



Greene County Conservation District

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GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES

Special Meeting

May 13, 2015

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Eisiminger at 7:00 p.m. in the Mezzanine Conference Room of the Fort Jackson Building, 19 South Washington Street, Waynesburg, PA. Those in attendance were as follows:

Greene County Conservation District Directors

Bradley Eisiminger-Chairman; Archie Trader-Vice Chairman/Commissioner Representative; Thomas Headlee, Treasurer; Jim Cowell-Secretary; Greg Hopkins-Director.

Guests and Cooperating Agencies

Kevin Paul-NRCS

Staff

Lisa Snider-District Manager; Karlie Wright-Agricultural Technician; Becky Salosky-Fiscal Officer; and Robbie Matesic-Department of Economic Development.

Ms. Matesic and Mr. Paul arrived later in the meeting.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Commissioner Trader to approve the minutes of the April 21, 2015 meeting. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

III. SPECIAL BUSINESS

2015-2016 Conservation District Fund Allocation Program (CDFAP) and Pennsylvania Utilities Commission (PUC) Unconventional Gas Well Fund (UGWF) Projected Distribution

The following information (attached) was distributed at the meeting.

- An Overview of the 2014-2015 CDFAP/UGWF Distribution
- An Overview of the 2014-2015 PUC/UGWF Distribution
- A Summary of the Salary/Benefits Projections for 2015-2016

- The 2015-2016 Estimated Funds for CDFAP/UGWF and PUC/UGWF
- Vehicle Base Price Quotes

To date, the State Conservation Commission (SCC) has not announced this year's allocations. It appears that they will request the same levels of funding as last year and that the distribution should remain the same.

The SCC also indicated that they plan to request that the line item in the State Budget, also remain the same as last year.

Last year, a total of \$167,394 in well allocation funds were received based on the following calculations.

- \$5,000 Base Fee
- \$239.41 Per Well (553 wells) (not to exceed \$200,000)
- \$25,189 (a general administrative grant) Evenly Distributed to all 66 Conservation Districts

Funding estimates for this year are as follows.

- \$5,000 Base Fee
- \$193,443.28 Well Figure (255 wells for 2014 for a Total of 808 Wells)
- \$25,189 General Administrative Grant

Based on these projections, a total amount of \$223,632.28 should be received this year for CDFAP/UGWF. These funds must be spent in accordance with the SCC's Statement of Policy, in the order of; staff salaries and benefits, administrative costs of the Conservation District, and lastly, for special projects.

This year's PUC/UGWF allocation is estimated to be \$56,818. The expenditure of these funds must be in accordance with the Conservation District Law; which is less restrictive than the Statement of Policy. The past two years, these funds have been set aside in a Capital Improvements/Building Fund.

Ms. Snider reviewed the spreadsheet that includes staff salaries (including those of the summer interns) the percentage of cost share funding expected, the conservation district's contribution, the county's contribution and the amount of CDFAP/UGWF needed for salaries (\$88,947.70). The salary estimates include a two percent Cost of Living Allocation (COLA) increase and the retirement benefits for the full time employees.

With a total projection of funding for this year at \$223,632.28, minus the \$88,947.70 needed for salaries and benefits, a balance of approximately \$134,684.58 would remain. Ms. Snider noted that, if the board chooses, the following expenditures could be made to utilize approximately \$93,800 in funding.

- \$55,000 – Mini Grants – 11 projects at \$5,000 each (must be completed by June 30, 2016)

- \$30,000 – Administrative
- \$8,000 – Office Equipment
- \$800 – Farmland Preservation

With the above expenditures and the \$88,947.70 needed for staff salaries and benefits, a balance of approximately \$40,884.58 would remain.

The following base price quotes, through the piggyback system, was received from Jeff Novak, Greene County Maintenance Department.

