

MINUTES

Regular Meeting

October 21, 2008

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The meeting was called to order by Vice Chairman Eisiminger at 10:20 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; Archie Trader, Director; Jim Kenney, Director; Greg Hopkins, Associate Director; and Bill Wentzel, Associate Director. Guests and District staff present were Robbie Matesic, Executive Director, Economic Development; Martin Niverth, District Manager; Lisa Snider, Assistant District Manager/Watershed Specialist; Laurel Rush, Ag Manager; and Becky Salosky, Fiscal Officer.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Martin stated that Foundation Coal was going to attend the meeting to discuss an abandoned mine project, but needed more time to prepare.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion by Tom Headlee and a second by Dave Coder, the minutes of the September 16th meeting were approved as mailed. (Motion Passed)

IV. TREASURER'S REPORTS

On a motion by Jim Cowell and a second by Jim Kenney, the Treasurer's Reports were approved with the following additions. (Motion Passed)

General Fund

Ck # 405 South Side Deli – Meeting Lunches – Approximately \$75.00

Ck # 406 Martin Niverth – Expenses - \$26.91

NPDES/CWF

Ck # 188 Bill Wentzel – Expenses - \$28.25

West Nile Virus

Ck # 217 Ramada Inn – PVC Conference - \$169.26

Ck # 218 PVC Association – Conference Registration - \$120.00

V. CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Martin read the letter received from Karl Brown of the State Conservation Commission regarding our request for the removal of inactive nominating organizations. The letter states that the Purebred Breeders Cooperative Association and the Sheep and Wool Growers Co-Op will be removed from the list of nominating organizations. An updated list was also provided.
- b. Martin announced that the next PACD Southwest Regional Meeting will be held on October 29th from 9:30 to 3:00 at the Westmoreland County Conservation District. In light of the increase in PACD dues, Martin encouraged director attendance. Jim Kenney indicated that he would attend and Lisa will also attend. **A motion was made by Archie Trader to allow two representatives to attend. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- c. Martin also announced that the Conservation District Educator Conference will be held in Watsonstown on November 19th. **A motion was made by Archie Trader to grant approval for someone to attend if they so desire. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- d. The next item of correspondence discussed was the request to sponsor a scholarship for a producer to attend the Appalachian Grazing Conference that will be held on March 6 and 7. The cost is \$75.00 which will cover the registration. **A motion was made by Archie Trader to sponsor a scholarship for \$75.00 and Dave Coder seconded. (Motion Passed)**
- e. Martin read the letter from the Dunkard Creek Watershed Association commending Dustin and Brian for their presentation of the West Nile Virus program.

- f. Laurel reported that a thank you letter was received from Waynesburg University for our donation to the homecoming race. Donations will be used for their mission trip.

VI. REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Mark Barto – 138 acres – Washington Township

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

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Martin reported that the lime spreader rental agreement has been submitted to Farley for review and we are awaiting his comments. He said that since the demonstration is scheduled for Saturday, and a handout is needed, he asked if a draft rental agreement can be distributed. **The board did not want to delay renting the equipment, so a motion was made by Archie Trader to use the draft agreement pending Farley's approval. Jim Kenney seconded. (Motion Passed)**

Laurel reported that the lime spreader has been delivered as was the missing spare tire. **A motion was made by Jim Kenney to accept delivery of the equipment and make payment. Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**

- b. Robbie discussed the next item of business, the Memorandum of Understanding with the County. She said that a meeting will be scheduled with the Committee following today's meeting.

At this time, last night's workshop with the Planning Commission and the Conservation District boards was discussed. Robbie said that there are numerous issues coming before the Planning Commission and it's imperative that both boards work together to ensure streamlined and sensitive development. She said that the Planning Commission has heard public criticism of some industrial development; but on the other hand, we are an industrial county and that is our economy. She also said that there must be a balance between conservation, environmental protection and industry.

Bradley commended Paul Boord, Chairman of the Planning Commission, for his effective management of the meeting and he mentioned Foundation Coal's plan to develop a mine near Holbrook. Foundation Coal received approval for an air shaft when plans are to develop a portal and this was

not known until the neighbors complained. Robbie said that a meeting was held last week with Foundation Coal and they were very cooperative. Their perspective is that when the financing and planning with corporate headquarters is approved, then an announcement is made. The Planning Commission feels that the information is needed when property owners are being impacted. The impact that this size of a development will have was discussed such as the increased traffic. Commissioner Coder specifically mentioned the dangerous turnoff onto the Oak Forest Road. Another problem mentioned was the lack of communication with DEP. Robbie said that when Foundation Coal found that the Conservation District was opposing the stream reclassification they requested a meeting. At that meeting, they explained that there are three DEP permits needed to open the mine. A mining operations permit, a surface facilities permit, and a permit for the waste sites. The permit for the waste site is what prompted them to apply for the stream reclassification. They are concerned that DEP will put so many restrictions on the development that it would be economically unfeasible. Robbie said that they were told that we will not agree to relax the water quality standards. In closing, Archie added that he felt it was important that the two boards are working together.

