



Greene County Conservation District

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GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT REGULAR MEETING MINUTES November 21, 2023

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. James A. Cowell, Jr. called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at Greene County Fairgrounds Building 10, 107 Fairgrounds Road, Waynesburg, PA.

Those in attendance were as follows:

GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS

James A. Cowell, Jr.-Chairman; Commissioner Mike Belding-Vice Chairman; Greg Hopkins-Treasurer; Dave Shipman and Glodenna Halstead. Associate Directors: Dominick Barbetta, Ryan Wise, Becky Salosky, Carol Adamson, Keith Golden, George Scull, Rebecca Trigger, and Kevin White

GUESTS AND COOPERATING AGENCIES

Introduction of new employee, Theresa Prochaska, Agricultural Conservation Specialist who started with the district on October 23, 2023.

Ryan Furrer-Regional District Rep Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP); Russ Gibb-DCNR PA Service Forester.

STAFF

Lisa Snider-District Director; Lindsay Kozlowski-District Office Manager; Zachary Basinger-Environmental Permitting Manager; Tiffany Stewart-Watershed Specialist, Theresa Prochaska-Agricultural Conservation Specialist, and Heather Yorko-Fiscal Officer.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to approve September 19, 2023 minutes. Glodenna Halstead seconded. (Motion Passed)

TREASURER'S REPORT

Ms. Yorko distributed an updated Treasurer's Report to the board before the start of the meeting. Ms. Yorko apologized that her QuickBooks was not cooperating when the meeting packet was being mailed so she had to email the Treasurers Report to the board members.

The updated Treasurer's Report includes a check to the County of Greene for \$58,947.19 and a check to reimbursement the district for Cree Farm's Growing Greener Grant in the amount of \$303,125.19.

George Scull asked if issues with receiving invoices in a timely manner from the Controller's office was resolved and Ms. Yorke answered that there were changes taking place in the Controller's office and that she felt that the issues would be resolved in the next month or so.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to approve the treasurer's report. Commissioner Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)

REQUEST OF ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM

Ms. Snider requested the addition of West Nile Virus matching funds and Hay meeting with Penn State Extension Office.

A motion was made by Glodenna Halstead to add the two items to the agenda. Greg Hopkins seconded. (Motion Passed)

CORRESPONDENCES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

Ms. Snider reminded the board that the 2023 Annual Banquet will be held December 6th at Valley View Farm starting at 5:30pm. Invitations were included in the meeting packets and members were asked to RSVP to Ms. Yorke by November 29th so that a headcount could be provided to the caterer.

STAFF REPORTS

Written reports were included in the meeting packets.

Lindsay Kozlowski – Ms. Kozlowski stated that she has been working on the banquet and she has had a few pre-bid meetings and a QAB rankings for Dirt and Gravel Roads.

Zack Basinger – Mr. Basinger stated that the West Nile Virus Program we collected 10,501 mosquitos submitted 207 samples with 5 samples tested positive for West Nile giving us a 2.5% positive rate which is a little above the national average, but nothing to be alarmed about. We collected 64 ticks with 32 of those testing positive for Lime and 1 testing positive for anaplasmosis.

On November 6th we had our last tire clean up, collecting 759 tires with the help of Ryan Wise and a piece of equipment from Jefferson Township. This brings our year-end total to 2,940 tires and almost 7,200 tires in three years.

In the WNV 2024 grant Ms. Snider and Mr. Basinger talked to DEP and they are reducing sites from 10 to 6 once the interns finish and it is just Mr. Basinger.

Ms. Adamson asked how our level of WNV positives compare to state averages. Mr. Basinger said that we are a little above the national and state averages of 1%, but not enough to be concerned.

Mr. Scull made the comment that he feels that the district has done great job on the Tire Recycling Program, but he wanted to know if we were getting tires off the side of the road not from tire shops. Mr. Basinger explained that our registration process helps to ensures that we are getting tires from individuals not businesses.

Mr. Basinger explained that DEP is taking action on the Kirby tire pile, he has to get rid of at least two trailers a month or he faces jail time and penalties.

Ms. Adamson asked where our recycled tires go and Mr. Basinger explained that they are taken to a plant in Weston West Virginia where they are turned into mulch.

Tiffany Stewart – Ms. Stewart stated that the Fall Newsletter went out last week and there would be extras in the office starting tomorrow if you didn't receive one.

Ms. Stewart sent out two more Growing Greener reimbursement since her staff report was submitted, one for Cree Farm and one for Willis Farm.

Tess Prochaska—Ms. Prochaska stated that she doesn't have much to report especially for October, she has been doing trainings and reading about E & S, ACAP, and GRACE Program. Mr. Scull asked about Ms. Prochaska's background. Ms. Prochaska explained that she is from Marshall County West Virginia, she grew up on a small hobby farm, she rode horses growing up and went to West Liberty University earning a Master of Science in Environmental Science.

