brenda Shambaugh of PACD that the legislators may be discussing the tax this week. She distributed, for review, a copy of the letters mailed to Representative DeWeese and Senator Stout, which the Farmland Preservation Board drafted in support of a severance tax. Commissioner Snyder said that the County Commissioner's Association of Pennsylvania voted to support any legislation for a severance tax provided, that it included a fair local share (no less than 40 percent). The 40 percent would be divided between the counties, townships, and conservation districts. She noted that it is important that our letter states that the Conservation District's receive a portion of the tax. It has been reported that there is a deadline of October 1st to pass legislation, so time is of the essence. Any letter must be done soon and faxed and e-mailed.

Commissioner Snyder noted that Pennsylvania is the only state that does not impose a tax on oil and gas since a ruling by the Supreme Court in 2002 that removed it from the tax assessment roles. It was also noted that Governor Rendell supports a tax similar to the one in West Virginia.

Mr. Kubasik noted that the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) also sent a letter of support of a tax which could be referenced.

After discussion, a motion was made by Archie Trader to draft and send a letter in support of a Marcellus Shale Severance Tax with a portion of the tax going to Conservation Districts. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed).

- b. The next item discussed was the Fee Schedule revisions which were included in the meeting packets. Lisa distributed a spreadsheet (attached) which shows the portion of our E & S program fees needed to cover salaries and benefits of a full time person, travel expenses and the mini-

grant program that will be paid with a portion of these funds. They include \$19,000 for the salary of the Agricultural Technician; \$5,000 to \$8,000 for the Second Technician; and \$38,000 for the salary and benefits for a new full-time technician (married with medical insurance with a family plan). Annual travel expenses are estimated at \$700 and \$5,000 is needed annually for the Mini Grant Program. The total amount needed is \$72,000. The funds collected to date for Erosion and Sedimentation Control (E&SC) plans reviews, Accelerated Review Fees, and National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit fees is \$34,500. Under the proposed Fee Schedule, \$62,000 would have been received. Another change is a flat fee for General Permits. On November 19, 2010, revisions to Chapter 102 will take effect and a site development disturbing 1 acre or more, (with or without a point source discharge) will require a NPDES Permit. Permit fees will increase to \$500 for a General Permit and \$1,500 for an Individual Permit. Earth disturbance over one acre, occurring West of Waynesburg, will fall under the High Quality Watershed Standards and will require a NPDES Individual Permit.

In order to remain current, a clause is included that would increase these fees automatically by 10 percent at the beginning of each year.

In comparison, Lisa said that the proposed fees are less than what Washington County Conservation District charges, but are more than those of Fayette County. She also said that she tried to simplify the process for the applicant by spelling out what is needed and required by the District for an E&SC Plan review and permit requirement needs.

Mr. Kubasik noted that in the light of the upcoming changes in the Chapter 102 program, this is a good time for a Fee Schedule revision. He also said that several other Districts are also taking this opportunity as well. He thanked Lisa for the copy of the proposal which he has forwarded to other conservation districts.

Mr. Kenney voiced concern regarding automatic increase of 10 percent each year. Mr. Trader suggested that this be changed to reflect increases based on inflation rates. Mr. Kubasik said that many conservation districts revise their Fee Schedules every two years, but he suggested reviewing it each year when developing our Annual Plan of Operations.

Laurel asked if agricultural activities would be exempt from General Permit fees. Lisa acknowledged that they would probably fall under minimal disturbances and would most likely be waived of fees. She also said that

the revisions include a \$25.00 fee for administrative review, but most fees are waived for farmers and homeowners.

Mr. Kubasik suggested that the new Fee Schedule fee increases be published as a Public Notice in the newspaper.

Discussion continued regarding the review time and effective date, with a decision being made to have an effective date of November 1, 2010 and to conduct a thorough review at least every two years.

A motion was made by Tom Headlee to approve these revisions to the Fee Schedule with the above stipulations. Pam Snyder seconded. (Motion Passed).

