



MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES

August 15, 2019

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Armstrong, Charlie Garris, Dave Moyer,
Roger McFadden, Chuck Gould, Pat Ross, and Randy Rice

ASSOCIATE BOARD: John Lyman, Edith Stevens

DISTRICT STAFF: Adam Schellhammer, Barbara Bistras, Emily Paul
and Lori Kerrigan

COOPERATING AGENCIES: Ryan Hill, Monroe County Planning Commission

PUBLIC: Drake Stinson, Borton-Lawson; Bob Heil, BWA; Jack Fossett, Resident; Craig Todd,
Resident; Amalia O'Brien, Tobyhanna Army Depot; Paula Heeschen, BWA; Mackenzie
Strunk, Representative Brown

Pat Ross called the meeting to order at 7:57 am.

Roll Call

Board Members Present:

Charlie Garris
Roger McFadden
Bob Armstrong
Chuck Gould
Pat Ross
Randy Rice
Dave Moyer

Executive Session: Pat Ross called for an Executive Session to discuss personnel matters
at 7:58am. Session ended at 8:04am.

July Meeting Minutes Approval: Pat asked for approval of the July 25, 2019 Board
Meeting minutes. Chuck Gould made the motion, Bob Armstrong seconded the motion,
motion carried. Pat abstained because he wasn't present.

Technical Report: Lori Kerrigan reviewed the technical site status report for the month of
July. We received ten new applications; one permit was issued in Pocono. Three Records
of Decision that went up to DEP. Under the Chapter 105 program, there were two permits
issued, GP-5 and GP-7. There were no new complaints on unclean fill. The interns that

were working on the PCSM-BMP mapping are near finishing and we are in the process of QC. The next step is to work with the Planning Commission to make it accessible to the public and to create an interactive map to document where PCSM Stormwater was permitted on that site, and required to be maintained. The interns were excellent. Pat asked if we have a program that lets people know when their permit is about to expire. Lori explained that DEP just recently set a protocol for this, so there will be letters that will be going out to notify them before their permit expires. She explained that the technicians try to capture this information on the inspection reports, but now a list has been created in ACCESS, and letters will be sent to the permittees.

Pat asked about the monthly lake sampling event at Lake Wallenpaupack that our Watershed Specialist and staff attended. Adam explained that there is a small portion that drains into Monroe County, and that our Watershed Specialist has sat on the board of the Wallenpaupack Management District. She attends their monthly meetings. A lot of what they have been reviewing is harmful algal blooms. She is hoping to bring the research for monitoring protocols to the lake communities in Monroe County.

Pat asked about assisting with the Macroinvertebrate Program for North Pocono Care. Adam explained that North Pocono Care is another watershed group that is on Tunkhannock Creek. Their area of concern is Monroe County and Carbon County.

Pat mentioned an article in Trout Unlimited by Alex Udonk about how the PA Game Commission stocks the streams. It says that every spring the PA Fish and Boat Commission stocks about 3.2 million legal-sized trout. Waters are ideal temperature in April and trout can tolerate the temperatures of Pocono lakes and rivers in April and May, but by July and August, when water is pushing 70 degrees, it is belly up and a wasted resource. Only 5% of the stocked fish hold over into the next season because they can't survive in these streams. Pat believes there are a lot more issues with our streams than development and he thinks it's time to start looking at a lot of those. He believes it would be a good idea to set up a meeting or a workshop to see what else we could do to make sure we maintain the streams instead of just going after the people who develop. He said he is not taking the developer's side, if some people are thinking that.

EE Report: Roger reviewed the Environmental Education report for the month of July. Finishing up summer camps right now and most of the school programs have been scheduled. Conservation camp was held in July. We had 28 campers. They had a normal schedule. Every year, the camp staff selects one outstanding camper. This year was Ramraj Jitlall from Stroudsburg school district who is interested in the conservation field as his future employment. Pat asked how many students go on scholarship. Roger answered that we have enough scholarships to cover all the students and some extra. All the kids write letters to the groups that give out the scholarships. We have a great group of clubs and groups that send scholarships.

