



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, October 21, 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, Commissioner Ron Schmalzle, Ken Coutts, Jo Ann Rose

Associate Directors: None

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

Cooperating Agency Representatives: Janet Creegan – DEP, Jennifer Matthews – NRCS

Guests: Jeffrey DiFrancesco – Stewards of Twin Lakes

Directors/Associate Directors Absent: John Milliken, Carole Linkiewicz, Paul Ranello

Scott Savini called the meeting to order at 9:04 am.

PUBLIC COMMENTS / QUESTIONS AGENDA ITEMS: None

ACTION ON MINUTES of August 19, September 24, and September 27, 2024: Commissioner Ron Schmalzle made an omnibus motion to approve the Board Meeting minutes from August and September. Ken Coutts seconded. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: We received our 50% allocation for the Dirt & Gravel and Low Volume Roads Programs. Funds were transferred from the Conservation Fund to the Operating Account for the new vehicle and the payment was sent to the County. The Professional Services fees includes the cost for the 2023 Audit. Report filed, subject to audit.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT: A letter to the Chief Clerk from the State Conservation Commission, stating the approval of JoAnn Rose as Public Director. An email from Lackawaxen River Conservancy thanking Rachael for her presentation about the Lackawaxen River at their annual dinner. There is also an email from DEP, thanking Chris for his outstanding inspection report. There are two letters from NACD with Honorable Mention Award Certificates for Ellen Enslin and Kelly Stagen; the District nominated them for the 2024 Distinguished Service Award.

DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT: Rachael developed and presented a program titled “Streaming Now: Decades of Data” focusing on the Lackawaxen River. She presented the program at the Lackawaxen River Conservancy’s Annual Dinner. Rachael also partnered with Penn State Extension to help them with a “Safe Drinking Water Clinic” and has completed a dry run for the “A Study of Microplastics in Pike County Waters” grant program. We are now accepting requests for participation in the study through December. Tech Staff have been very busy this month with inspections, tech assists, complaints, permit and plan reviews. We are one of two PCSM delegated counties participating in DEP’s KEES pilot program for PennDOT Chapter 102 applications. Chris and Ally have been working closely with them to help develop the program. The PAG-02 Permit will expire on December 7, 2024. We are working with permittees to submit a renewal NOI. We received half of our DGLVR allocation for

this fiscal year. The amount this year has increased from \$100,000 to \$112,000 due to increased limestone costs and redistribution of extra funds between eligible districts. We will be doing our second road clean up today after the meeting. This year marks 30 years of the District doing the road clean up along Route 402, we will be receiving a sign in the spring. We have 51 people attending the Annual Dinner this year on November 1. The PACD Mini Grant for our Rain Barrel program has been closed out. The Watershed Specialist Mini Grant was awarded to all districts, and Rachael has begun preparations for her study. In September, I attended the Management Summit and New Manager Training hosted by PACD.

OLD BUSINESS/COMMITTEE REPORTS:

New Dime Bank credit card to replace current Bank of America credit card – Tara Burnham, District Manager. We received the new Dime Bank credit cards and will be distributing them after the Employee Credit Card policy is approved and signed by the staff. The Bank of America account will be closed out once we have the new cards up and running.

Jeep replacement – Tara Burnham, District Manager. The Jeep replacement has been completed, we received the new truck, and the Jeep was traded in.

Memorialize: Audit update (vote) – Tara Burnham, District Manager. Jay Morrow made a motion to approve the Memorialization of the audit updates. Ken Coutts seconded. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

District Director Oath of Office for JoAnn Rose – Commissioner Ron Schmalzle administered the oath of office to JoAnn Rose as a District Public Director for a term through December 31, 2026.

Fee waiver request from Pike County Commissioners for E&S Plan (vote) – Tara Burnham, District Manager. We received a request from the Pike County Commissioners to waive the E&S Review Fee of \$150 for the Brooks Cabin Road Project. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the fee waiver request. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried. Commissioner Ron Schmalzle abstained as he works in the office requesting the waiver.

