



Pike County Conservation District

556 Route 402, Hawley, PA 18428

Phone (570) 226-8220 e-mail: pikecd@pikepa.org www.pikeconservation.org

PIKE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES Monday, December 12, 2022

The Board of Directors meeting was also held via Zoom Video Conference call.
Information regarding the conference call was posted on the District website.

ATTENDANCE:

Directors: Scott Savini, Jay Morrow, Ken Coutts, Kelly Stagen, John Milliken

Associate Directors: Paul Ranello

Staff: Michele Long, Lisa Dolci, Rachael Marques, Devan George, Chris Meszler

Cooperating Agency Representatives: Christina Jenkins, NRCS, Garrett Beers, DCNR

Directors/Associate Directors Absent: Commissioner Ron Schmalzle, Mike Spencer, Carole Linkiewicz, Jo Ann Rose

Scott Savini called the meeting to order at 9:00 am

PUBLIC COMMENTS / QUESTIONS AGENDA ITEMS: None

ACTION ON MINUTES of November 14, 2022: Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the November 14, 2022, Board Meeting minutes. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried. John Milliken abstained as he was not in attendance at the last meeting.

FINANCIAL REPORT: We received the CDFAP funds from the state in late November. The higher number includes additional funds to be reimbursed to the County towards salary/benefits costs. We are working on closing out the bills for the end of the year. Report subject to audit.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT: Correspondence included: A training seminar on Employment Law for Conservation Districts by Adam Long of McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC in February. A notice from the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) approving a rule prohibiting the discharge of wastewater from high volume hydraulic fracturing to water or land in the Delaware River Basin.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT: The Pine Hill Farms NPDES permit has numerous violations that are still being resolved. A meeting scheduled in November got postponed by DEP to discuss violations with the applicant and contractor. Executive Director, Michele Long attended the Governors Invasive Species council meeting and DCNR gave a presentation about their Spongy Moth program from last year and egg mass counts for 2023. On DCNR land there is a significant increase on 395k acres, and they only have the funding to spray 295k acres. The Game Commission is planning to have 110k acres sprayed in 2023. All of the data is currently going through environmental review. We have received several calls from community associations looking for additional information, and we are directing them to contact aerial sprayer, have egg mass counts done and work with their neighbors to coordinate a spray program if needed. The December E-Newsletter focuses on Microplastics. Watershed Specialist Rachel Marques completed an article about Microplastics in Pike County based on the report that came out. The nominations for the 2023 Board Directors have been sent to the State Conservation Commission, and Mike Spencer and Ken Coutts have been approved for another term. The Commissioners appointment will be sent in January. The State Conservation Commission sent a draft of the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Delegation Agreement that ends in July 2023, the agreement would be for another 5-year term.

OLD BUSINESS/COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Communications and Outreach Committee – Devan is working on the final Conservation Minute videos to be distributed in January.

2023 Budget – The Draft budget was distributed for review in November. There have been some changes with the 2022 Projections and those numbers will be finalized in January. The 2022 transfer from the Conservation Fund was a little over \$61k, some of those funds were used in repairs and maintenance along with the capital improvements. The numbers for Salary and Benefits to the county are significantly higher for 2023 due to the additional funding from CDFAP. Jay Morrow made a motion to approve the 2023 Budget. Ken Coutts seconded. Motion carried.

Agriculture Conservation Assistance Programs – This funding source has allocated \$300k to Pike County, 6% towards administrative costs and 14% for technical assistance. Michele has met with Wayne and Lackawanna Counties and the State Conservation Commission to see who would be able to provide technical assistance to our office in order for us to sign the delegation agreement. Wayne County stated will not be signing an MOU to provide us with technical assistance and Lackawanna County may not participate in the ACAP program for their county. If any county does not participate in the program, then the State Conservation Commission will have to provide those services. At this time Michele does not recommend signing the delegation agreement for Pike County and we should wait to see if the SCC can provide us with technical assistance.