- c. Martin said that the Annual Awards Luncheon is tentatively scheduled for December 5th. He is preparing information and asked the board to grant authority to the committee (Mr. Eisiminger and Mr. Trader) to move forward with the luncheon. **A motion was made by Dave Coder to grant the committee the authority and Tom Headlee seconded. (Motion Passed)**

Also, the December meeting will be held prior to the annual awards luncheon.

- d. Martin stated that he included a packet regarding the PACD dues with the meeting information for board review. He distributed an addition to the information, a letter from Northumberland County, and a sheet explaining what PACD does. No action will be taken on this matter until Mr. Kenney attends the upcoming Regional Meeting.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Laurel presented the award nominees as decided by the committee after their farm visits. The Outstanding Cooperator Award to Burkey and Warren Lilly who's farm is located at the head waters of Crooked Run in Dunkard Township. They originally signed on as cooperators in 1972 and resigned in 2002. They own approximately 500 acres in Pennsylvania as well as acreage in West Virginia. A large portion of their farm is a reclaimed strip mine. They currently have an EQIP grazing contract.

They have a 200 cow operation with 30 replacement heifers, many spring developments, cross fencing, pond exclusion fencing, and a solar pump.

Mark and Cristie Barto were presented to receive the Wildlife Conservation Award. They own approximately 130 acres in Washington Township on Craynes Run. They have 15 acres of wildlife riparian area and wetland enhancement. They also have streambank fencing and crossings, animal walkways, and spring developments.

As recommended by Forester Ralph Campbell, Arlen Perkey of Center Township was selected to receive the Forestry Award. He has been a cooperater since 2001 and his property is located on Clay Lick Run. Mr. Perkey received the award in 1992, but has accomplished much since. He has written a book entitled "Crop Tree Management" and continues to be very active in the Southwestern PA Woodlot Owners Association. He has a CREP contract where he has implemented buffers and wildlife plantings.

A motion was made by Archie Trader to accept all three of the nominations and Dave Coder seconded. (Motion Passed)

Jim Cowell requested that we present a special recognition award to Suzy Petery for her work with the Conservation District. **A motion was made by Tom Headlee to present this award and Jim Cowell seconded. (Motion Passed)**

Other awards that will be presented include the Conservation Speaker Award to Beth Jenkins who is attending Penn State, and probably will not be able to attend the luncheon, but will be represented by Curt Hughes. The winning Envirothon team, Carmichaels, will also be recognized.

- b. Lisa reported that she and Mary Jane attended the Dirt and Gravel Roads Training. The first day was administrative training with a diagnostic training to follow. A field visit was made to determine the problem and then a solution was presented the next day. She also learned that funding does not have to be used directly on the road, but can be used to fix a problem on the land around the road. She said that she plans to request diagnostic training for our supervisors. Martin commended Lisa and Mary Jane for their work on the program. In closing, Lisa said that approximately 22 people are registered for the upcoming Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Training.
- b. Martin informed the board that a landowner relocated a portion of Muddy Creek along Route 21 near Khedive and now must face a violation from DEP. A meeting will be held on October 23rd with all involved parties.

He also said that the problem must be fixed or neighboring properties may be flooded.

IX. DISCUSSION OF STAFF REPORTS

Staff reports were mailed with the meeting notices. Additionally, Lisa reported on the Falls Hollow Dirt and Gravel Road Project. She said that the project is mostly finished and the contract amount was paid; however, there was not enough funding to apply DSA on the entire road. The Quality Assurance Board has agreed to provide an additional 10 percent to finish the paving and Atlas has agreed to do the labor. The Edgar Hill Road project in Washington Township is finished and Lisa plans to visit the site today. She also reported that Brian Ratica has resigned to accept a position in Maryland and that before he left he managed to visit all the townships except for two. He has created a spreadsheet with the information that he gathered. Robbie added that she asked Brian work part time to finish the project and he has agreed.

Martin announced that a field day is being sponsored by Consol to showcase practices done on Enlow Fork tomorrow at 2:00 p.m.

Laurel said that she hopes to have the first farm preserved under the Farmland Preservation Program in time for the annual awards luncheon. Regarding another matter, Laurel said that Jim Cowell was approved for a mini grant for a project he is currently working on. Since he has received a loan through the Farm Service Agency, they have requested that we make the payment directly to them. Laurel plans to draft a document for Mr. Cowell to sign that states that the money will be directed to the FSA.

X. REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES AND GUESTS

XI. The next regular meeting will be November 18th

XII. ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Archie Trader and a second by Bradley Eisiminger, the meeting was declared adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca K. Salosky
Fiscal Officer