



Pike County Conservation District

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PIKE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES Monday, May 13, 2024

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, Kelly Stagen, Jay Morrow, John Milliken, Ken Coutts, Mike Spencer, Commissioner Ron Schmalzle
Associate Directors: Paul Ranello, Jo Ann Rose
Staff: Tara Mlodzienski, Ellen Enslin, Lisa Dolci, Chris Meszler, Ally McGee, Marianna Quartararo, Rachael Marques, Emily Mansfield
Cooperating Agency Representatives: Jennifer Matthews - NRCS
Guests: Aaron Weston, Shohola Elementary School, John Stagen
Directors/Associate Directors Absent: Carole Linkiewicz

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS / QUESTIONS AGENDA ITEMS: None

ACTION ON MINUTES of April 15, 2024: Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the April 15, 2024, Board Meeting minutes. Ken Coutts seconded. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Program costs include food for the Envirothon participants and volunteers, and the registration fee for the winning team to compete in the State Competition. The gutters and downspouts for the building were replaced. Painting for the Education Room, entry hall and exterior doors, and railings were completed. Report filed, subject to audit.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT: We received a thank you letter from PA Adopt a Highway program for our road cleanup day. We collected 27 bags of trash along a section of Route 402. Roy Richardson with the SCC sent an announcement of his retirement after 25 years of service. PACD sent a press release regarding Conservation District Week and a thank you letter for the support they have received. Staff sent out a thank you letter to our local legislators with a personal note attached.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT: Spring sampling was conducted later than usual this year due to high water levels and has now been completed. The macros collected during sampling will be distributed to the consultant for identification. DEP is talking with Rachael about making PCCD a courier drop off location for DEP samples. We hope to have more information by the next board meeting. The PAG-02 General Permit will be expiring on December 7, 2024. Permittees that do not have Notice of Termination (NOT) approval by December 7, 2024, will need to submit a renewal NOI. Ellen has completed all 7 quarters of the ACAP reporting. The Engineer's Workshop was held on May 10 with 120 people in attendance. Our April Science on Tap program was "Get Ticked about Ticks," and we had about 40 people in attendance. The May Science on Tap program will be held on May 16, and the topic is "Pocono Lakes in a Changing World." The Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for July 26, and save the dates have been sent out to legislators and local leadership. Envirothon took place on April 16 with 12 teams that

participated. The winning team was the Wetland Warriors from Delaware Valley High School. The Dingman Township Park Pollinator Garden was one of the recipients of the 2024 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence in Pennsylvania. Ellen and I attended the dinner in Harrisburg to receive the award on behalf of all the partners. Conservation District week was from April 28 to May 4; the Commissioners made a proclamation at their April 17 meeting. We announced our mascot naming contest at the beginning of the week, and at the end of the week the final votes came in. The new mascot's name is Stoni Stonefly. We partnered with the Pocono Environmental Education Center to host a guided hike called "Hiking in Harmony" on May 4 to showcase how the District works to protect our natural resources. Emily had an interview with WJFF to discuss everything we did for Conservation Week. The nomination forms for the PCCD Conservation Achievement Awards have been added to our website. The Annual Dinner has been scheduled for November 1 at the Summit Restaurant in Lackawaxen. Rachael is working with Peter Wulforth of Penn State Extension to conduct a Twilight Pond Walk on June 24. Pike County Department of Public Safety came to the District and gave all staff CPR and AED Training. The first quarter reporting has been completed. Lisa and I met with the accountant to prepare for our annual audit. The District provided comments on the draft Imagine Pike County 2035 Comprehensive Plan. Kelly Stagen, Ellen Enslin, and I attended a local work group for USDA-NRCS on April 25 and provided feedback on future allocation spending goals.

OLD BUSINESS/COMMITTEE REPORTS:

PCCD Mascot Update – The naming contest has been completed and we will be announcing it on social media soon. We have stickers, pins, and coloring sheets of the stonefly mascot that will be distributed at various events and programs.

