

MINUTES

Regular Meeting

April 15, 2008

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rice at 10:05 a.m. at the Mezzanine Conference Room, Fort Jackson Building, Waynesburg, PA. Directors present were J. Robert Rice, Chairman; Bradley Eisiminger, Vice Chairman; Tom Headlee, Treasurer; Dave Coder, Commissioner Representative; Jim Cowell, Director; Jim Kenney, Director; and Bill Wentzel, Associate Director. Guests and District staff in attendance included Archie Trader, Commissioner; Robbie Matesic, Executive Director, Economic Development Office; Kevin Paul, Sustaining Greene County; Chuck Kubasik, DEP Field Representative; John Scott, Regional Director, PA Department of Agriculture; Bobbi Bailey, Coordinator, Penn's Corner RC&D; Suzy Petery, SDC, NRCS; Lisa Snider, Assistant District Manager/Watershed Specialist; Laurel Rush, Ag Manager; Todd Klaner, Resource Specialist; Mary Jane Kent, Administrative Assistant to Program Support, and Becky Salosky Fiscal Officer.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Kevin Paul of Sustaining Greene County was present to extend an invitation on behalf of himself and business partner, Kim Moninger, to the board to hold a future meeting at their place, Tally Hollow Farm, in Wayne Township. He said that \$154,000 of grant funding has been secured with another \$50,000 on the way. They would like to do a presentation for the board and perhaps partner with the District. Plans are to install an environmental science monitoring station. The board will discuss this matter further.

III. REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS

Suzy Petery – Suzy reported that the application deadline for the CREP program is April 18th with an additional application being processed for Greene County. Under the program, a large buffer is being planted along Route 188 on the former Alex Harry farm. Other practices (water supplies, fencing, etc.) are also installed on farms with livestock to protect the buffer. Survey, design, and construction are being done under the EQIP program. In order to qualify for the program, the applicant must be an agricultural producer and must buy and/or sell at least \$1,000 of agricultural products. In order to speed contract procedures, changes have been made in the application period making the deadline for 2009 funding on August 31, 2008.

Pennsylvania was awarded additional money for the WHIP program. Work is being done with Consol, PA Game Commission, and the Big Covey Chapter

of Quail Forever on the Robena Tract with the seeding of 100-120 acres of grassland habitat.

Bobbi Bailey – Since the matter of the Penn’s Corner Executive Board appears later on the agenda, Bobbi deferred comment until that time.

Chuck Kubasik – Chuck reported that House Bill 1020 just passed the Senate and is headed to the House. He said that this bill has been in the works for a long time and that it is an update to Act 217, the Conservation District Law. Some of the changes include a provision for the reimbursement of directors for some activities and the appointment of directors by the county. Currently, two names per vacancy are required and that will be changed to one name per vacancy.

Chuck announced the following meeting dates. The Dirt and Gravel Roads Conference, October 1-3 in Ligonier; the PACD Regional Directors meeting, October 29 in Westmoreland County; and the DEP Roundtable meeting, October 31.

John Scott – John said that he recently spoke to Jim Kenney regarding a bio security hazard with the numerous gas wells being drilled in the county. Mr. Kenney is concerned that the numerous vehicles entering fields could result in the spread of disease. Mr. Scott plans to discuss the matter with the Secretary of Agriculture and he advised the group to bring their concerns to the Farm Bureau as well. Robbie said that she will bring this matter to the attention of municipal officials when she meets with them on April 24th.

Laurel reported that she has been working with the Greene Team Pellet Company, Robbie, and the University of Pittsburgh’s Small Business Office. The company hopes to expand their operation by using switch grass to make pellets. She said that the Conservation District’s role would be to identify landowners who might grow the grass and/or provide technical information for the management of the crop.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Jim Cowell, the Minutes of the March meeting were approved as mailed. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed)

V. TREASURER’S REPORTS

On a motion by Jim Kenney and a second by Bradley Eisiminger, the Treasurer’s Reports were approved with the following additions.

General Fund

- CK 289 Scotty's Pizza – Mtg. Lunch - \$75.37
- CK 290 County of Greene – Salary Reimb. – Martin – March - \$861.41
- CK 291 County of Greene – Salary Reimb. – Lisa – March – \$2,303.30
- CK 292 County of Greene – Salary Reimb. – Laurel – March – \$2,196.48
- CK 293 County of Greene – Salary Reimb. – Todd – March - \$1,824.92
- CK 294 County of Greene – Reimb. – Computer Accessories - \$56.00
- CK 295 Giant Eagle – District Mtg. & Farmland Preserv. - \$17.79

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Lisa informed the board that a \$3,000 contribution for this year's Envirothon was received from Consol through the Community Foundation.
- b. Laurel reported that a thank you letter was received from Waynesburg Prosperous and Beautiful for our sponsorship of the Farmer's Market.
- c. Todd will attend the Ohio River Valley Water Sanitation Commission Workshop in Washington, PA on April 21st.
- d. Laurel announced that the Westmoreland Conservancy will sponsor "Conservation Connection at the Zoo" on May 3rd.