Kettle Creek Fund dinner is September 20th at Trout Lake. It helps to pay for camps and school programs from the money that they raise.

Roger commended the summer work crew for a job well done.

Roger notified the board of Ali's last day and restate how well she did during her 2 years with us.

Roger provided an update on Karen and a timeline for her return.

District Managers Report: Adam reviewed the District Manager's report for the month of July. We had a communications meeting with the State Conservation Commission and PACD in Clinton County to see how we could get a better working relationship with the SCC and improve our existing programs with them.

We completed the flood control dam cleanup. There was a lot of woody debris we had to remove. We met with Strauser Nature's Helpers prior to starting to see what their scope of work will be. They will cut the vegetation in the fall and will repack the crest of the dam with stone chip as per the engineer's suggestion in the spring.

We did attend the Pocono Raceway kid's day. There was a good turnout. Had around 150 kids come through that morning.

Financial Report: Charlie requested that we look into better interest bearing accounts. A motion was made by Roger McFadden and seconded by Chuck Gould to accept the July 31, 2019 financial statement and balance sheet as presented, motion carried.

A motion was made by Roger McFadden and seconded by Chuck Gould to accept the July 2019 Invoice lists as presented, motion carried.

A motion was made by Chuck Gould and seconded by Randy Rice to accept the Donations list as presented, motion carried.

Adam discussed the need for bank accounts for grant funding. A motion was made by Chuck Gould and seconded by Randy Rice to open new bank accounts for grants as presented, motion carried.

Other Business:

Out of County Travel: A motion was made by Chuck Gould and seconded by Bob Armstrong to approve the out of county travel as presented, motion carried.

2019/2020 ACT Budget and Staff sheet: Adam reviewed the ACT agreement and budget for the Ag. program. The ACT funding will be \$16,225, Act 38 will be \$15,000, and the District payment will be \$27064.89. This totals \$58,289.89. A motion was made by Charlie Garris and seconded by Roger McFadden to approve the ACT Budget for 2019/2020, motion carried.

2020 District Budget: Roger McFadden discussed that the Financial Committee recommends approving the budget w/ the caveat that they do not have enough information on the costs of the roof and ramp repair. Adam explained that the ramp repair bids will be come back September 19th. We estimate \$50-\$60,000 and that is included in the 2019/2020 Budget. The other large project is the roof repair. We made some minor repairs this year and hope to get through to 2021. We estimate \$50-\$60,000 for a complete roof repair. Both projects would require moving funding from reserve accounts to cover the cost. A motion was made by Roger McFadden and seconded by Chuck Gould to approve the ACT Budget for 2019/2020, motion carried. As a District representative, Charlie Garris abstained from voting.

Educator Hire: Staff is recommending Josie Bonham-Marino for the Environmental Educator position with a start date of September 9th. A motion was made by Dave Moyer and seconded by Roger Mcfadden to approve Josie Bonham-Marino for the Environmental Educator position, motion carried.

Cooperating Agency Reports:

MCPC – Ryan Hill - closed on three agricultural easements this month, two in Chestnuthill, and one in Eldred. That brings them up to 119 farms. Will be starting inspections with Amber and the Conservation District on August 27th. There are around 7200 acres total in the program.

Bob Heil commented on the Trout Unlimited article that was discussed earlier. The PA Fish & Boat stocking program is kind of a “put and take” intended for the recreational user. If you were down on the levee on the Brodhead, the water probably would be really warm in the summertime, but there are the headwater streams, the exceptional value streams that stay cold. This is the importance of keeping the cold streams cold and good quality because that’s where the native trout reproduction is probably occurring.

Jack Fossett said that the environment is the best thing for them. With stocking them, the fish stay there, they’re easy to catch and they die off. So, if the environment is there for them, they’ll reproduce and if the cold water is there, they’ll take care of themselves.

