



Greene County Conservation District

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GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES

September 18, 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 were as follows:

Greene County Conservation District Directors and Associate Directors

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

Guests and Cooperating Agencies

Suzy Petery-NRCS; and Jeremy Kelly- Department of Economic Development.

Staff

Lisa Snider-District Manager; Laurel Rush-Ag Technician; Becky Salosky-Fiscal Officer; and Robbie Matesic-Department of Economic Development.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to approve the minutes of the August 21st, 2012 meeting. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to approve the treasurer's report. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)

V. NEW BUSINESS

New Business was moved forward on the agenda to accommodate District Directors schedules.

a. Request for Assistance

Patrick Ernest – 50 acres – Cumberland Township

Mr. Ernest is requesting assistance with a grazing and livestock watering system. Mr. Ernest may apply for the District Mini-Grant Program in the future.

A motion was made by Jim Kenney to accept this Request for Assistance. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)

Julia S. Kerr – District Mini-Grant – Cumberland Township

At August 21st GCCD meeting the Board accepted Ms. Kerr's Request for Assistance. At this time, Ms. Kerr is requesting to be approved for a District Mini-Grant of \$1,000 to assist with a spring development. Ms. Rush has visited the farm and found it to be a viable project.

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to approve the Kerr Mini-Grant application for \$1,000. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

b. Project Grass Conference Attendee Registration

At the April 17th, 2012 GCCD meeting the board agreed to provide a scholarship that would allow a local producer to attend the Project Grass Conference on October 11th and 12th at the Kovalchick Convention & Athletic Complex in Indiana, PA. A local producer would be selected from entries received at the Greene County Fair and by direct mail and newspaper outreach means.

Information regarding the scholarship opportunity was direct mailed to approximately 80 agricultural producers following the fair and advertised in the Observer-Reporters Conservation Corner. Doug Willis was the only applicant received and was brought forward to the GCCD Board as the scholarship recipient.

In an effort to promote the lime spreader, at the GCCD meeting on July 17th, the board agreed to raffle tickets for one free use. Two names were drawn for a 3-day lime spreader rental from the 8 applications that were received. The second name selected will be considered an alternate in the event the winner would decline the offer. Jack Hughes of West Alexander was the winner and Terry Cole of Wayne Township was selected as the alternate by drawing during the meeting.

c. **Model CD Agricultural Complaint Response Policy**

The Agricultural Committee met to review the Model CD Agricultural Complaint Response Draft Policy and suggested a few minor changes. The edited policy was included with the meeting packets with the changes noted throughout the document. The committee, consisting of Jim Kenney, Jim Cowell, Greg Hopkins and Laurel Rush, presented their proposed modifications to the GCCD Board of Directors for their consideration.

Mr. Cowell reviewed the changes as follows:

- Complaints will be investigated within 10 business days.
- The Agriculture Committee of the GCCD will be notified of all agricultural complaints.

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to accept the policy as recommended by the Agricultural Committee. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

d. **Ruff Creek/Pumpkin Run Stream Rehabilitation Growing Greener Grant**

Since the GCCD August 21st meeting, both cost estimates and design plans prepared by the PACD Technical Assistance Grant (TAG) Engineer were reviewed by both Mr. Gary Taylor and Mr. Bradley Eisiminger (GCCD Board of Directors, Chair). Each landowner is prepared to participate in the grant and understands the matching requirements required by the Growing Greener Grant.

Morgan Township Supervisors have agreed to assist Mr. Taylor with the installation of the streambank protection project as it has been proposed.

GCCD staff has updated the scope of work and budget to include the two new projects. Rita Coleman, PA DEP Growing Greener Grant Advisor, has reviewed each project and has given the approval to add the projects to the grants scope of work.

Approval is needed from the GCCD Board to add the Eisiminger and Taylor projects to the Growing Greener Scope of Work.

