

**GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
MINUTES
January 24, 2012**

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bradley Eisiminger at 10:00 a.m. in the Mezzanine Conference Room, 19 South Washington Street, Waynesburg, Pennsylvania. Those in attendance are as follows:

Greene County Conservation District Directors and Associate Directors

Bradley Eisiminger-Chairman; Archie Trader-Vice Chairman; Pam Snyder-Commissioner Representative; Tom Headlee-Treasurer; Jim Cowell-Secretary; Greg Hopkins-Associate Director; Bill Wentzel-Associate Director/Program Associate.

Guests and Cooperating Agencies

Chuck Kubasik-Field Representative, Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Jim Kennedy-Regional Director, PA Department of Agriculture; Kevin Paul - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

Staff

Lisa Snider-District Manager; Laurel Rush-Ag Technician; Julie Maxwell-Watershed Specialist; Jeremy Kelly-Environmental Program Specialist II; Becky Salosky-Fiscal Officer; Robbie Matesic-Executive Director, Department of Economic Development

II. REORGANIZATION

- a. Mr. Jim Kenney was re-appointed by the Greene County Commissioners to serve a four year term beginning in January, 2012 until December, 2015. Due to his absence, the Oath of Office will be administered at the next monthly meeting on February 21st.
- b. Lisa Snider, District Manager, opened the floor for the nominations for officers for 2012.

Chairman - Commissioner Snyder nominated Bradley Eisiminger. Commissioner Trader seconded. (Motion Passed).

Vice Chairman - Commissioner Snyder nominated Commissioner Trader. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).

**Secretary – Commissioner Snyder nominated Jim Cowell.
Commissioner Trader seconded. (Motion Passed).**

**Treasurer – Commissioner Trader nominated Tom Headlee.
Commissioner Snyder seconded. (Motion Passed)**

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to retain Greg Hopkins and Bill Wentzel as Associate Directors and J. Robert Rice as Director Emeritus for 2012. Commissioner Trader seconded. (Motion Passed).

Mr. Cowell inquired about the vacancy on the Board due to the resignation of Theresa Matscherz. Commissioner Snyder indicated that the position remains vacant. The required nominating procedures were followed and two names were received as candidates. When the candidates were contacted to determine their interest in serving one candidate indicated willingness to serve. That person was appointed by the County Commissioners and the name submitted to the State Conservation Commission for approval. The commission rejected this individual because the vacancy was for a public director and this person is a farmer. She said that this was unfortunate, since this individual would have been a valuable asset to the board. The Commissioners will circulating nomination request letters a second time to attempt to identify an individual interested who will qualify as a public director.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2011 meeting. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed).

V. TREASURER'S REPORTS

A motion was made by Commissioner Trader to approve the treasurer's reports with the following addition. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).

Ck 969 – Scotty's Pizza – District Meeting Lunch - \$54.23

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. At the November 15th meeting, the Board approved a donation of \$500 to the Corner Cupboard Food Bank. Ms. Snider read the thank you letter we received from the organization's Executive Director, Jan Caldwell.
- b. The State Ethics forms are available and must be completed by all GCCD Directors and returned to the office. The forms will be distributed after the meeting.
- c. The Southwestern PA No-Till Conference will be held on February 1, 2012 at the Fred Rogers Center, Saint Vincent College, Latrobe, PA. The early registration deadline has passed, so the registration fee is \$40. Ms. Rush indicated that she has registered for the event and offered to provide transportation for anyone wishing to attend.

VII. REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

There were no Requests for Assistance to bring before the Board.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Members of the Izaak Walton League recently met with Jim Cowell, Lisa Snider and Julie Maxwell to discuss their efforts in the water testing program, funded in part by a donation from the GCCD. Ms. Snider distributed the information (attached) and emphasized that four "hot spots" have been identified:
 - Emerald #1,
 - Bleeder Shaft #5,
 - Cumberland #29
 - and Whiteley Creek.

The samples from these sites and other areas have been analyzed by the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). The results

from these four hot spots reflect levels of total dissolved solids, field conductivity, temperature and pH many times higher than at other sites throughout the county. The four sites are all downstream of mining operations and the analysis is based on drinking water standards, not in-stream requirements.

- b. Ms. Snider gave an update on the Farmland Preservation Program. The items necessary to encumber the 101 acre parcel of the James F. and Pearl Willis Living Trust were mailed to the PA Bureau of Farmland Preservation before the deadline of December 31, 2011. A Conservation Plan is being drafted by Ms. Rush and will also be forwarded to the Bureau upon completion and approval of NRCS. It is hoped that this easement will be presented to the Pennsylvania Farmland Preservation Board for consideration at their April meeting.

At the November 15th meeting, the possibility of a shortfall in funding for this easement was discussed. However, based on the payment in the application and the appraisal fee, additional funds from the district should not be needed.

Mr. Willis' attorney, Jeffrey Proden, has indicated that they are continuing their efforts to clear the title of the 53 acre parcel, also owned by the James F. and Pearl Willis Living Trust, which has previously been considered for an easement in the program.

