



MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
January 19, 2023

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Armstrong, Sharon Laverdure, Roger McFadden, Craig Todd, Brian Winot, Donna Foulk and Jason Smith.

DISTRICT STAFF: Kristina Heaney, Lori Kerrigan, Roger Spotts, John Motz, Mike Wilk, Drew Wagner, David Hooker, David Lucykanish, Barbara Bistras, and Iwona O'Connor.

Cooperating Agencies: Jennifer Matthews-NRCS, Janet Creegan-DEP, Matt Deitrich- PFBC

PUBLIC: Paula Heeschen-BWA, Tarah Probst- PA State Representative, Jack Fossett, Rodney Stark.

Bob Armstrong called the meeting to order at 8:04 AM.

Public Comment- None.

Director Appointments:

Oath of Office: Sharon Laverdure, Brian Winot, Robert Armstrong and Jason Smith sworn in as directors of MCCD Board.

Election of Officers:

A motion was made by Sharon Laverdure, seconded by Brian Winot, to approve Bob Armstrong as Chairperson. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Bob Armstrong, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to approve Brian Winot as Vice-Chairperson. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Brian Winot, seconded by Bob Armstrong, to approve Craig Todd as the new Secretary. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Bob Armstrong, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to approve Roger McFadden as Treasurer. Motion carried.

Board Meeting Minutes: Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of the December 8, 2022 board meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to approve the December 8, 2022 board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Sharon Laverdure presented the MCCC with **75 years of Service Award on behalf of the Monroe County Commissioners Office.**

Tech Report: Lori Kerrigan provided the technical report in the board packet. She disclosed that in the month of December there were two (2) applications withdrawn, one (1) new general permit authorized, and three (3) individual permits issued. There were also three (3) complete records of decision, as well as three (3) (chapter 105 program) permits (GP1, 5 and 7.)

Lori informed the board, that currently technical staff is meeting with the supervisors of Monroe County municipalities to discuss the Act 167 roll out, and to invite them to the BMPs bus tour, that will be scheduled soon. She added, that technical staff also continues to work with the planning commission on the Water Quality Study.

Lori provided 2022 year-end review report. She informed the board that 2022 numbers were more similar to 2020, because 2021 was a huge post-Covid construction rebound year. Lori reported, that MCCC's review times are 57% shorter than statewide average, and it is due to having two (2) full time engineers on staff, and despite still being available for ancillary technical support, trainings and sitting on various review committees for DEP. The largest project in 2022 was 92 acres, as compared to 476 acres in 2021. The majority of projects came in Pocono and Tobyhanna Townships, and the most of complaints were in Coolbaugh Township. Kristina added, that 2022 numbers were still trending towards increased development.

Tarah Probst introduced herself as House of the Representative's contact, and an advocate for Monroe County. She offered open door communication with the district and provided her cell phone number. She explained that she would like to work on scaling back the 600 million dollar highway I-80 widening project. She also notified the Conservation District of Delaware Water Gap's new transmitter's project and the easements for the power lines.

Brian Winot informed the board, that he often encounters engineers' complaints about MCCC's completeness review being very technical. Lori explained that having two (2) engineers on staff allows an opportunity to look at the applications in more detail. If there is something that could cause a problem with passing a technical review, it is often flagged early, at the completeness review, and avoids the 2nd review fee.

Drew Wagner commented that he often chooses to make comments up front, at the 1st technical review, to avoid large comments, leading to large revisions, later in the process; which as a result would prolong the project.

Craig asked for an example of a project that benefited the decision of an early review. Drew replied that it could be any new project just being reviewed for consistency of calculations of impervious surfaces across all of the documents and spreadsheets.

Mike Wilk announced that MCCC's engineers provide quasi-technical comments to the consultants during completeness review, but only if there is something that would require a significant change to the project later. He added that the review time also shortens substantially with each resubmission, therefore it is a benefit and a service to the consultants to avoid complete project redesigns.

Craig Todd asked Lori about line #5 on her report. Lori responded that it is a site of a new home construction on the wet lot, and that this site was previously referred to the DEP and USACE.

EE Report: The report was provided to the board in their packet. Roger stated that the renewal of the five (5) year agreement with TNC was completed. The MNC's agreement with DCNR was still in progress. The EE program trimmed and cleaned up the bog's plots in December. The bog's program schedule for 2023 is complete, and a number of programs in cooperation with Brodhead Watershed Association have been set up as well. All county schools were scheduled, and there is no free board until June.

Roger provided 2022 year-end review report. The EE program's 2022 figures were much higher than 2020 or 2021. The building's attendance had over 1,500 walk-ins. The program's income was over \$75,000.00, and the gift shop added another \$5,000.00. EE plans on expanding gift shop's inventory beyond the bird seed, next year.