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to accept the changes to the Scope of Work and the project budget. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed).

e. **Whiteley Creek Streambank Protection Growing Greener Grant**

As discussed at the August 21, 2012 meeting, a suggestion was made to contact the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy (WPC) concerning the possibility of transferring the entire Whiteley Creek Streambank Protection Growing Greener Grant project. This suggestion was given by Mark Saucer, PA Fish and Boat Commission and Rita Coleman, PA DEP Growing Greener Grant Advisor.

If the project were to be transferred, funding would be available to construct more than 3 devices of the 7 that were originally approved for funding.

According to Widmer Engineering, it would be nearly impossible to bid the project, hire a professional to ensure correct installation and construct the 3 currently proposed devices with the funding available and time allowed by the grant.

Ms. Snider met with Mark Killar, WPC and Rita Coleman, Grant Advisor, PA Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP), to discuss the details and responsibilities of each party involved. In order to transfer the grant of \$97,000, GCCD would be required to write a letter to the PA DEP Grant Center indicating that we would like to relinquish all responsibilities of the grant. Subsequently, the WPC would write a letter accepting all of the grant responsibilities.

At the meeting, Ms. Coleman indicated that is better to relinquish the grant and ensure its completion.

Per a phone call this morning, Ms. Snider learned that the WPC is interested in pursuing the grant and would need more time to research the project.

Ms. Snider agreed to assist with obtaining the materials and provide "match" for the time GCCD spent on the grant. It was noted that a Special Use Agreement would be required between the PA Game Commission (PGC) and the WPC.

All permitting for the project is registered to the PGC and would not need to be altered. The stream encroachment permit issued to the PGC is still valid. The deadline for the completion of the project is June 30, 2013; however, since Whiteley Creek is trout stocked, they can only complete the work during March 15th to June 15th, unless approval is granted by the PA Fish and Boat Commission. Grants can be extended up to 5 years; so it is possible that another extension could be requested.

Action is requested to transfer the Whiteley Creek Streambank Protection Growing Greener II Grant to the Western PA Conservancy by relinquishing the grant back to PA DEP.

After discussion, a motion was made by Jim Cowell to authorize the staff to write a letter to the PA DEP Grants Center to relinquish the grant. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

f. **2012 Annual Awards Banquet**

At the August 21st District Meeting, the Board agreed to pursue the option of hosting the Annual Awards Luncheon at Hunting Hills. A price quote of \$16 per person for the luncheon was received by Mr. Raz Sisler. A tour of the facility will be provided, via golf carts, highlighting the conservation efforts undertaken at the facility over the past 10-15 years.

This will take place on October 16, 2012 with the tour starting at approximately 9:30 a.m. The District will be afforded time to conduct its monthly meeting at 11:00 a.m., if business needs to be taken into consideration. The awards ceremony will then take place just before lunch is served so that those who need to leave directly after lunch may do so without missing the awards program.

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to accept the date, location and the cost of the awards luncheon. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed).

Ms. Rush noted that the Agricultural Committee was unable to visit the farms of the award nominees prior to the meeting, but they plan to visit them today.

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to conduct a poll following the committee's visit. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

Chairman Eisiminger called for questions, and Ms. Petery responded. She noted that in the past, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provided the award nominees. Ms. Rush contacted her and assistant Laura Smith for recommendations. At this time, Ms. Petery felt that no one is quite ready, and therefore, no nominees were provided. At the request of Ms. Petery, Mr. Cowell, Agricultural Committee member, provided the nominees as follows: Corbly Orndorff, Richard Phillips, and Jim Willis.

She noted that in the past, the award given was the Cooperator of the Year or the Conservation Farmer of the Year and required the recipient to possess and implement a Soil and Water Conservation Plan. She offered

to provide that information and noted that, while it is not her choice to make, she did suggest that the Board consider changing the name of the award.

g. 2012-2013 Agricultural Conservation Technician (ACT) Assistance Program

The 2012-2013 Agricultural Conservation Technician (ACT) funding will continue to support the current ACT position at the 2011-2012 funding levels. A draft of a new 5 year Conservation District Fund Allocation Program (CDFAP) Agreement for the ACT program was provided for review by all board members prior to the meeting. This Agreement would effectively be a renewal of the previous agreement and will be effective July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2017.

