

MINUTES

Regular Meeting

March 17, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Eisiminger at 10:10 a.m. at the Mezzanine Conference Room of the Fort Jackson Building, Waynesburg, PA. Directors present were Bradley Eisiminger, Vice Chairman; Tom Headlee, Treasurer; Jim Cowell, Secretary; Dave Coder, Commissioner Representative; and Jim Kenney, Director. Guests and District staff in attendance included Robbie Matesic, Executive Director, Economic Development; Suzy Petery, SDC, NRCS; Lisa Snider, Assistant District Manager/Watershed Specialist; Mary Jane Kent, Administrative Assistant to Program Support; and Becky Salosky, Fiscal Officer.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were received.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Tom Headlee and a second by Dave Coder, the minutes of the February 17th meeting were approved as mailed. (Motion Passed)

IV. TREASURER'S REPORT

On a motion by Jim Cowell, the Treasurer's Reports were approved with the following additions. Dave Coder seconded. (Motion Passed)

General Fund

Ck# 509 Scotty's Pizza – District Meeting Lunches – Approx. \$80.00

Ck# 510 Pitney Bowes – Postage Machine Rental - \$161.72

V. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Lisa announced that the Southwest Regional Meeting will be held on March 25th with a deadline for registration of March 18th. Jim Kenney indicated that he plans to attend the meeting and the registration will be mailed.

- b. Lisa reported that planning has begun on the 2012 Canon Envirothon. She requested approval to attend their first meeting in June, most likely in State College; to see if she could help with the event. **A motion was made Jim Kenney to grant approval to Lisa to attend the meeting. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- c. Lisa also announced that the state Envirothon will be held on May 19th at Bald Eagle State Park in Centre County. Due to budget cuts, the event will be held for one day and she requested approval to attend, if her schedule allows. **A motion was made by Jim Kenney to approve her attendance and Dave Coder seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- d. The last meeting announcement Lisa made was the quarterly meeting of Penn's Corner RC&D to be held on March 23rd.

VI. REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Ronald O. Bland – Franklin, Wayne, Center Twps., 160 acres

Mr. Bland also submitted an application for a Mini Grant to develop a spring. Since the site has not been visited, Suzy recommended that the board accept the application. **A motion was made by Tom Headlee to approve the Request for Assistance and accept the mini grant application. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. On Laurel's behalf, Suzy discussed the next item of business, the Isaac Pierce mini grant application. She said that the board approved the application about a year ago, but no work has been completed. She recommended that the board cancel the application and have Laurel send a letter of notification. This would "free up" the money and Mr. Pierce could always re-apply. **A motion was made by Tom Headlee to cancel the Pierce Mini Grant Application. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed). She also said that the board may want to set a policy for future applications.**
- b. Due to Martin's absence, because of a medical problem, action on the Memorandum of Understanding was tabled. **The motion was made by Dave Coder and Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- c. Action on the Annual Plan of Operations was also tabled until Martin can be present. Robbie said that a revision is needed in the agricultural

section. **A motion was made by Dave Coder to table action and Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**

- d. Lisa reported that Tracy Zivkovich, Director of Human Resources, contacted her last week regarding interviews for the West Nile Virus position. Last year, Mr. Kenney took part in the interviews and volunteered to do the same this year. Robbie said that she will have Tracy contact him regarding scheduling. Lisa said that Martin suggested that Dustin take part in the interviews and Robbie agreed and will check with Tracy.
- e. Robbie discussed the last item under Old Business, water resources. She said that Brian Ratica worked last summer to get us started on a water resources program. The Conservation District is working with DCED on floodplain management and FEMA is updating their floodplain maps. Although the floodplain boundaries have not changed, the revised maps, that will include an aerial image and 2 foot contours, should be available in the next 6 months. Also, DEP has asked the county to draft a county wide Storm water Management Plan and the Commissioners have agreed. This plan will require every municipality to adopt storm water ordinances. She said that the Planning Commission does have a storm water ordinance and that all new development is evaluated. As part of the storm water planning process, DEP is urging the county to consider conducting an integrated water resources plan that would address other issues such as floodplains, water quality and abandoned mine discharges, well drilling, as well as storm water. They will provide funding of 75 percent of the cost. Robbie said that this is a huge undertaking and that the Conservation District will be very much involved.

Martin has been meeting with Foundation Coal regarding mitigation efforts for the opening of the new mines. They have hired a group of professors from WVU to conduct water testing on Dunkard. The PA Fish & Boat is also conducting aquatic studies on the river in cooperation with officials from Pennsylvania and West Virginia. They will need approximately \$10,000 for these studies and the board will be asked to consider this matter at the next meeting. Meanwhile, we have concerns regarding the South Fork of Ten Mile and Ten Mile Creek and contact has been made with Professor Dave Argent of California University to do testing of those areas as well. We have a pre-proposal, but it does not include cost figures. Robbie would like the Conservation District to work closely with these entities conducting the studies and with the municipalities in developing storm water ordinances.