Bob asked Roger about tapping the trees. Roger replied, that it is scheduled for the week of February 6th, which is three (3) weeks earlier than when the program first started, (which is also the case for all the Sugar Bushes in the United States.) Roger further explained, that with no snow cover as a blanket insulation for the roots, it will take longer for the sap to flow. Roger reported, that the tree sponsors' number is at 150, with two (2) public maple sugaring dates scheduled for March 4 and 11, 2023. The board held a discussion about program's advertising options.

Roger added that due to EE's busy schedules, the program will require additional contracted people this summer.

District Managers Report: Kristina Heaney provided her report in the board packet. She informed the board, that in the month of December, she shadowed some of the technical programs and visited some violation sites. She had an opportunity to work with ESSA Bank and Trust as an advisor for a possible green business alternatives and recommendations. She will work with them in the next few months, trying to help allocate privatized funding, and sources that promote green technology alternatives.

ACAP Delegation Agreement:

Kristina reported, that the ACAP program allocation for Monroe County is \$300,000.00 that will be spent on local agricultural programs over the next three (3) years. There will be no extra work load, and the

district already has required staff employed, as well as number of potential projects lined up. The ACAP is 100% modeled off of a very successful existing Dirt and Gravel Road program.

David Hooker added that ACAP combined with NRCS EQUIP program will be a great resource to the local farmers. Potential six (6) landowner candidates would need to have at least agricultural E&S plan, and a comprehensive nutrient management plan. David H. is currently training to be able to help with design and certification of these plans. The ACAP's program funds will be distributed 50% upfront, with the remainder of initially allocated funds to be committed by December 2024, and all spent by the end of 2026. Donna Folk added that many farmers are unaware of what is available to them, and are often afraid of the government. She believes that a few grant projects can bring their trust back. Jason Smith added, that up to 1200 people might become eligible for these programs. David H. added that he will explore more funding options if necessary. His long term goal is to obtain job approval authority through NRCS.

Bob Armstrong asked for approval of Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) Delegation Agreement.

A motion was made by Brian Winot, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to approve the Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) Delegation Agreement. Motion carried.

Out of County Travel:

Bob Armstrong asked for approval of out of county travel.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to approve out of county travel.

Square Credit Card Processing.

Bob Armstrong asked for approval of Square Credit Card Processing.

A motion was made by Brian Winot, seconded by Roger McFadden, to approve Square Credit Card Processing.

2022 Donations:

Bob Armstrong asked for approval of June 28- December 31, 2022 donations.

Craig Todd listed the donations as follows:

- \$475 to the Conservation Camp
- \$806.84 to KCEEC
- \$1500.00 to USGS Gage
- \$16,337.75 from KCEF
- \$672.60 Art Show income

Barbara noted that the last two (2) amounts were for the whole year.

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to approve the Donations.

2023 IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate.

Bob Armstrong asked for approval of 65.5 cents, 2023 IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate.

A motion was made by Brian Winot, seconded by Roger McFadden, to approve 2023 IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate of 65.5 cents per mile.

Financial Report:

Invoice Lists for January 19, 2023:

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Sharron Laverdure, to approve the invoice list of January 19, 2023. Motion carried.

Balance Sheet as of 12/31/2022:

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Sharron Laverdure, to approve the balance sheet for 12/31/2022. Motion carried.

Revised 2023 Budget:

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Sharron Laverdure, to approve the revised 2023 Budget. Motion carried.

Cooperating Agency Reports:

DEP-Janet Creegan supplied the DEP report in the board packet. Janet asked the new board members to update their team's sheets. She announced that JUDO training, for district staff who conduct inspections and respond to complaints, is scheduled for March 28 and 29. She also reported that ACAP funding is available at the controller's office.

NRCS- Jennifer Matthews supplied her report in the board packet. She informed the board, that they are currently ranking and assessing EQUIP applications for this fiscal year. They should be completed by the end of next week.

PA Fish and Boat Commission- Matt Deitrich. Matt reported that trout stocking schedule is almost finalized. He informed the board that fishing license prices will increase \$2.50 for the residents, which will subsequently generate additional \$2.5 million of revenue for the commission. Matt reported that there were nine (9) fatal boat accidents in 2021, and he reminded everyone to wear lifejackets on boats year-round.

Public Comment: None

Bob Amstrong welcomed Jason Smith to the MCCD Board of Directors.

Jason Smith introduced himself. He asked the board about the possibility of the Farm to School Program coming to the Pocono Mountain School District to introduce its students to the food sources and agricultural career opportunities.

Bob Armstrong adjourned the meeting at 9:52AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Iwona O'Connor
Office Assistant Sr.

**The next MCCD Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Thursday,
February 16, 2023 at 8:00 AM at the Monroe County Conservation District**