



Greene County Conservation District

22 West High St. • Suite 204 • Waynesburg, PA 15370

Tel: 724-852-5278 • Fax: 724-852-5341

email: gccd@co.greene.pa.us

Web: www.co.greene.pa.us/gccd

GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT REORGANIZATION MEETING MINUTES

January 17, 2023

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Lisa Snider called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at Greene County Fair Grounds Building 10, 107 Fairgrounds Road, Waynesburg, PA.

Those in attendance were as follows:

GREENE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT DIRECTORS

James Cowell-Chairman; Commissioner Belding-Vice Chairman; William Wentzel-Secretary; Greg Hopkins-Treasurer; Dave Shipman, Dan Bazzoli, and Glodenna Halstead. Associate Directors: Keith Golden; Jim Willis, Jerry Day, Becky Salosky, Dominick Barbetta, George Scull, and Sean Hilverding.

STAFF

Lisa Snider-District Director; Lindsay Kozlowski-District Office Manager; Zack Basinger-Environmental Permitting Manager; Jared Zinn – Watershed Specialist, Tiffany Stewart-Conservation Technician and Heather Yorko-Fiscal Officer.

GUESTS AND COOPERATING AGENCIES

Ryan Furrer - Regional District Rep Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP).

OATH OF OFFICE

Commissioner Belding administered the Oath of Office to James Cowell, Farmer Director, term to expire December 31, 2026 and Dan Bazzoli, Public Director, term to expire December 31, 2025, Mr. Bazzoli will complete the remainder of Melissa Adamson's term.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Tiffany Stewart – Conservation Technician & Heather Yorko-Fiscal Officer.

REORGANIZATION AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS-CHAIRMAN, VICE-CHAIRMAN, TREASURER, SECRETARY-LISA SNIDER

Ms. Snider asked for a nomination for Chairman of the Greene County Conservation District Board.

A motion was made by Bill Wentzel to nominate James Cowell, Jr. as Chairman of the Conservation Board. Greg Hopkins seconded. (Motion Passed)

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to nominate Commissioner Mike Belding as Vice-Chairman of the Conservation Board. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to nominate Greg Hopkins as Treasurer of the Greene County Conservation Board. Mike Belding seconded. (Motion Passed)

A motion was made by Dan Bazzoli to nominate Bill Wentzel as Secretary of the Greene County Conservation Board. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Dave Shipman to approve the November 15, 2022 minutes. Bill Wenzel seconded. (Motion Passed)

TREASURER'S REPORT

The November and December reconciliation statements were provided to the board for review. The board was provided with an updated treasurer's report.

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

REQUEST OF ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEM

Request to add \$200 to FFA Special fund to pay for FFA Jackets as discussed at last month's meeting to the agenda.

A motion was made by Mike Belding to add FFA additional donation to the agenda. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

CORRESPONDENCE

Directors should have received 2023 State Ethics forms in their meeting packets. The ethics forms are to be turned in by the end of April. This item will remain on the agendas until all ethics forms are received. Only district directors are required to submit the ethics forms.

Mileage rate change from .625 to .655 per mile.

The annual district director form was distributed in each mailing packet. This form is utilized annually to verify the donation of mileage to Envirothon by those board members that choose to do so. The board was asked to update the contact information if needed and return the forms as soon as possible.

STAFF REPORTS

Written reports were included in the meeting packets.

Lindsay Kozlowski – The district received a donation from First Federal for the Envirothon. Apparel order was not received in time to distribute at the meeting, but will be distributed at the next meeting.

Zack Basinger- Summary of the increase in plans received in 2021 compared to 2022, which accounted for an approximate increase of \$54,000. Discussion of Grow facility in Cumberland Township regarding the addition of three buildings; review should be completed this week.

Jared Zinn-Update will be discussed in new business, new development with the Growing Greener Grant and the Cree Farm.

Lisa Snider-Will update at next month's meeting due to being out for illness prior to this meeting.

Tiffany Stewart-Nothing to report due to just starting, but thankful to be a part of the board.

George Scull questioned the need for such a lengthy meeting packet and repetition of same information on employee's reports-this is due to need for quarterly submissions, time justification and specific jobs that are shared efforts.