- c. The Environmental Program Specialist position was the next matter discussed. Lisa said that a spreadsheet (attached) was also included with the meeting packets. She explained that the proposal is based on a \$15.00 per hour salary and it includes two different figures; one with health insurance and one without. The annual salary for a full-time person would range from \$33,000 to \$38,000. With current projects and the anticipated increase of our workload, due to the changes in the Chapter 102 Program, Lisa recommended that the position be full-time. She asked the Board to consider advertising the position, conducting the interviews, and make a recommendation to the Commissioners. She said that a new employee will have a 90 day probationary period, at which, the program can be evaluated regarding the funding, workload, etc. Lisa also said that she would like to keep Second Technician Bill Wentzel, on for this time period, to assist with the training.

Questions were raised regarding our backlog of work, if a full-time position is warranted, etc. Lisa said that with our current staff, it is impossible to conduct onsite inspections on many of the projects. She also said that the number of complaints we receive have increased and are very time consuming. Mr. Kenney expressed concern regarding hiring a full-time person. At this point in the meeting, the Digital Voice Recorder stopped and this portion of the minutes is from notes and memory.

Discussion continued regarding the financial commitment, should the Conservation District be unable fund the position. Commissioner Snyder said that they could evaluate the situation and possibly help, provided that they had funding to do so.

A motion was made by Jim Cowell to begin the process of hiring a full-time Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) Control Technician. Pam Snyder seconded. (Motion Passed). Mr. Kenney volunteered to assist with the interviews.

- d. Ms. Rush and Mr. Hopkins discussed the next item of business, the Annual Awards Luncheon. They both met with Dan Wagner at the Greene County Career and Technology Center and they discussed holding the event and serving locally grown foods. A day-time event, possibly in early November, was chosen and Mr. Wagner agreed to a price of \$6.00 per plate. Laurel and Greg will need to find a source for the foods which Mr. Wagner will purchase and prepare.

A motion was made by Archie Trader to tentatively schedule the event for November 9th. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).

- e. A Committee of Jim Cowell, Jim Kenney, and Laurel visited the farms of the nominees for this year's awards; the Outstanding Cooperator and the Forestry Award.

Upon their recommendation, a motion was made by Pam Snyder to present this year's award to the Red Barn Farm owned by Jeanne and Llew Williams. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed).

- f. **A motion was made by Pam Snyder to present this year's Forestry Award to Barbara and Jim Butler. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed).**

Other awards to be presented at this year's Awards Luncheon include, the Conservation Speaker to Karlie Hoy, the recognition of Kevin Willis, Advisor for the Carmichaels High School's Envirothon team, and a Special Recognition Award to Bob Born, FFA teacher at Waynesburg Central High School.

A motion was made by Tom Headlee approve these other awards. Pam Snyder seconded. (Motion Passed).

Another Digital Voice Recorder was obtained from the Office of Economic Development and used to record this portion of the meeting Minutes.

- g. Lisa reported that of the five applications received for Dirt and Gravel Road Projects, only one qualified for the program. She explained that the other four involved more road maintenance and did not affect the water quality, therefore, the Quality Assurance Board (QAB) failed to approve them for funding. Consequently, Lisa asked for approval to extend the application period.

A motion was made by Jim Cowell to extend the application period. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed).

- h. The next item of the business discussed was the Request for Proposal to be submitted to the Department of Environment Protection (DEP) for using funds available through Sections 205(j)(1) and 604(b) of the Federal Water Quality Act of 1987. In late August we were approached by Mark Brickner, Water Pollution Biologist, PA DEP to submit for funding through this request to monitor and sample streams with 75% canopy cover for chemistry, aquatic organisms and physical characteristics of the streams to submit for upgrades on the protected use of the stream. This stems from the upgrades of streams to "Exception Value" last year, DEP staff feels that many other streams may also be undervalued and they asked that we submit proposals to conduct stream sampling.. Lisa said that the sampling and evaluations can be conducted in conjunction with Waynesburg University on about 41 streams. The project can be conducted over a two year period with one sample of each stream. Julie noted that sample can be taken at five sites per week and with all sites completed in the period of March through May. Lisa said that DEP will provide the training and funding for transportation to the sites, etc. They will also process the water chemistry samples. The Macro Invertebrates will be analyzed by the West Pennsylvania Conservancy.