John Lyman said that one thing that they found in Tobyhanna with the Tunkhannock Water Association is that the difference between riparian buffer areas and developed areas we monitor is that even on the same stream with riparian buffer areas the water will be around 60-65 degrees, and a mile later it will be 75 degrees. So, when you’re talking about what you’re talking about, a lot of it has to do with how wild it is and how preserved it is, and literally how many trees or undeveloped woodland there is around the edge of the stream.

Public Comment:

John Lyman inquired about the two current applications for associate board members, Amalia O'Brien and Craig Todd. John reviewed their relevant qualifications and asked the board to consider them to become new Associate Directors. He also stated that the District currently has only two associate directors. Pat restated that Amalia's application was received after the deadline and would be considered in November for 2020 appointments.

Craig Todd made comment on earlier discussion on the mortality rate of stocked trout in PA. He clarified that stocked trout are not put there to repopulate but are there for 100% consumptive use, and that other factors contribute to holdover trout.

Craig asked for further clarification regarding his appointment as associate director: He restated the motion made by the board in January that tabled action on his appointment until July, closer to his three year retirement anniversary. Craig discussed his knowledge base understanding of the issues and experience regarding conservation in Monroe County. Craig further asked for clarification as to why action on his appointment continues to be postponed. Pat noted the comment.

Paula Heeschen asked why public comment at the start of meetings was removed. Adam clarified that he had left it off the agenda. Discussion was held on the value of two public comment periods.

Paula asked about Craig's appointment and restated the motion to consider his application in July. Paula asked if there was additional discussion held by the Board about Craig's appointment. Additional discussion was held on when Craig's application would be considered, and it was decided that it would be considered during the September board meeting. Jack Fossett stated several reasons why Craig's knowledge would be valuable to the Board. Pat stated his position and concern about a long-term employee returning to serve in an oversight role with the same organization. Pat illustrated with examples from other organizations. Chuck Gould voiced his position that it is common in business practices for retirees to return in consulting roles and why it could be a benefit to the District. Discussion was held on the pros and cons of such occurrences within other organizations. Craig restated his interest and understanding of the role and reiterated that he does not want to manage the District and is interested in using his experience to further conservation efforts. Chuck clarified that the Board appoints associate directors and can remove them if they deemed it necessary, or simply choose not to reappoint them the following year. It was also clarified that associate directors do not vote during board meetings.

Dave Moyer began discussing previously voiced complaints about the streams in Monroe County. He does not agree with the state and local findings that many of the streams are high quality or exceptional value. Dave voiced concerns about salt and thermal impacts from roadways. He thinks the State is wrong in their evaluation of Monroe County streams. Adam discussed previous debates with Dave and again suggested that Dave review resources that were provided to him. Jack Fossett mentioned his concern with previous

legislative action that reduced protection of riparian buffer areas that are critical in maintaining water quality. Discussion was held on the importance of buffers. Dave voiced his opinion that streams in the wilderness need to be managed because "the streams themselves are destroying themselves." Adam stated that streams migrate and shift naturally and some erosion occurs during this process. That illustrates the importance of buffer areas and providing adequate space for waterways to function naturally. Adam stated that streams in wilderness areas are capable of managing themselves without human interference. Additional discussion was held on the subject.

Pat suggested that we schedule a roundtable meeting with potential stakeholders and partners to discuss the direction of the conservation district and how to improve the environment.

Drake Stinson discussed his observations of how clear Pocono Creek is and how that is a draw for him to this area.

Jack Fossett asked that the Board take a position on Senate Bill 619 that Senator Scavello voted in favor of. Chuck and Jack stated that it is dangerous legislation that changes pollution laws and enforcement that would negatively impact water quality. They stated that it allows developers the opportunity to define what is and what is not a pollution event. Adam stated that he would send a copy of the bill to the Board for review.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 am by Pat.

Respectfully submitted,



Emily Paul
Office Assistant, Senior

**THE NEXT MCCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY,
September 19, 2019 AT 8:00 AM AT THE MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
OFFICES
STROUDSBURG, PA.**