



Pike County Conservation District

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PIKE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES Monday, December 18, 2023

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

Associate Directors: Paul Ranello, Jo Ann Rose

Staff: Tara Mlodzienski, Marianna Quartararo, Ellen Enslin, Rachael Marques, Lisa Dolci, Emily Mansfield, Ally McGee

Cooperating Agency Representatives: Janet Creegan – DEP, Jen Matthews – NRCS, Kurt Tereschak – PA Fish and Boat Commission, Ralph Cozzolino – Twin and Walker Creek Watershed Conservancy

Guests: Jeffrey DiFrancesco

Directors/Associate Directors Absent: Carole Linkiewicz, Commissioner Ron Schmalzle

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

PUBLIC COMMENTS/QUESTIONS AGENDA ITEMS: None

ACTION ON MINUTES of November 13, 2023: Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the November 13, 2023, Board Meeting minutes. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Included in the Capital Improvement Expenses was the deposit for the carpet replacement in the Education Room and entry hall. The Consultant hours are included in Misc. Expenses. We are working on closing out the bills for the end of the year. Report filed, subject to audit.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT: None

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT: The November well run was completed with no issues. Phil Bird from USGS was here for the annual audit of the sampling, per our contract with them. Phil has been a long time Field Liaison with USGS and will be retiring at the end of 2023. The new Watershed Specialist in Wayne County went on the well run with Rachael to observe. Rachael has submitted the final report for the Spotted Lanternfly grant, and we are waiting for reimbursement. The date for the first Science on Tap program has been moved from January 25th to January 18th at the Jam Room due to a conflict with the speaker's schedule. On December 6th, Emily was interviewed by Tim Bruno at WJFF radio station located in the Catskills, about our December newsletter article. The radio interview was recorded; for anyone who would like to hear it, please contact Emily. We submitted our annual Highlights Page to PACD that showcases the accomplishments we have achieved with State Funding. Emily has been working on updating the website to include additional information for our Education programs and Agricultural Resources. A PA version of the culvert maintenance repair tool was added to the website as an additional resource for the public. PACD is holding their annual video award contest, and we submitted our video about the PA IMap Invasives Tool. The video can be seen on our Facebook page.

OLD BUSINESS/COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Appoint Nominating Committee – Board Chairman, Scott Savini, spoke with Kelly Stagen who has agreed to serve as the Nominating Committee Chair. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve Kelly Stagen as the Chair. Mike Spencer seconded. Motion carried.

Board Approval of Commissioner Appointment – Board Chairman, Scott Savini acknowledged Commissioner Ron Schmalzle has been appointed to our Board of Directors for 2024; there was no objection from the Board.

New Nominating Organization (vote) – District Manager, Tara Mlodzienski, received a petition from Lacawac Sanctuary to become a Nominating Organization in place of the NEPA Audubon Society. We recommend the approval to add Lacawac Sanctuary, and with the vote from the Board, we will send the recommendation to the State Conservation Commission for final approval. Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve Lacawac Sanctuary as a Nominating Organization. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried.

2024 Board Meeting Schedule (vote) – Jay Morrow made a motion to approve the 2024 meeting schedule. Mike Spencer seconded. Motion carried.

2024 District Action Plan (vote) – The Board was provided a copy of the Draft 2024 Action Plan; there were no significant changes from the 2023 plan. Mike Spencer made a motion to approve the 2024 District Action Plan. Kelly Stagen seconded. Motion carried.

Water Quality Contract with Mike Bilger for 2024 (vote) – Watershed Specialist, Rachael Marques, received the draft contract from Mike Bilger for Macro and Fish sampling next year. The price has increased due to rising costs and an additional site that was added to the list. Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the new contract. John Milliken seconded. Motion carried.

Surface Water Quality Report for 2023 – Watershed Specialist, Rachael Marques, included a one sheet summary of the Water Quality Monitoring for 2023. The full report is available on the website for anyone who would like to review it.

Draft 2024 Budget – District Manager, Tara Mlodzienski, stated that replacing the Jeep has been included in the budget under Capital Improvements for 2024. The 2023 end of year projected costs include additional expenses for new tables and chairs in the Education Room, as well as new audio-visual equipment. The additional costs were approved by the Executive Committee. Jay Morrow approved the 2024 Draft Budget. Mike Spencer seconded. Motion carried.

Unconventional Gas Well (UGW) Fund Transfer for Staff Retention (vote) – The UGW Funds for 2023 Staff Retention were budgeted for \$23,167. Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the fund transfer from the UGW Account into the Operating Account. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried.

Clean Water Fund Transfer to Operating Account – Staff will be transferring \$23,500 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 \$2,500 minimum in the account as required for the Money Market account.

PACD Policy on Proposed Amendment to the Clean Streams Law (vote) – Kelly Stagen. There is a Policy on Proposed Amendment to the Clean Streams Law that will need to be voted on regarding Streambank Fencing. Five regions voted to support the original proposed policy, and one region proposed an amended version of the policy. It is recommended to vote on the original proposed policy since this will allow for more voluntary compliance and more ability to do education and outreach with the landowners. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the vote to support the original proposed policy to the Clean Streams Law. Mike Spencer seconded. Motion carried.

Cooperating Agency and Other Organization Reports:

NRCS – Jennifer Matthews stated that they are ranking the applications for their EQIP and AMA Programs that are due by the end of January.

DEP – Janet Creegan highlighted the PA Fertilizer Law revisions will be effective beginning January 2024; this includes residential and agricultural operations. For any questions, please contact Denise Uzupis. There will be Chapter 102 Small Group Trainings available in 2024.

PA Fish and Boat Commission – Kurt Tereschak has informed us that Caleb Kramer who handles Northern Wayne County will also be handling all of Wayne County, Palmyra, Pike, Mt. Pocono, and Monroe Counties. Kurt will be working on our Dirt and Gravel QAB Board. Starting in January, anyone who wants to stock fish in any location must go to the website and fill out an application.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

PUBLIC/PRESS QUESTIONS: None

ADJOURN: Ken Coutts made a motion to adjourn the Board of Directors Meeting. Mike Spencer seconded. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 9:23 am.

Respectfully submitted, Lisa Dolci, Board Secretary