Heather Yorko – Ms. Yorko apologized stating that she had gotten hurt and been off for several days in October and was getting caught up. Ms. Yorko stated that she is working with Mr. Hartley, Auditor in the Controller's office, to get invoices until someone is hired to fill the open Accounts Receivable Specialist position.

Lisa Snider- Ms. Snider wanted to update the board about GRACE Program for 2022, which will close at the end of December, she has reimbursed approximately \$65,000 with a lot of contracts that have not been completed yet.

Mr. Hopkins asked about the 8-week online class called "Fence Post Fundamental", Ms. Snider explained that it covered numerous topics and was well worth the \$40.00 fee that was charged. Mr. Scull expressed what an asset we have in Justin Brackenrich at the Penn State Extension office in Waynesburg.

OLD BUSINESS

Penn's Corner Charitable Trust and Grigsby Site

Ms. Snider stated that she is removing this item from old business. Funds have been transferred to Clean Streams Foundation; DEP stated that there is a consent order but without funding the district will not be held accountable in the future.

Ag Complaint – Update

Kovalcheck Road – Ms. Snider stated that she had a phone call a week and a half before the meeting with Paul Cinkan, Alene Evan, Laurel Rush and Mr. Gall. Mr. Gall was given a couple of options to develop Manure Management plans, Ag E&S plans, permitting for the stream crossings and actually implement the plans, start growing grass and making sure everything is managed or quit farming.

Ms. Snider requested that Mr. Gall has to hire a professional to develop and submit his plans to the district, because it is a conflict that we have been out for complaints over the last year regarding his property and animals.

Mr. Gall requested copy of manure management plan that Jared Zinn help to develop for him and it has been mailed out to him.

NEW BUSINESS

Request for Assistance

There were no requests for assistance.

2024 Meeting Dates

Meeting dates for 2024, still the 3rd Tuesday each month which Ms. Yorke had checked for conflicts.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to advertise the 2024 GCCD Meeting Dates. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

2024 Budget Review Draft

Ms. Snider passed out a draft of the 2024 Budget and left it up to the board whether they wanted to review it now or set up a budget committee meeting and revisit this at the January 17th meeting.

Ms. Snider, Commissioner Belding and Greg Hopkins decided to meet at 3:00pm on December 12th for Budget Committee meeting. Ms. Yorke will remind Mr. Hopkins and Commissioner Belding on Friday, December 8th of the meeting at 3:00pm December 12th.

ACAP Project Update Willis Grant Amendment

Ms. Stewart asked the board to amend the Willis ACAP for another \$10,000 to enable the project to be completed with calculation error and COVID cost increases; the original budget was done prior to COVID and included an addition error from PennWest Partners for Fish & Wildlife invoice. Additionally, there were some changes to the plantings that were originally planned that caused cost increases. We have the ACAP funds available and needing to be utilized.

Penn West has contributed \$27,000 as match and the Willis have contributed in \$36,000 match. This additional monies will take care of a mathematical mistake in the Growing Greener Grant, change of the grass seed mix with wildflowers, pollinators and trees and COVID cost increases.

We have workshops in planning for the upcoming year with SW Region Watershed, Penn State Extension and Penn West has already taken student out for a field day in October.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to increase Willis Farm ACAP funds by \$10,000. Commissioner Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)

Clarification on Land Ownership Vs. Trust

Ms. Snider had a question to bring to the board as the result of an ACAP farm visit. GCCD had decided that only owned property was able to apply for the ACAP program in Greene County. The Galings are interested in participating in ACAP, however, their property is owned by a trust so Ms. Snider wanted the boards opinion on if that would be acceptable.

Mr. Gibb, DCNR PA Service Forester, explained that NRCS policy was to have all trust members agree and be willing to sign the ACAP contract; ACAP is following NRCS standards.

A motion was made by Commissioner Belding to approve adding the capability to work with Trusts for ACAP. Greg Hopkins seconded. (Motion Passed)

DGLVR Fall Contract Approvals

Ms. Kozlowski stated that last week QAB went out and ranked 3 roads, two DGR Aleppo and Wayne Townships and one LVR which is Waynesburg Borough. The QAB recommended funding all three projects. The total to complete both Dirt and Gravel Road projects is \$291,275.40 and there is \$407,661.43 available. The QAB recommends funding both projects. Low Volume Road project is the Waynesburg Borough \$20,329.04 we have \$156,737.33 available and need to spend about \$105,000.00 of that by June. The QAB recommended funding the project.