After discussion, a motion was made by Archie Trader to participate in the program. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed).

- i. **A motion was made by Jim Cowell to pay the 2010 dues of \$100 to the Western Pennsylvania Coalition of Abandoned**

Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR) for the 2010 dues. Theresa Matscherz seconded. (Motion Passed).

A motion was made by Pam Snyder to name the Watershed Specialist as the Delegate to the Western Pennsylvania Coalition (WPCAMR) and the District Manager as the Alternate. Archie Trader seconded. (Motion Passed).

- j. Lisa noted that Robbie Matesic, Executive Director, of the Office Economic Development will be attending the 2010 Marcellus Summit on October 10-12 in State College after which she will report back to the Board.

X. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

The staff reports were mailed with the meeting packets. Additionally, Julie noted that she will be attending the mandatory Watershed Specialist's Meeting on October 12th and 13th in State College.

Lindsay noted the following corrections to her written report. The receipt of two ESCGP-1's, 14 General Permits, and three Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plans for a total of \$3,975 in fees to the General Fund and \$2,000 in fees to the Clean Water Fund. Approvals were granted for two ESCGP-1's and nine General Permits.

Laurel presented the latest revision of the Core 4 Calendar which should go to the printer on September 27. Plans are to print 10,000 copies with each Conservation District to receive at least 100 copies for distribution. Regarding the Mini-Grant Program, Laurel noted that Jeanne Williams has completed her project and has been paid \$1,000. The Morris-Miller project has also been completed and she is awaiting technical certification from Suzy Petery of NRCS. Larry Vogel's project will most likely be underway next week. Work under the contract with Penn's Corner RC&D on the Conservation Stewardship Program has been completed and all the necessary paperwork will be submitted. After attending yesterday's Penn's Corner RC&D meeting, she learned that similar contracts may be done with other NRCS programs.

XI. REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS

- a. Chuck Kubasik – Chuck informed the group that Susan Marquart, Executive Director of PACD, recently resigned to accept a position with NRCS. The Nutrient Management Specialist, Chris Rerko of the Fayette County Conservation District has also resigned. Anyone who may be interested in this position should contact the District Manager.

Chuck presented a “Letter of Appreciation” to Jim Cowell for his completion of the Director's On-Line Training Courses sponsored through the Leadership Development Program. He noted that Mr. Cowell was only one of three Directors to complete the program in this region. Before closing, Chuck noted the website, www.paleadership.org, where the course can be found, as well as other information.

- b. Chris Hardie – Five projects were brought before the Greene County Planning Commission at their September 15th meeting. Four of which received Preliminary Approval; two gas compressor stations located in Greene and Center Townships, a warehouse in Cumberland Township, and a storage unit in Waynesburg Borough. A cell tower in Monongahela Township received Conditional Approval. To date, 55 lot splits have been received and 350 “Public Notices” are currently being reviewed and mapped.

XII. The Next Regular Meeting will be October 19th

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Prior to adjournment, Mr. Kenney asked if the information, included with the meeting packets, was the final report for the Monongahela River Monitoring Project. Lisa said that it was not and that Bob Ventorini of the PA Fish and Boat Commission was scheduled to attend this meeting to give an update, however, due the length of today's agenda, she asked that they attend a future meeting.

Lisa noted that the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission would like to partner with the District and possibly the Izaak Walton League to hold a public presentation to discuss their findings on the Mon River and she will be working with Mr. Ventorini to schedule a date. This will be a public meeting and the board will be notified of the arrangements.

A motion was made by Tom Headlee to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 a.m. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca K. Salosky".

Rebecca K. Salosky
Fiscal Officer