- Ford Explorer 4WD - \$27,514
- Chevy Traverse AWD - \$24,388
- Dodge Durango AWD - \$30,455
- Jeep Cherokee 4WD - \$24,340

Ms. Snider noted that the CDFAP/UGWF cannot be used for the purchase of a vehicle. The PUC/UGWF can be used for this purpose. For the past two years, these funds have been designated for the Capital Improvements/Building Fund.

In response to an inquiry by Commissioner Trader, Ms. Snider said that her preference of vehicles was the Ford Explorer and Jeep Cherokee.

The next item discussed was the mini grants. To date, nine applications, from individuals new to the Conservation District, have been received, with another three applications expected. Following is a summary of the six applications received for farm related practices.

Archer Farm – Spring Development
 Cole Farm – 3 Spring Developments and 3 Spring Repairs
 Morris-Miller Farm – Spring Development
 Williams Farm – Stormwater Management
 Wise Farm – 3 Spring Developments
 Wolfe Farm – 3 Spring Developments

Ms. Wright, who visited most of these farms, gave a summary of each application, noting some of their other needs, that may result in future projects.

She was uncertain as to whether the Cole's would be eligible to receive funding, since their farm is located in both Greene and Washington Counties (the house is located in Greene and some of the property is in Washington). It is believed that the Cole's pay all of their property taxes to Greene County.

Following discussion, the board agreed that, upon verification that the Cole's taxes are paid to Greene County, they should be eligible to receive a mini grant.

Mr. Paul of NRCS noted that the Morris-Miller, Williams, and the Wise projects should be viable projects. The Cole's have completed several feet of streambank fencing, but more is needed. Should any of these projects qualify for NRCS funding, it could be used in conjunction with GCCD funds to complete a larger project.

He reviewed the following projects in which NRCS assistance has been requested and the estimated cost for each project.

Dennis Downey – 611 Golden Oaks Road, New Freeport, PA - \$25,000
Currently, he has no livestock. Practices needed include approximately 6,000 feet of fencing, two spring developments, and one stream crossing. He also needs a conservation plan and a manure management plan. He has expressed an interest in rotation grazing.

Kurt & Jane Lambeth – 261 McCollum Road, Graysville, PA - \$11,000
Livestock – goats and horses. Practices needed include; approximately 1,500 feet of streambank fencing, one stream crossing, and one spring development. They also need a conservation plan and a manure management plan. They may be interested in rotational grazing.

Ed & Verna Pressley – 323 Toms Run Road, Brave, PA - \$750-\$1,000
Chemical control of invasives on a 5.9 acre floodplain restoration easement along Dunkard Creek.

Harlan Pust – 348 Woodies Road, Waynesburg, PA - \$10,000-\$15,000
He has a small number of sheep and goats and he wishes to establish a grazing system. He needs a conservation plan, a grazing plan, and manure management plan.

Rebecca Trigger – 127 Valley View Road, Jefferson, PA - \$1,500-\$5,000
She would like to develop a forest management plan for the wooded portion of her property.

Ms. Snider noted that these are additional projects that could be considered for Mini Grants through the UGWF/CDFAP.

Per Jerry Day, Ms. Wright noted the approximate costs, for spring developments as follows. Costs are based on the distance and the difficulty of the installation.

- New Spring Development - \$3,500-\$4,500
- Dividing Two Springs – An additional \$2,000
- Spring Repairs - \$2,000

Ms. Snider has visited the sites of the following two landowners who submitted applications for streambank stabilization projects. The cost estimates were received from Jim Tennant.

- Phillis Daniels, near Swartz – cost estimate of over \$15,000
- Jessica Vukmanic, near Mt. Morris – cost estimate of over \$5,000

The Greensboro/Monongahela Township Volunteer Fire Department has submitted an application for stormwater management for their new building. Since the building is in close proximity to baseball fields and Mon View Park, there is a safety concern with the installation a detention pond at the site. They have been approved to install stormwater controls to convey the water from the site utilizing a rock lined channel. The VFD is requesting funds to assist with the stone needed to stabilize the newly designed channel for stormwater control.