There is also an amendment needed for Monongahela Township DGR Leslie Road project for \$40,000 it was contracted by the new stream crossings policy was put in place, but now project has changes to meet the new requirements. This is a high estimate, but this will be the first stream crossing we will bid out completely under the new policy.

After discussion, the board decided to fund the DGLVR projects as recommended by the QAB.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to approve the Wayne and Aleppo Township Dirt and Gravel Road projects for \$291,275.40. Commissioner Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to approve the Waynesburg Borough Low Volume Road project. Commissioner Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)

A motion was made by Commissioner Belding to approve the amendment to the Monongahela Township project due permitting changes. Greg Hopkins seconded. (Motion Passed)

The QAB recommended that we open up another round of applications that end March 31,2024. We have some funding in Low Volume that we need to get into contracts to meet our spending requirement by June 30, 2024.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to approve opening another round of application to end March 31, 2024 for DGLVR. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

PA Envirothon Donation

Ms. Snider requested that GCCD annually donates \$500.00 to PA Envirothon as long as our budget allows.

A motion was made by Commissioner Belding to make an annual, line-item donation to PA Envirothon. Greg Hopkins seconded. (Motion Passed)

FFA Jacket Donation both West Greene and Waynesburg – Make annual at \$250

Ms. Snider requested that GCCD annually donate \$250.00 to FFA Jackets for West Greene and Waynesburg students as long as our budget allows.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to add \$250 Donation to FFA for Greene County students Jackets an annual donation line-item in the budget. Dave Shipman seconded (Motion Passed)

PACD Fall Meeting Summary

Ms. Snider stated that there were two different motions sent for amendment to the Clean Stream Law policy. Five regions voted to not support any streambank fencing legislation. The Southwest Region of Pennsylvania PACD recognizes the significant environmental benefit of Streambank fencing in a pasture used for grazing to restrict livestock access to stream. PACD supports education and incentives for voluntary installation of streambank fencing. PACD is in favor of allowing administrative agencies of the Commonwealth to require fencing along a stream. PACD is apposed to allowing municipalities to require fencing along streams. After discussion Mr. Furrer explained that he attended this meeting and the requirements that were agreed did not include changes, but possibly a miscommunication due to a note taking error.

The voting is on January 25, 2024. Ms. Snider can seek some clarification to make sure that we have a clear understanding of these motions prior to voting.

GRACE 2023 Discussion – Hildreth

Ms. Snider and Mr. Cowell explained that Mr. Hildreth misunderstood direction to sign up for GRACE at the Greene County Fair and proceeded with watering troughs to GRACE specifications thinking that he would be reimbursed. Mr. Hildreth brought receipts to the office after the GRACE Program had closed and asked Ms. Snider to ask the board to consider helping with the invoice costs.

A motion was made by Commissioner Belding to not help with invoices submitted outside of GRACE Program closure for the year. Glodenna Halstead seconded. (Motion Passed)

West Nile Virus Matching Funds

Ms. Snider stated that Mr. Basinger put together West Nile Virus Grant 2024 and the West Nile Habitat Reduction/Tire Recycling Events for next year. The state cut funding to \$2598 which is enough to possibly do one dumpster. DEP made an error in their math only adding the dumpster fees, but did not include the hauling fees. Ms. Snider and Mr. Basinger tried to explain the error and get it corrected, but DEP would not give any additional funds to Greene County. DEP suggested that Mr. Basinger reach out to the district and see if they would be willing to match funds given which would be enough money for four dumpsters. Another option is using the almost \$2400.00 that have been collected at the tire recycling events; some of this was used for the November recycling event.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to match funds in the amount of \$2,600 to continue the West Nile Virus Habitat Reduction with Tire Recycling events. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

Hay Meeting with Penn State Extension Office

Ms. Snider has been talking to Justin Brakenrich of Penn State Extension to start Farmer series, the first attempt will be March 13, 2024 from 6-8 at the Greene County Fairgrounds. Ms. Snider will be using her Workshop funding for this event and asked board members to please spread the word.

CONSERVATION DISTRICT OUTREACH

Hay Meeting with Penn State Extension

REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES

Ryan Furrer—PADEP- Mr. Furrer stated that yesterday was the 102 Ag compliance review follow up meeting.

Russ Gibb—DCNR PA Service Forester – Mr. Gibb stated that there was a lot of turnover within the bureau. There was a meeting yesterday with three Carnegie Mellon robotic students that will be working in the next two semesters to develop a robot able to plant bare root seedlings on rolling hills.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive session not needed.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

The next regular meeting will be January 16, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to adjourn the meeting at 11:55am. Greg Hopkins seconded. (Motion Passed)

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Yorko
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 <u>January 16</u> , 2024.
Chairman, Greene County Conservation District
<i>Jandrew</i>

Glenn Secretary