OLD BUSINESS

PACD Southwest Regional Director Nomination-The open position was discussed and directors were encouraged to cast their name as a director for the SW Region at last meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Request for Assistance

No request for assistance

Request Associate Directors

Board reviewed the 2022 associate directors list, discussed inactive members and the search for new associate members. In searching for additional associate directors, Ms. Snider sent an email out to all township supervisors requesting a township supervisor volunteer to be an associate director. She received two names of interested individuals, Matt Robison, Richhill Township and Ryan Wise, Jefferson Township expressing interest in becoming associate directors. In addition, Rebecca Trigger attended last GCCD Board Meeting, would be interested in serving as an associate director. Ms. Snider requested a motion to approve which associate members to retain from 2022 list and who to send a letter to invite them to our February meeting.

A motion to retain 2022 associate directors with the exception of Raymond Stockdale, Spencer Johnson; Bill Cree, Sr., and Tim Neil as well as to invite Ryan Wise, Matt Robinson & Rebecca Trigger as 2023 Associate Directors was made by Mike Belding. Dan Bazzoli seconded (Motion Passed)

Letters will be sent to outgoing 2022 Associate Directors thanking them for their service and invitations will be sent to those interested in serving as associate directors in 2023.

Greene County Conservation District 2023 Committees

Included in the meeting packet is the GCCD Committee Outline and updated last year's

Committees for 2023, all members were encouraged to volunteer for committee assignments for the year.

Keith Golden asked to be removed from dirt and gravel road committee due to a potential conflict of interest; Keith was added to the agriculture committee, as well as George Scull. Dominick Barbetta was added to the Policy and Legislative Committee.

2023 Conservation Delegates for PACD and Project Grass

Vacancies remain on the PACD, asking for volunteering that are interested in joining. Tiffany Stewart will fill the position on Project Grass.

Updated Contact Information for Board Members

The annual district director contact form was distributed in each mailing packet. This form is utilized annually to verify the donation of mileage to Envirothon by those board members that choose to do so. Board members were asked to update the contact information and return forms as soon as possible.

ACAP

GCCD received the delegation agreement for the 2022-2027 Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program. Included in meeting packet is the Program draft guidelines, allocation of funds, agreement for delegation of administrative responsibilities for ACAP, terms and conditions, etc. for review.

Board and staff discussed the concerns over how the staff would carry out the program being that there is a lack of engineering assistance for farmers. Farmers that apply will be responsible for obtaining either conservation plans and/or manure management plans that clearly outline the needs for each individual farm. The needs of BMP's will need to have cost estimates and engineering designs for funding. With the lack of engineering professionals in our area to handle this, it is a concern that the funding would go unspent.

Another concern was the lack of answers and concrete decisions from the SCC on how to run and handle the program. To date there are still questions that are unanswered by the SCC. Such as, will funding levels be kept in counties that the local districts are not implementing the program? Ryan Furrer suggested that the SCC is looking into this and may cut the funding to those counties that do not participate.

Will there be SCC staff that can assist with the program? Mr. Furrer suggested that the SCC was to hire regional staff to assist districts with technical assistance.

It was understood that the district could opt out of the program at any time. The Ag staff at the district is not qualified to assist farmers with larger projects and there is a concern that farmers in Greene will not want to participate once they understand the SCC requirements on funding. Farmers need to understand this is not funding for just certain practices. The farms that apply must address any ACA areas on their farm along with the BMP for which they are applying. Any project over \$25,000 in total cost will be required to pay prevailing wage to any contractor hired. The farmer is responsible to prove to the district that prevailing wages were

paid to receive their final payment. BMP's are only reimbursed once the BMP is certified complete. The farmer will be required to cover costs until the certification is obtained.

Staff questioned if the district fails to implement the funding in time would they be held accountable to a program that may not be well liked by the residents. They were assured that if a fair attempt were made, they would not be held accountable and if it became a program that is not received well by the residents it would be turned back to the SCC.

ACAP will be part of Agriculture Committee; those directors that would like to be involved in the beginning process are encouraged to sign up for the Ag Committee.

A motion was made by Dan Bazzoli to sign up for the ACAP Delegation Agreement and continue to monitor it closely as it evolves. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)

Dirt and Gravel Low Volume Road Delegation Agreement

Next five-year agreement updated draft was discussed quickly. The SCC will be taking comments until January 20. Once comments are received and addressed it is hoped that a new five-year agreement will be sent to districts prior to July 2023 for signatures.