- c. The survey regarding rental equipment was placed in the GCCD newsletter, as discussed last month. Only two surveys have been returned. Commissioner Snyder has reviewed the usage data for the lime spreader and indicated her disappointment with the low usage of the equipment and the fact that rental fees collected have not even covered the purchase price. She is, therefore, reluctant to commit to purchase additional rental equipment. She suggested that Ms. Snider speak to Liz Menhart, Director of the Greene County Tourism Department to discuss ways to promote the current program and all the agricultural programs offered by the GCCD at local fairs, festivals, public meetings, etc.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- a. A list of the 2011 Committees was distributed for review. Changes will be necessary with the resignation of Director Theresa Matscherz.

On motion by Commissioner Snyder, the following committees will remain the same: Agriculture, Budget and Audit, Dirt and Gravel Roads, Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) Control and Compliance, Personnel and District Operations, and Policy and Legislative Committees. Commissioner Trader seconded. (Motion Passed).

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to appoint Tom Headlee, Jim Cowell, Greg Hopkins, Laurel Rush, and Julie Maxwell to the Education, Outreach and Awards Committee. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).

Commissioner Snyder made a motion to appoint Commissioner Trader, Chairman Eisiminger, Greg Hopkins, Robbie Matesic, Lisa Snider, and Julie Maxwell to the Water Resources Committee. Commissioner Trader seconded. (Motion Passed).

- b. ***A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to accept the meeting dates as distributed (attached). Commissioner Trader seconded.***

A public notice will be placed in the Observer-Reporter advertising the regular meeting schedule. Any changes or cancellations will be noted in the Community Events section of the newspaper.

- c. The Teleconference Policy adopted by the State Conservation Commission was included in the meeting packets for review. The policy is to help facilitate director participation by telephone during conservation district business meetings. Ms. Snider requested approval to rewrite the policy specifically for GCCD. ***A motion was made by Commissioner Snider granting approval to rewrite the policy specifically for GCCD. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).***

Commissioner Trader requested that future items requiring board action be included in the meeting packets.

- d. An invoice was received from the County of Greene for \$844.57 for the annual liability insurance premium for the GMC Sierra truck. Ms.

Snider noted that the truck is used exclusively by GCCD. Since this item was not included in the 2012 budget, an amendment is needed. ***A motion was made by Commissioner Trader to amend the budget to reflect this charge and authorize payment. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed).***

- e. ***Account balances at First Federal exceed the limits of the FDIC coverage (\$250,000), a motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to transfer \$75,000 from the General Fund Checking Account at First Federal to the General Fund Checking Account at First National Bank. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).***
- f. The Grigsby Project, Greene Township, was the next item of business discussed. The site, located along Whiteley Creek, contains an aluminum mine discharge. Partial funding for treatment was received by the district at one time, but is no longer available. Since that time, oil and gas activities have changed and relocated the discharges and the site has not risen to the level of a priority project for funding through the Department of Environmental Protection. Attempts have been made to try to obtain funding to construct a treatment facility, but have been unsuccessful to date.

Separate funding for operation and maintenance (O&M) of a treatment facility only was set aside at Penn's Corner Charitable Trust through a Consent Order from the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) with Twilight Industries (the mining operator). The Consent Order and Agreement named the District as the party to build the treatment facility and operate and maintain the facility once built. The Charitable Trust is holding approximately \$90,000 for O&M; should a treatment facility be built. This funding is strictly earmarked for operation and maintenance and it is becoming nearly impossible to find the funding to construct the facility. Officials at DEP, the Office of Surface Mining (OSM), and the Western PA Coalition of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (WPCAMR) are reviewing the consent order to determine if any of the dollars from the consent order could be redirected for the construction of a treatment system.

In light of the events that have occurred at Penn's Corner, Ms. Snider felt that the matter should be brought to the board's attention since it most likely will be discussed at future meetings.

X. REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS

Since the staff reports were included with the meeting packets and because Commissioner Snyder had another meeting to attend, these reports were moved forward and were discussed at this time.

Jim Kennedy – He attends numerous Conservation District meetings where many of the same items are discussed, yet there are differences. The Teleconference Policy has been discussed at all the meetings and will affect all Conservation Districts. Each District will determine how they can use it; do they have the ability to participate via video conferencing, etc. It's a very important issue as far as keeping a quorum, voting, having the necessary information, etc. He also briefly discussed the changes with manure and nutrient management and the need to relay this to area farmers. He feels that Conservation Districts face many challenges to make all of our dollars count.

He thanked us for the opportunity to attend our meeting and welcomed our questions and/or comments. In closing, he requested that we forward to him any information regarding issues relative to Greene County.

Commissioner Snyder requested that we keep Mr. Kennedy informed via e-mail.

Chuck Kubasik - Word has been received that the State Budget has not been kind to DEP, with revenues running about \$485 million below projections. As a result, Governor Corbett placed approximately \$160 million in budgetary surplus and directed most state agencies to reduce their budgets by three percent. Consequently, PA DEP's operational budget has been temporarily reduced by three percent and includes the following reductions: the Nutrient Management Program was reduced by one percent, or about \$27,000, and the Chesapeake Bay Program by three percent or about \$83,000. Fortunately, the "line items" for the PA

Department of Agriculture (PDA) and DEP's Conservation District Fund Allocation Program (CDFAP) will remain the unchanged.