Suzy stressed the importance of protecting our water quality.

Gas well drilling was discussed at length.

Regarding the stream reclassification request by the coal companies , Robbie said that DEP's biologists were in the county last week to begin their field work which will take a couple of years. They will be available for a meeting in May.

Robbie also said that Planning Commission Chairman, Paul Board, attended a presentation by Foundation Coal regarding the proposed Freeport Mine. He found it to be very information and has asked them to have a presentation and invite the County Commissioners, and the boards of the Planning Commission and Conservation District.

Robbie said that Laurel has been working with Washington Township on an ag security area and that Cindy Bailey of Greene Speak made a Right-to-Know Request to obtain additional information. She said that the Township filed an application in 1992, but it was never properly recorded. She also said that Cindy's story was very factual. We received a copy of a letter from Bill Hook, the township's solicitor, to the township outlining what has been done wrong. She also said that Laurel has not done anything wrong and it's the township's responsibility to ensure that it's properly recorded.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **After discussion, a motion was made by Tom Headlee to donate \$250.00 to the Grassland Evaluation Contest. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- b. Lisa reported that the District was awarded a Growing Greener Grant for \$97,721.00 for stream bank stabilization on Whiteley Creek. She said that Suzy and she had previously worked with the Game Commission in this area, PA Game lands 223, and can expand on the project. The Game Commission, the PA Fish & Boat Commission, and inmates from the County Jail will be available for assistance with this project. She will be meeting with the Stu Demanski, Grant Advisor, to review the scope of work and the budget. **After discussion, a motion was made by Jim Kenney to approve the grant contract and Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- c. In addition to the Whiteley Creek Project, Lisa also submitted an application for Growing Greener funds for the Grigsby Project, but, it was denied. She said that only 2 out of 10 acid mine drainage projects were funded and that DEP is checking to see why it was denied. They will keep trying to fund the project. It is speculated that this may have to do with the release of abandoned mine funds through SMRA and Lisa distributed

information regarding this. Robbie asked the board to draft a letter to Representative DeWeese and Senator Stout expressing the need for funding of abandoned mine projects. **After discussion, a motion was made by Dave Coder to send a letter to the legislators and Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed)**

Suzy added that there was an old program, the Rural Abandoned Mine Program (RAMP), which reclaimed old mine sites and projects are still “on the books” and plans are on file.

- d. Lisa announced that the Alternative Energy Forum will be held on March 28th at Waynesburg Central Elementary School from 9:00 to 3:00. She said that Martin has been working with the Waynesburg Quarterback Club to provide food for the event and she approached Foundation Coal and Gen Power who had each agreed to make a \$500.00 donation. Martin, Laurel, and she met and thought \$1,500 would be needed and that the District could possibly contribute \$500.00. Now, however, Gen Power may not be donating \$500.00 so \$1,000 may be needed. **The board felt that this was a lot of money and since Martin was not present to explain, a motion was made by Dave Coder to contribute \$500.00 at this time and if additional money is needed, it would be brought before the board again. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- e. **Since Martin was not present, discussion of the budget was tabled. A motion was made by Dave Coder and Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- f. Lisa presented her budget for the Dirt and Gravel Roads program. **After discussion, a motion was made by Tom Headlee to approve the Dirt & Gravel Roads budget. Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**

IX. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports were mailed with the meeting notices. In addition, Lisa said that she’s been working with Robbie interviewing consultants for the storm water plan. She also said that the newsletter was recently completed.

X. REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS

Suzy Petery – Suzy distributed information on the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. She explained that through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Economic Stimulus Bill, money is available for

emergency watershed protection, particularly to buy floodplain easements. She said that there will be a 3 week application period which will end March 27th and asked that anyone who knows of old dams, etc. that need to be removed to let her know. The main purpose of the program is to protect and allow areas along rivers and streams to revert without obstruction. She also reported that the American Rivers Organization has been doing work on Dunkard Creek and will join the U.S. Geological Survey next week to do an aquatic study. Suzy also reported that the NRCS deficit in Pennsylvania is ½ million dollars and that there were 7 employees in the three county area and there are now 5.

Jim Cowell thanked the staff for their work on his application for the national Environmental Stewardship Award. Also, he said Laurel has been selected to receive a special recognition award through the Pennsylvania Cattleman's Association. She will be presented a plaque at an upcoming meeting. Their farm will be hosting the 2010 Cattleman's Association Field Day.

XI. The next Regular Meeting will be April 21st

XII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Dave Coder to adjourn the meeting at 11:35 a.m. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca K. Salosky
Fiscal Officer