The State Conservation Commission (SCC) continues to work on a final agreement. Currently, they are only requesting the budget portion. Thus far, the funding levels remain the same as in the past (\$30,784.48) for eligible reimbursement costs.

An "Executable" copy of the agreement will be provided to GCCD for consideration once finalized by legal council and the PA Comptroller.

A motion was made by Commissioner Snyder to accept these funding levels. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed).

If the final agreement is changed, those changes will be brought before the board.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence to bring before the board.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

a. USACE Monongahela River Watershed Assessment

- The proposal submitted by Paul Ziemkiewicz of the West Virginia Water Research Institute (WVWRI) has been accepted by the USACE and is currently being contracted by the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).
- The agreement between Greene County and USACE has been reviewed by both Greene County and USACE Division. The agreement was signed at the September 6th Greene County Commissioners Public Meeting.

- The agreement has also been signed by the USACE District Commander. Robbie Matesic and staff will meet with them soon regarding the scope and schedule.

b. Vehicle Purchase

The Greene County Department of Buildings and Grounds/Bridges and Facilities Maintenance (Maintenance) did forward the invoice of \$23,701 for the truck that was ordered for GCCD. Ms. Snider noted that this is a savings of approximately \$1,000 from the original price quote. She also stated that a portion of the payment, \$4,000, will be used from the 2011-2012 Allocation for the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program with the remainder of the costs to be paid from the General Fund.

Maintenance will most likely pick the truck up at the dealership sometime this week.

c. Agricultural Security Area (ASA) Program

- Cumberland Township has approved the Richard Phillips and Tom Willis ASA applications
- Greene Township has approved the additional ASA acreage for Harley and Janet Gapen.
- All three additions have been recorded at the Greene County Register and Records Office.

GCCD staff has completed the soils inventories for ASA applications from both Franklin and Jefferson Township landowners.

It is anticipated that Jefferson and Franklin Townships will be creating new ASA's. Ms. Rush noted, however, that a Franklin Township landowner decided not to submit an application due to the results of the soil inventory. Less than 50 percent of the soils were Class I-IV.

d. Act 13, the Natural Gas Impact Fee

Commissioner Snyder noted that this matter is scheduled to be brought before the Supreme Court on October 17th. Ms. Matesic noted that according to last week's news reports, over \$200 million has been collected and they are on schedule to release the funds at the beginning of December.

e. Nutrient and Manure Management Program Level 2 Delegation Agreement

At the August 21st, 2012 District Meeting, the GCCD board accepted the Nutrient and Manure Management Program Level 2 Delegation Agreement. This document has been forwarded to the State Conservation Commission (SCC) for final execution. Ms. Rush noted that the SCC requested a minor change in the budget; to move the \$250 from the "other" category to the "administrative" category of the funding budget.

f. Aleppo Township Dirt and Gravel Road (DGR) 2011 Contract-Guthrie Road

The GCCD board approved a new contract to reflect the cost over runs for this completed project at their meeting on August 21st. Mr. Bob Rice, DGR Quality Assurance Board (QAB) member, and Ms. Snider were scheduled to inspect the project last week; however, due to illness, they were unable to do so. Since that time, two other projects were also completed in Aleppo Township on Moreford Road and Mason Road. They will reschedule their inspection to include those roads as well as the Guthrie Road. Ms. Snider noted that she could forward photographs of these projects to NRCS, for their review. Ms. Petery indicated that either she or Laura Smith may be available to visit these sites. After a final inspection is made of each site and are found constructed satisfactorily, final payment may be made to each municipality.

g. GCCD Staff

Ty Basinger has resigned as Watershed Specialist effective August 17th. Mr. Basinger has accepted a position with the Southwestern PA Water Authority.