VII. REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

The Hughes Mini Grant Application for a diversion repair was presented. **A motion was made by Tom Headlee to accept the application and Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Action on the Appalachian Grazing Conference was tabled until further information is received.
- b. At last month's meeting Todd presented a proposal for a technology upgrade for review and consideration. Under the policy, \$25,000 would be set aside initially with future funding through accelerated review fees. Two computers would be replaced every three years and other equipment (GPS units, cameras, etc.) would be evaluated on a four year basis. If approved by the board, Todd said that he would draft official guidelines for the program and each purchase would be presented to the board for approval. **A motion was made by Bradley Eisiminger to set**

aside \$25,000 for technology upgrades and Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)

- c. Lisa reported that Laurel, Todd, and she have been working on the Alternative Energy Environmental Education Grant that was extended until August. After reviewing the proposal, they felt changes were needed and requested approval for a change in the scope of work and the budget. The original scope of work called for tours and most of the budget was for salaries for individuals who no longer are with the District. They felt that the money could be put to better use by holding a series of workshops. They will be meeting with Maggie Hall next week to get her planning assistance. Lisa went on to explain that plans are to hold workshops specific to the county, invite vendors and conduct energy audits, etc. She also said that the total grant award was \$20,000, but, approximately \$2,300 was used for an ad in the Greene Saver and toward salaries. **A motion was made by Jim Kenney to approve the change to the scope of work and budget. Bradley Eisiminger seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- d. Action on Jackson Township's Dirt and Gravel Road Contract for Macedonia Road was tabled at last month's meeting to restructure the contract. The township has since reworked the contract for a total of \$33,945.95. They made a change from an arched bottomless culvert to a structural pipe "a squash pipe" which the Dirt and Gravel Roads Center has Okayed. The restructured contract calls for two pipes of 30' and 40', 90' of 24" pipe, 160' of 15" pipe, lots of stone, and a 600' pipe to drain a spring along side of the road. Suzy expressed concern regarding the size and grade of the 600' pipe and said that she will look at it further. **A motion was made by Jim Kenney to allocate the funds for this project. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Todd requested board consideration for the addition of a second E&S Technician. He said that the amount of plans and their complexity have increased significantly, making it difficult for him to do both reviews and field inspections. He thought that perhaps someone could be hired on a part time basis to help with the inspections and that a total of \$5,800 is available through the state's cost share program. Commissioner Coder asked that written justification be submitted to their office and Commissioner Trader requested a job description. Robbie mentioned the possibility of using a college intern. Chuck cautioned that a lot of training and knowledge of this state regulated program is required. **A motion was made by Bradley Eisiminger to work with the county to**

advertise the position. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)

- b. Laurel presented the proposed Budget and Objectives for 2008. She reviewed the changes from last year's objectives such as eliminating completed projects and being more specific in some areas. Special Project additions include developing a media plan to promote conservation programs, working with the County's Tourism Department to identify agri-tourism opportunities, and the sponsorship of the farmers market. She also said that several phone calls have been received regarding a tree sales program so this was also added. Chuck recommended that working to update the nominating organizations list be added.

Laurel briefly discussed the budget stating that there are four budgets: General Fund, Dirt and Gravel Roads, Clean Water Fund, and West Nile Virus. Becky added that she is working with the Controller's Office on the financial report and these are preliminary figures. Laurel also said that the committee list should also be updated. **After discussion, a motion was made by Dave Coder to approve the 2008 Budget and Objectives and Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**

- c. Bobbi Bailey reported that the position of Commissioner Representative is vacant on the Penn's Corner RC&D board. She has sent a letter to Robbie requesting that the position be filled as soon as possible. She reviewed the current representatives as follows: Robbie Matesic, County Alternate, Ralph Bell, Director Representative, Martin Niverth, Alternate Director Representative; and Lisa Snider, Member-at-Large. The replacement of Ralph Bell will be needed. Action on this matter was tabled until the next meeting.
- d. Laurel announced that the PACD Joint Annual Conference will be held July 27-30 in State College. Sponsors are being sought with a minimum sponsorship of \$100. Action on this matter was tabled.
- e. **A motion was made by Dave Coder to reserve two spaces at the Greene County Fair at a cost of \$100. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- f. Lisa informed the board that Foundation Coal has agreed to donate \$2,500 to the District to provide college scholarships to the winning Envirothon team. She also said that Terry Dayton will provide a check at the beginning of May for this year and he feels that it should continue for a number of years. Lisa said that this program will be managed the same as our old scholarship program, with the money being held until the students

attend college. A separate account will need to be established. The board requested that a thank you letter be sent to Foundation Coal for their generosity.

Lisa also said that Foundation Coal will again contribute \$500.00 for a student to attend the Conservation Leadership School.

X. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports were mailed with the meeting notices.

XI. The next regular meeting will be May 20th

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Prior to recessing to Executive Session, Chairman Rice asked for comments regarding the invitation by Kevin Paul to hold a meeting and a tour at the Tally Hollow Farm. **After discussion, a motion was made by Jim Kenney to hold the June meeting here at the office and adjourn for a tour of the Tally Hollow Farm. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed, 4-1, with Dave Coder dissenting)**

Chairman Rice called a recess at 12:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca K. Salosky
Fiscal Officer