Pay It Forward

A donation letter was received from Matthew Clayton, a 15-year-old Mt. Morris resident who wants to pay it forward for another person to be able to attend the Wildlife Leadership Academy. This program is designed for high school students that have an interest in wildlife resource jobs-biologist and foresters; It is a two-week intensive program with some of the country's best instructors.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to make a \$250.00 donation and stipulate that we would be willing to donate another \$250.00 for a Greene County high school student to attend, as well. Dan Bazzoli seconded. (Motion Passed)

GRACE Program Application Advertisement 2023-2024

The board was asked if they wanted to proceed with the 2023-24 GRACE program by advertising for new applicants. Being that as of the GRACE 22 year, funding allotted for the program for contracts never exceeded the allotted amounts, the board would like to continue with the program.

Board members that received help through the GRACE Program said how easy the process for GRACE was and the assistance of GCCD staff was amazing. Discussion of doing a Greene County podcast, Facebook posting and article submitted to the newspaper as a public service announcement as well as direct mailings to prior GRACE participants was held. GCCD will also direct mail to property owners with over 10 acres of land.

A motion was made by Dan Bazzoli to start up the 2023-2024 GRACE Program. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

Donation of additional \$200 to FFA to cover jacket purchases

At the November meeting, the board discussed donating \$200 to the FFA Jacket program. The board felt that donating directly to the FFA Improvement fund would be the best option for the

county. The annual donation of \$1,500 to the FFA improvement fund should be increased by \$200 to purchase FFA jackets for Waynesburg and West Greene students.

A motion was made by Mike Belding to add \$200 to yearly donation to purchase FFA jackets. Greg Hopkins seconded. (Motion Passed)

Growing Greener Grant

GCCD has been awarded \$454,400 for Cree Dairy Project which will come alongside the EQUIP program award of \$442,303.

This combined funding will fully implement their CNMP. It will install BMP, implement a grazing plan, and facilitate their nutrient/manure management. There is a renewed interest due to the son's interest in continuing the farm.

There was discussion on the participation of the owner when receiving such a large grant; there is a landowner agreement, which states that they are responsible for maintenance and upkeep for the life of the BMP (10 years). There is an operation, maintenance and repair plan in the agreement that is signed by the owner.

A motion was made by Bill Wentzel to approve entering into an agreement with DEP for the Growing Greener Grant. Dan Bazzoli seconded. (Motion Passed)

DEP Stream Improvement Funds- Stream Obstruction Removal

The low water crossing near Jefferson is a serious danger to people using the stream for recreation. There is also a resource concern; the stream has cut a new channel that is dumping sediment into south fork ten mile. This is a two-phase project, funding has been obtained for the first phase with this \$60,000. This will fund removal the structure. Discussion of possible additional \$25,000 from the board to make sure that this removal is completed. Barron Construction is confident that \$60,000 will cover the cost of removal. Any rebar or metal will be removed, but the existing concrete will be used to reinforce the bank and stabilize the stream. Additional stabilization may be needed in the future to offset the erosion that has already occurred over the years. Decision was made to go ahead with the \$60,000 grant and see if there is more work that needs to be done in the future.

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to approve entering into an agreement with DEP for the Stream Improvement Funds. Dave Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

NACD Poster & Coloring Contest

We are asking the board to authorize up to \$1,500 to cover prizes and incidental costs associated with the 2023 Poster and Coloring contest. This year's theme will be One Water.

A motion was made by Glodenna Halstead to continue the Poster and Coloring Contest with a contribution of \$1,500. Dan Shipman seconded. (Motion Passed)

CONSERVATION DISTRICT OUTREACH

No outreach

REPORTS FROM COOPERATING AGENCIES

No report

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Executive session not needed.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

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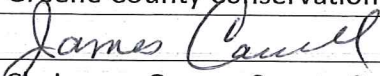
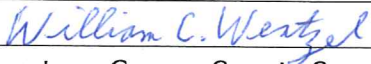
The next regular meeting will be February 21, 2023.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Greg Hopkins to adjourn the meeting at a.m. Bill Wentzel seconded. (Motion Passed)

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Yorko
Fiscal Officer

<u>MEETING MINUTES CERTIFICATION</u>	
We, the undersigned, agree that the minutes taken above were approved in their entirety by the Greene County Conservation District on <u>February 21</u> , 2023.	
	
Chairman, Greene County Conservation District	
	
Secretary, Greene County Conservation District	