NEW BUSINESS:

Memorialize: Letter of Support – Lake Wallenpaupack Watershed Management District's Pocono Forest and waters Conservation Landscape mini-grant application (vote) – Tara Mlodzienski, District Manager. Nick Spinelli reached out to us for a letter of support for a mini grant application to develop a Mobile HAB Education Trailer to be used by the Pike/Wayne Conservation Partnership throughout the two counties. Due to time constraints, we had to provide a letter of support with approval from the Executive Committee. Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the Memorialization of the letter of support. Mike Spencer seconded. Motion carried.

PCCD Environmental Education Grants (vote) – Tara Mlodzienski, District Manager. We received two applications for this year's grant. The first grant application is for a food plot/feeder. With previous grant money received, the class purchased game cameras to observe wildlife in the area. The students would like to set up a food plot to continue to observe and learn about the local wildlife. It is recommended by the Board to reach out to the school to have them meet with the PA Game Commission to go over the plan and make sure it is safe and appropriate, make any revisions necessary, and resubmit it to the Board for further consideration. The second grant application is for a pollinator garden. The students will construct a wheelchair accessible raised garden bed at the school; it will then be transported and installed at PEEC in an accessible location for public use. Mike Spencer made a motion to approve the second grant application for a pollinator garden. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried.

PCCD Conservation Achievement Awards Ranking Form (vote) – Tara Mlodzienski, District Manager. There are three draft ranking forms: one for each award. Each section begins with eligibility verification followed by a series of questions used to rank each nomination. Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the ranking forms. Mike Spencer seconded. Motion carried.

Wildlife Leadership Academy request for scholarship funding (vote) – Tara Mlodzienski, District Manager. We received an email from the Wildlife Leadership Academy requesting a scholarship donation for \$150. This donation will help a Pike County student cover the cost of the program. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the scholarship donation. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried.

Fee Waiver Request from Westfall Township for GP-5 Permit (vote) – Tara Mlodzienski, District Manager. We received a fee waiver request from Christopher Lordi at Westfall Township. The waiver would cover the cost of a GP-5 Permit to extend the sanitary force main along Route 6/209 to the border of the Delaware Vally School District. Mike Spencer made a motion to approve the fee waiver. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried.

PCCD Environmental Education Grant 2023 presentation – Aaron Weston, Principal at Shohola Elementary School. The Shohola Elementary School started an agricultural initiative where they set up an aquaponic growing system in an unused area of the school. They are on their second and third generation of food and tilapia. With the grant money from PCCD, the school was able to start an orchard by planting fruit trees. The project is teaching the students how to grow and sustain the garden and fish as well as learning about the loss and risks of farming.

ACAP project contract-Vanderbeek Farm, Michael Mancino (vote) – Ellen Enslin, Program Manager. We received an application for Vanderbeek Farm and had a LAW meeting on April 19 to review the project. The primary focus of the farm is to board horses. Mike Mancino, whose family owns the farm, has an EQUIP Contract with NRCS that allows him to request funding through the ACAP Program. The project includes walkways, diversion, and water systems to help with drainage. With the remaining ACAP allocation we are able to provide the project with \$68,393.50. Mike Spencer made a motion to approve the contract and funding. Ken Coutts seconded. Motion carried.

Cooperating Agency and Other Organization Reports:

PACD – Brenda Shambaugh from PACD sent out the information pertaining to the voluntary, one-time donation of \$500 from Districts to help minimize the deficit for this fiscal year and next. Jay Morrow made a motion to approve the donation. Mike Spencer seconded. Motion carried.

NRCS – Jennifer stated they are working on writing contracts for applications they received for EQIP and AMA. She has worked with Mike Mancino for over 10 years and agrees that his ACAP project will be very beneficial to the environment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

PUBLIC/PRESS QUESTIONS: None

ADJOURN: Commissioner Ron Schmalzle made a motion to adjourn the Board of Directors Meeting. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:49 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Dolci, Board Secretary