Right to Know Request proposed policy updates (vote) – Tara Burnham, District Manager. We would like to update the Right to Know policy for anonymous requests. Due to recent AI activity, there have been several organizations being inundated with anonymous Right to Know requests from AI generated programs. We would like to update the policy so that any request received without a name or verifiable address will be denied. We added a fee for applicants to receive a USB flash drive for files that are too large to send electronically. Kelly Stagen made a motion to approve the policy updates. Commissioner Ron Schmalzle seconded. Motion carried.

Employee Credit Card Policy (vote) – Tara Burnham, District Manager. This policy is being put in place to help protect the staff and District from any issues that may arise. The policy outlines the procedures the District is currently using but outlined in a more formal way. The policy was reviewed by the County Solicitor, and we received a letter from the County Commissioners with their approval of the policy. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the credit card policy. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried.

Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Road QA/QC Results – Tara Burnham, District Manager. The QA/QC went very well, it was stated that we were exceeding expectations. There are no required actions for us, but they did provide some recommendations.

2024-2025 Strategic Planning Grant for Conservation Districts – Tara Burnham, District Manager. We were due to update our Strategic Plan this year but decided to move it to 2025 and apply for a grant for funding through PACD to help develop the plan. A letter of intent will be presented at the November meeting for approval.

Streamlining Permit for Economic Expansion and Development (SPEED) program updates – Tara Burnham, District Manager. The SPEED program was put in place from legislation that was passed by Governor Shapiro. A press release from DEP was received and information regarding and outlining the program. Overall, this program is supposed to help Districts receive better quality applications for review, it will be up to the applicant if they want to have a DEP-verified professional review their application before it is submitted to Districts for approval.

Letter of Support for Lackawaxen River Conservancy (vote) – Tara Burnham, District Manager. We received a letter from Lackawaxen River Conservancy for a letter of support, be part of the study, or partner for designation of Wild and Scenic River for the Lackawaxen River. After some discussion, staff will look into this more before moving forward.

Letter of Support to the PA General Assembly for Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Funding (vote) – Tara Burnham, District Manager. We were asked to provide a letter of support for future funding increases for the Dirt Gravel, and Low Volume Road program. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve the letter of support. Commissioner Ron Schmalzle seconded. Motion carried.

Dirt and Gravel Road Contract Amendment-Panther Brook Road, Shohola Township, time extension and contract amount increase (vote) – Ellen Enslin, Program Manager. Shohola Township has requested a time extension amendment until December 20, 2024, to complete the Panther Brook Road project. They have also requested an additional \$4,020 due to the additional culvert pipe that was needed and added to the project. Commissioner Ron Schmalzle made a motion to approve the contract extension and additional funding. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried.

Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps Young Adult Job Shadow request (vote) – Rachael Marques, Watershed Specialist. We received a request from the PA Outdoor Corps to have a young adult shadow me during a workday sometime in November. This organization helps young adults who are interested in jobs with conservation to shadow individuals already working in the field. I would take this individual to do a mock macroinvertebrate sampling to show them the process and how to document the information. Ken Coutts made a motion to approve this job shadow request. Jay Morrow seconded. Motion carried.

Cooperating Agency and Other Organization Reports:

PACD – Kelly Stagen reiterated a big topic with PACD at the moment is the new SPEED program, the Districts are asking a lot of questions about it, and it will be discussed more in the upcoming months. Streamside Buffers and how they protect our water, was a big topic at the region meeting that just took place.

NRCS – Jen Matthews submitted her report stating they are accepting 1st round applications for the EQIP & AMA programs through November 1, 2024. We will be assessing and ranking applications in December and January preparing them for contracts. Conservation Stewardship Program deadline to sign up is January 1, 2025.

DEP – Janet Creegan stated the DEP's 2025 Environmental Education Grants are accepting applications through November 15, 2024, projects must be implemented during July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. There are upcoming virtual webinars on October 30, November 13, and December 4 for District Directors and staff. In February there will be an employment law seminar in Allentown, PA, there will not be a virtual option.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: None

PUBLIC/PRESS QUESTIONS: None

ADJOURN: Ken Coutts made a motion to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting. Jay Morrow seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Dolci, Board Secretary

DRAFT