E&S Technician, Lindsay Kozlowski, is currently on maternity leave, but expects to return to work either the first or second week of October. With the transfer of Jeremy Kelly to the Department of Economic Development, that leaves Ms. Snider as the sole reviewer of erosion and sedimentation control plans. Commissioner Snyder noted that both positions have been advertised and hopefully will be filled soon. Ms. Snider noted that she forwarded information to California, Waynesburg, and West Virginia Universities.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

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

Lisa Snider – She apologized for not including her staff report with the meeting packets.

In an effort to promote GCCD, the Waynesburg University Service Fair was attended by Laurel Rush and Ty Basinger. University student, Kim Rowan of the Carmichaels area, is interested in completing approximately 30 hours of service with us. Ms. Snider hopes to have her update our website and Ms. Snider will be working with Ms. Matesic to ensure Ms. Rowan may be accommodated.

Discussed at our meeting on August 21st, was the Executive Order signed by Governor Corbett on July 24, 2012, requiring DEP to implement the Permit Guarantee Program. Since that time, she participated in a Webinar developed by PA DEP regarding the program. She read the following information provided by PA DEP as an explanation of the new program. "The

purpose of this policy is to ensure a coordinated and timely review of projects with multiple department permits. Promote comprehensive staff reviews and coordination within the Department and with the permit applicant on all technical and environmental matters related to projects. Ensure potential project issues are identified early, so that timely and appropriate public outreach measures are taken and technical coordination issues are considered and resolved appropriately. Allow for the tracking of coordinating projects. Achieve greater consistency among regions and programs.”

Ms. Snider noted that Conservation Districts will mostly likely to be held to a higher standard in the review process. She noted that GCCD should not have a problem meeting those time requirements, as we generally process permits in a timely manner. Applicants and consultants will be expected to submit technically sound plans for review and PA DEP will offer training to assist with this effort. This should result in the submission of technically-sound plans that are guaranteed to meet an expected permitting timeline.

The program may require GCCD to attend more pre-application meetings with applicants at PA DEP's Regional Office in the future.

Laurel Rush – On September 17th, 2012, she attended the Penn's Corner RC&D quarterly meeting where she learned that they are about ready to hire a part-time Executive Director. Sherene Hess, the former full-time director, and current NRCS employee, was offered the position. Currently, Penn's Corner is the only Council that does not employ at least a part-time Executive Director. Doniele Russell, Penn's Corner RC&D President, is also serving as the President of the State organization.

Additionally, Penn's Corner is now the fiscal sponsor of the Rivers Alert Information Network (RAIN) organization.

As discussed at the last meeting on August 21st, Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful, Buy Local Committee has purchased several marketing items. Since GCCD was a contributor, we will receive some of those items for distribution. WPB plans to introduce many of those items at their annual Holiday Open House at the Courthouse on Friday, November 30th, 2012.

The Ombudsman Program has received funding to produce another Conservation Calendar. Since Greene County and Penn's Corner were instrumental in developing the last calendar, they wanted to ensure that we were also involved with this one as well. The two-year calendar will emphasize manure management, but will also include grazing and agronomy tips. Suggestions such as the inclusion of a gestation table and agency phone numbers were made. Additional suggestions will be forwarded.

At this time, Mr. Cowell reported on the Project Grass meeting that he and Ms. Rush recently attended. The committee is busy working to obtain additional attendees and vendors for the upcoming conference to be held October 11th and 12th in Indiana, PA.

Robbie Matesic – She noted that Ms. Snider is carrying a huge work load and she thanked the Board for their action to relinquish the Whiteley Creek Streambank Protection Project; a very time-consuming project for her. Also, she will be working with Tracy Zivkovich, Director, of the Greene County Human Resources to obtain qualified applicants for both vacant positions as soon as possible. Although Jeremy has officially transferred to the Department of Economic Development, he will be available to assist Ms. Snider as needed.

Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful-Buy Local Campaign recently began. A pledge of support is available online and she will see that the web link is provided to the Board members.

Act 13 includes a provision for funding for the conversion of fleets to natural gas. PA DEP will be hosting a number of workshops and will soon be accepting applications for funding. Sheetz and Giant Eagle have been converting their fleets. A new LPG station recently opened at the Smithton Truck Stop along Interstate 70. With a little trunk space, vehicles can be fully converted or partially converted to natural gas.

The Marcellus Shale Coalition has published a report to promote conversions across Pennsylvania. The report identifies the "Clean Transportation Corridor" which includes all four of Greene County's I-79 interchanges. Giant Eagle has requested that Greene County organize a meeting to gauge the interest of conversion and identify possible sites. If anyone knows of anyone interested, in a conversion, to please let her know. Two local bus companies, Fox and Ferek have expressed an interest. Mr. Cowell suggested that she speak to Zalar Busing as well.

Waste Management's effort in this field was briefly discussed as well as the distribution of natural gas to homes.

Research is being conducted regarding coal, gas, and bio mass liquefaction.

Washington and Jefferson University opened an Energy Policy and Management Center about 10 months ago. It should provide them the opportunity for input when a new energy policy is established.

Also, she spoke to Waynesburg University regarding the water and the environmental policy in relation to energy and they are interested in their role.

She commended Ms. Snider and Mr. Kelly for their role in their recent handling of a few difficult situations.

She noted that former Greene County Planner, Chris Hardie, has accepted a position as Assistant Dean at Waynesburg University and she looks forward to the partnership opportunities.

Mr. Hopkins suggested that the County organize a workshop regarding the Marcellus industry to discuss product uses, the environment; etc. Ms. Matesic indicated that she would discuss it with Waynesburg University.

Bill Wentzel – At the request of Ms. Snider, he agreed to work two days per week, instead of his usual one, to make up for the lost staff. Several construction sites were visited last week along with logging operations.

Additionally, he noted that he contacted Russ Gibbs, Service Forester, regarding a nominee for this year's Forestry Award. Currently, there are no nominees.

IX. REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS

Jeremy Kelly – The establishment of vegetation is a problem on EQT's Sunrise project located in Franklin, Freeport, Gilmore, Jefferson, Wayne, and Whiteley Townships. Many times, this due to the landowner mowing it too soon or disturbing it with tractors, etc. EQT may send a letter to those landowners. Also, the Dominion Appalachian Gateway project located in Center, Franklin, Jefferson, Morgan, and Richhill Township is also experiencing similar problems. They are completing their remediation at a late time to establish seeding.

He thanked everyone for their assistance while he served as an E&S Technician and noted that he hopes to continue to work with GCCD. He also noted that Lisa was recently discussing connecting younger farmers with older farmers. He hopes to possibly work with them on agricultural business development and the development of bio-fuels.

Suzy Petery – She noted that many Greene County landowners are participating in NRCS conservation programs and developing stewardship plans for implementation who could be future nominees for the Conservation Farmer and Wildlife Awards.

The federal fiscal year will be ending on September 30th. With that brings an end to the federal budget and Farm Bill. As noted at previous meetings, conservation program applications from Greene County landowners did decline last year and she encouraged application to all of the conservation

programs. Non-agricultural producers qualify for wildlife and forestry programs. She plans to participate in the Willis Field Day, scheduled to be held on October 20th, and provide information regarding conservation programs and the importance of conservation planning.

Prior to adjournment, Mr. Cowell mentioned the newspaper article regarding the Planning Commission's recent meeting in which they nominated Keith Martin for a director with GCCD. He noted the problems which occurred earlier with this appointment; Mr. Martin is a farmer and an Urban Director's position is open. Ms. Snider explained that this was just a reported nomination by the Greene County Planning Commission.

X. The next regular meeting will be November 20, 2012.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Jim Cowell to adjourn the meeting at 11:19 a.m. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed)

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