



# Pike County Conservation District

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## PIKE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES Monday, September 23, 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, Jay Morrow, Commissioner Ron Schmalzle

**Associate Directors:** Paul Ranello

**Staff:** Tara Burnham, Ellen Enslin, Lisa Dolci, Ally McGee, Emily Mansfield

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

**Guests:** Jeffrey DiFrancesco – Stewards of Twin Lakes

**Directors/Associate Directors Absent:** Kelly Stagen, John Milliken, Ken Coutts, Jo Ann Rose, Carole Linkiewicz

Scott Savini called the meeting to order at 9:03 am. There was no quorum so there were no actions taken.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS / QUESTIONS AGENDA ITEMS:** None

**ACTION ON MINUTES of August 19, 2024:** There was no quorum so there were no actions taken.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Our first ACAP allocation was received. Funds were transferred from the Conservation Fund to the Operating Account to cover capital expenses for 2024, moving forward they will be done individually as the expenses occur rather than all in one lump sum. There was a large expense for several trees cut down and trimmed around the building. Report filed, subject to audit.

**CORRESPONDENCE REPORT:** Riley Smith, who attended the Wildlife Leadership Academy over the summer, sent us a thank you letter for supporting his attendance with our donation. There is an invitation to attend a Municipal/Legislative Day for Sustainable Timber Harvesting on October 2<sup>nd</sup> in Wilkes Barre hosted by Northern Tier Hardwood Association. Friends of Promised Land held an informal meeting on September 19<sup>th</sup> to organize a “Friends Group” to organize events, raise money and maintain trails and public spaces.

**DISTRICT MANAGER REPORT:** Rachael has been meeting with the new Watershed Specialist in Wayne County to assist her in her new role and provide resources. We have conducted several compliance meetings in the beginning of August and continue to work with the permittees to bring the sites with outstanding violations into compliance. We are working on conducting additional inspections to follow up and make sure they are following the line items to bring the projects into compliance. DEP is accepting questions from conservation staff regarding their new SPEED program. The program will give applicants a choice to have their plan reviewed by an outside agency for an additional fee before it comes into the Conservation Districts. We received the QA/QC results and are currently reviewing them and making comments to send back to the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads. The September Science on Tap was held on September 19<sup>th</sup>, the presentation was called “Swampy Science” given by the District Staff. There were 26 people in attendance. We will be holding a Road Clean up after our October board

meeting. The Nominating Organization Breakfast was held on August 23, at Grey Towers National Historic Site. Seven organizations attended, as well as board members Kelly Stagen, Paul Ranello, and Commissioner Ron Schmalzle. The Stream Keepers program has been rescheduled for October 5; we are partnering with Trout Unlimited and Wayne Conservation District for it. We currently have 11 registrations for the new program date. The invitations for the Annual Dinner have been sent. During September, we reached a big milestone for our social media accounts. We reached 2,000 followers on Facebook, which is around double what other conservation districts in our area have. We are reaching more accounts on our social media and have a 777% increase on Facebook and 521% increase on Instagram. The board nomination process has begun; the organizations have received a letter from the Chief Clerk to send in their nomination for 2025. Board member, Mike Spencer has stepped down in his role for the PCCD Board. JoAnn Rose has agreed to step into the role for the remainder of the term through 2026.

### **OLD BUSINESS/COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

New Dime Bank credit card to replace current Bank of America credit card – Tara Burnham, District Manager. We have been approved for the credit cards with Dime Bank and are finalizing the paperwork before we close out the Bank of America account. I am working on an internal credit card policy for staff receiving a credit card to sign. It will be available for review and approval at the next board meeting.

Jeep replacement – Tara Burnham, District Manager. A check will be sent to the County this week to pay the downpayment for the new truck. Once the payment is processed, we will receive a delivery date, and the Jeep will be picked up for the trade in.

Audit update – Tara Burnham, District Manager. There was an adjustment made to the audit regarding the funds for ACAP. We asked that funds for ACAP are listed as restricted, the same as the DGLVR funds. The updates will need to be approved at the next meeting.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

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. There was no quorum so there were no actions taken.

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. There was no quorum so there were no actions taken.

### **Cooperating Agency and Other Organization Reports:**

PACD – None

NRCS – Jen Matthews submitted her report with the breakdown of funds for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) programs. They are wrapping up the contracting for the first round of funding for this fiscal year. Pike County has one EQIP contract totaling \$3,539.00.

DEP – Janet Creegan stated the Environmental Education Grant applications are open until November 15. There will be several trainings held for Districts and their Board members. On October 30, the Act 217 & The History of Conservation Districts held at 12 pm; November 13, Applicable Laws & Policies for Conservation at 12 pm; December 4, Part 1 - District Boards 101: Function & Engagement at 12 pm; December 11, Part 2 - District Boards 101: Function & Engagement at 12 pm. In February

there will be a training on Employment Law for Conservation Districts at three different locations to choose from and will be in person not virtual.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** None

**PUBLIC/PRESS QUESTIONS:** None

**ADJOURN:** The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 am. There was no quorum so there were no actions taken.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Dolci, Board Secretary

DRAFT