The Western PA Conservancy is a potential applicant. They would like to plant trees at their streambank stabilization site in Whiteley Township along the stream located on State Gamelands #223. GCCD Board will need to confirm the eligibility of this project, being that the organization is an outside organization, but the project is within the county.

Ms. Snider noted that in the past, mini grants, a maximum of five annually, were funded with money received for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits under the Chapter 102 program. It was noted that GCCD could continue to fund smaller projects with these funds and use CDFAP/UGWF special project funding for the remainder of projects or increase the size of the projects brought before the board. This decision will be brought before the board at the June regular meeting.

Discussed earlier in the meeting was the PUC/UGWF being set aside in a Capital Improvement/Building Fund for the construction or purchase of a building to house GCCD. A location mentioned at previous meetings, was the Wisecarver Reservoir, operated by the Southwestern PA Water Authority. Several years ago, rehabilitation of dam began, and upon completion, recreational facilities at the site were planned through the partnership of three entities; the Southwestern PA Water Authority, the County of Greene and Franklin Township. The status of the recreational facilities is unknown, but it is believed that Franklin Township withdrew from the recreation plans. Ms. Matesic suggested that GCCD contact Jack Golding, Executive Director, Southwestern PA Water Authority, regarding this matter. She will provide Mr. Golding's contact information to Mr. Hopkins so that he may contact him.

Mr. Hopkins noted that a new location could also bring forth the opportunity for education. Ms. Matesic mentioned a new educational initiative; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM). Many school districts in the region

have established a STEM Academy. This program, which many of the oil and gas companies are supporting, could be a funding opportunity for the Conservation District to incorporate an educational component into a new facility to focus on agriculture. Ms. Matesic noted that Indiana County is constructing a STEM building to focus on NASA. Ms. Matesic will request a copy of Indiana County's STEM proposal.

A discussion ensued regarding the funding needed to build and operate a building separate from the county. It was noted that a separation from the county would most likely result in the loss of staffs current benefits; payroll processing, health care and retirement.

Mr. Cowell asked Commissioner Trader if the county would be willing to provide an annual allocation to the Conservation District. With the primary election pending, and since he is one member of a three member Board, he was non-committal.

Ms. Snider noted that the PUC/UGWF could be used to enlist the services, through a Request for Proposals, of a consultant to prepare a plan that would include the amount of money needed to purchase the land, construct, maintain and operate the building, etc.

Commissioner Trader noted that a study, regarding sewage and water, is being conducted in Washington Township. The study, which is expected to be completed in about 3 months, will cost approximately \$90,000. Commissioner Trader also noted that Greene County has agreed to match the funds of Washington Township and they may consider a match with GCCD. Following the completion of our study, he suggested that GCCD schedule a meeting with the Greene County Commissioners to discuss the completion of a long term contract to provide staff salaries, etc.

Prior to the next GCCD meeting, the staff will contact the landowners, that Mr. Paul discussed earlier in the meeting, to determine if they can complete their projects in the time frame, by June 30, 2016, and compile a list for Board consideration in July.

Ms. Snider noted that the receipt of gas well funding has allowed GCCD to reserve other funding (E&S review fees).

The regular meeting of GCCD, scheduled to be held on May 19, 2015, was canceled. The next meeting will be June 16th, 2015.

IV. Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Greg Hopkins to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

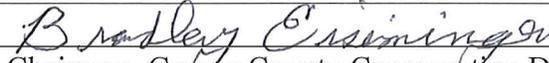
Respectfully submitted,

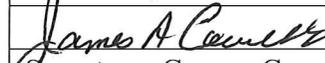


Rebecca K. Salosky
Fiscal Officer

MEETING MINUTES CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, agree that the minutes taken above were approved in their entirety by the Greene County Conservation District on June 16 , 2015.


Chairman, Greene County Conservation District


Secretary, Greene County Conservation District