The Agricultural Conservation "boot camps" have been scheduled to be held at Fort Indiantown Gap. Level I training, for new employees, will be held April 9th-13th and Level II training, for more experienced employees, April 23rd-27th.

The E&S "boot camps" have been tentatively scheduled and will also be held at Fort Indiantown Gap. Level I, for newer employees, will be held March 26th-30th and Level II, April 3rd-5th.

The Nutrient Management Delegation Agreement will expire at the end of the fiscal year and work is underway on revisions. The revised agreement will expand the role of Conservation Districts and will now include manure management. Funding may be available to Conservation Districts to compensate for the additional work. Greene County receives a "quarter" grant, which will equal an increase of approximately \$2,500 to \$3,000. This matter will be addressed by the State Conservation Commission at either their March or May meeting.

Lastly, the next DEP Regional Roundtable Meeting will be held on March 9th at the Westmoreland Conservation District office. Requests for agenda items are welcome.

Kevin Paul – Due to an unexpected conference call, Suzy Petery was unable to attend the meeting and sent her apologies. Farm Bill Program rankings continue. Approximately, 50 applications have been received for the three county area; less than 10 for Greene County. Currently, no funding is available for the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP), however, that could change. Customer Service Toolkit Training was hosted by NRCS last week. Results of the Engineering Field Review conducted in November were favorable. Before closing, he distributed a copy of a report (attached) summarizing NRCS work in Greene County.

XI. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports (attached) were mailed with the meeting packets. Additional comments follow.

Lisa Snider – The ESCGP-1 permit application is currently out for public comment. The update includes some new Chapter 102 regulations and DEP and district roles in the permitting process. Changes are minimal and applicants are still held to the five acre standard. Upon project completion, the applicant will be required to name a responsible party to care for the post construction storm water and best management practices. January 23rd began the 30 day comment period.

Laurel Rush – She distributed a tentative agenda for the Project Grass Conference which has been rescheduled and will be held October 11th and 12th. She also distributed information regarding the 15th Annual Northwest Grazing Conference to be held March 22nd near Clarion, PA. She has been working with John Hewitt, Washington County Conservation District, to host a nutrient management workshop. Plans are to schedule the event on a Saturday in April at a location near the Lone Pine area. The Log Cabin Fence Company and Adams Pine Creek were two possible locations suggested. After this event, she plans to host smaller workshops for nutrient management, possibly in May. She has contacted the Cooperative Extension office to assist in providing this information to Greene County horse farmers.

At this time, Mr. Kubasik wanted to explain the process of appointing Conservation District Directors and apologized for discussing this matter after the departure of Commissioner Snyder. Upon receipt of a nomination, the State Conservation Commission e-mails Field Representatives to see if that individual raises any red flags. Typically, it's a matter as to whether the individual is qualified to serve as Public or Farmer director. Since he is a farmer, the Commissioners nominee did not qualify for the Public director's position.

He explained that if the appointment was carried out, it could result in a violation of the State Ethics Law. Last year, the State Conservation Commission revised the description of a farmer director to follow the PA Right to Farm Act. That is if an individual farms 10 acres or more or make more than \$10,000 from the farm, they would meet qualifications of a farmer director.

Commissioner Trader requested copies of the descriptions.

Robbie Matesic – Work continues with the Army Corps of Engineers to complete a watershed assessment of the Monongahela River Basin. The basin includes three states; Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia and 18 counties; one in Maryland, six in Pennsylvania, and eleven in West Virginia. The initial assessment has been issued for public comment and with the help of Ms. Snider and Ms. Maxwell, the review process has begun and comments are being prepared. Ms. Matesic outlined some of the items we feel should be addressed as follows. Outreach; more effort should be made to contact all of the organizations that may wish to comment. The focus of the assessment is on water quality, quantity, and infrastructure as it pertains to water, sewage and flood control. In addition to the gas and coal industry, closer attention should be paid to agriculture and non-point source pollution, legacy acid mine drainage, and regulation for water withdraws.

Upon completion of the of the review and comment period, the Greene County Commissioners will most likely enter into an agreement with the Corps of Engineers to act as the non-federal sponsor of the watershed assessment. Its completion is expected to take about 2 years.

Ms. Matesic noted that a report will be given on this matter at the monthly GCCD meetings.

Prior to adjournment, the group briefly discussed problems associated with water; and the oil and gas industry, specifically, the number of treatment plants and where they are located, illegal discharges, etc. Robbie noted that additional information will be obtained and reported at a future meeting.

XII. The next regular meeting will be **February 21th, 2012.**

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT**

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Jim Cowell to adjourn the meeting at 11:15 a.m. Commissioner Trader seconded. (Motion Passed)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca K. Salosky
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 _____, 2012.

Chairman, Greene County Conservation District

Secretary, Greene County Conservation District