NEW BUSINESS:

Appoint Nominating Committee – John Milliken will be Chair of the Committee and is working on appointing members for the committee. Board Chairman Scott Savini mentioned that we should be looking at succession planning for the Chairman position in the next 5 years as he plans on retiring in the next 5 years so the transition for staff and board is seamless. This will be taken into consideration in the nomination process moving forward. He reiterated he would serve as Chair as long as the Board requested until that time.

2023 Board Meeting Schedule (vote) – Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the 2023 Board Meeting Schedule. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried.

Unconventional Gas Well (UGW) Fund Transfer for Staff Retention (vote) – The UGW Funds for 2022 Staff Retention were budgeted for \$21,500. Jay Morrow made a motion to approve the fund transfer from the UGW Account into the Operating Account. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried.

Clean Water Fund transfer to Operating Account – Staff will be transferring \$29,500 from the Clean Water Fund to be into the Operating Account at the end of the year for expenses related to the Chapter 102 & 105 delegated programs. The funds are received through General Permit and NPDES Fees. This will leave a little over \$2500 minimum in the account as required for the Money Market account.

2023 District Action Plan – 2022 updates (vote) – Board were provided a copy of the 2022 summary of actions completed from the 2022 Action plan and a Draft 2023 Action Plan. Executive Director Michele Long reviewed the highlights of the 2022 summary of updates to the 2022 Action plan and touched on a few items from the 2023 Draft Action Plan. Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the 2023 District Action Plan. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried. Scott asked that for the January 2023 Board meeting we discuss the formation of a committee for the Succession planning for the Executive Director position.

Water Quality Contract with Mike Bilger for 2023 (vote) – At the end of 2021, Ken Ersbak retired, and we continued to work with Don Baylor in 2022 from Aquatic Resource Consultants. Once the season was completed, we reached out to other contractors and received two quotes. Mike Bilger is being recommended by staff based on his credentials and the proposal submitted provides the services needed in line with DEP protocols currently being followed. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the 2023 Water Quality Contract with Mike Bilger. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried.

Post Construction Stormwater Management (PCSM) Delegation Agreement – With the hiring of Chris Meszler, P.E. in September, we are able to proceed with seeking the Chapter 102 Delegation Agreement with DEP Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control (E&S) Program and National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permitting Program for the Discharge of Stormwater Associated with Construction Activities for Post Construction Stormwater Management Plans (PCSM). We will be sending a letter of intent and workload analysis to DEP to start the process executing the PCSM Delegation Agreement. Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the PCSM Delegation Agreement letter of intent to move the process forward. John Milliken seconded. Motion carried.

Cooperating Agency and Other Organization Reports:

PACD – PACD is focused on preparing for discussions with new legislators. There is a “white paper” being developed to be ready in January to give to Legislators to help educate them on Conservation Districts. The winter meeting will be held in New Orleans and Kelly Stagen will be appointed as Vice Chair of the Northeast Region. The PACD Executive Board is requesting that each District provide up to \$500 each in order to conduct a comprehensive salary and benefit audit that will compare the numbers between private sector and conservation districts. This is especially important for legislators to see in order to increase our funding for competitive salaries and budgets. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the \$500 fee to PACD for the salary comparison study. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried.

NRCS – Christina Jenkins stated that they are starting their assessments and rankings for EQUIP. The first round of signups for CSP will begin January 1st. They are currently working on the Growing Greener Grant to complete comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans for producers.

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Garrett Beers mentioned the issues with Spongy Moth and egg count masses. They are anticipating a large defoliation in this area for spring of 2023. They are in the process of conducting environmental impact studies for over 30k acres in Pike and Monroe County. Timber sales are up, the pricing is pretty good compared to the last 10 or 15 years. Snowmobile season started on Sunday, December 11th. State Forest camping sites will now have a fee, \$10 per night for a resident and \$15 a night for a non-resident. The fees will be used to help pay for the resource concerns that come with the influx of visitors to these areas.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

PUBLIC/PRESS QUESTIONS: None

ADJOURN: Ken Coutts made a motion to adjourn the Board of Directors Meeting. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:58 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Dolci, Administrative Assistant