



MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
July 15, 2021

MEMBERS PRESENT: Bob Armstrong, Sharon Laverdure, Roger McFadden, Chuck Gould and Craig Todd

DISTRICT STAFF: Kristina Heaney, Roger Spotts, Lori Kerrigan, Alexandra Dutt, Alesia Gallo, Michael Wilk, an Barbara Bistras and Diana Flint

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS: Brian Winot and John Lyman

Cooperating Agencies: Shane Kleiner-DEP, Karen Books-DEP, Jennifer Matthews-NRCS, Christine Meinhart-Planning Commission

PUBLIC: Leslie Berger, Maricatherine Garr, Reece Kresge, Ben Keppel, Emma Barrett and Zachary Dooner.

Bob Armstrong called the meeting to order at 8:02 am.

Executive Session: Bob Armstrong called for an executive session at 8:02am. The board conveyed to the board meeting room for the executive session in regards to board updates. The session ended at 8:11am.

Bob stated that the executive session was regarding the resignation of Pat Ross, who was the chairman of the board. Pat has twenty years of service with the Monroe County Conservation District. Craig stated that Pat's been very involved, had a good perspective on things and that he's sorry to see him go. Sharon wanted to personally thank him for twenty years of service.

Board Meeting Minutes: Bob Armstrong asked for approval of the June 17, 2021 board meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Chuck Gould, seconded by Roger McFadden, to approve the June 17, 2021 board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Technical Report:

Lori Kerrigan provided the report in the board packet, which she reviewed with the board. Lori also mentioned that the DEP is pushing for permits to get terminated if they are completed. Kristina mentioned that we're closing out the Dirt and Gravel Program that we had with the Game Commission and that the project worked out really well. Lori then mentioned the Growing Greener Grant that we had

applied for, the second round of funds for the grant was received and the project will move forward in 2022. Bob asked Lori about the number of plan reviews listed vs. the number of sites in the report. Lori confirmed what was reported was the number of plans vs. the number of reviews required for the plan to be deemed adequate. Craig questioned the 847 project acres and the 563 disturbed acres in reference to the disparity. Lori stated that there are several large projects that have come in, particularly the Swiftwater Solar Project.

Sharon asked about the disease that has been affecting songbirds recently. Roger explained that there is a disease that's affecting songbirds and that it's recommended to temporarily take down bird feeders until the issue is resolved. This will help stop the concentration of birds in small areas. We've removed feeders at the Environmental Center and are instructing anyone who calls to do the same. The disease is affecting more birds in southern PA but it's suggested to take feeders down in this area also, as a precaution. Sharon mentioned that affected birds can be reported to the Game Commission, Alesia added that they can also be reported via the reporting website.

EE Report: Roger Spotts provided the report in the board packet. Roger mentioned that Conservation Camp is next week and that there are fifteen campers registered. The technical and EE staff will be involved with programs at the camp. There will be a normal camp schedule with COVID-19 guidelines being implemented. Roger informed the board that both weeks of day camp in August are full and that the Nature Conservancy has agreed to re-open the bog for public walks. The first walk was last week and people are calling to register for additional walks, which are offered each week. School contacts have been started for fall programs and he's optimistic that most programs will start again in the fall.

Roger stated that the Pleasant Valley High School envirothon team won the PA state championship for the first time and will be competing in the international competition on July 26th and 27th. The competition will be held virtually, with Roger and Alesia as the proctors. Roger stated that they won by ten points which is a huge margin. Roger introduced Maricatherine Garr, the advisor and long-time coach that competed in the envirothon as a student. Maricatherine explained that she taught environmental science at Pleasant Valley and has been with the district for fourteen years. She mentioned all of the hard work and time that the team put into studying for the PA state envirothon competition. Maricatherine thanked Roger and Alesia for all of their help with the envirothon competition. Emma Barrett, the team captain was introduced first, she's a senior that's headed to Yale for environmental studies. The next team member to be introduced was Reece Kresge, who has also recently graduated as is headed to the army. Zach Dooner, who will be a senior next year, was introduced next. The newest member, Ben Keppel, was also introduced, he just completed his freshman year and is learning a lot about the competition. Meghan Chechel is also a team member but she couldn't make it here this morning. The envirothon team was presented with engraved Yeti mugs which the board provided. Emma thanked everyone for the years of support for envirothon.

District Managers Report: Kristina provided the report in the board packet. She's been covering for the office assistant and watershed specialist positions this month and has been busy balancing these roles. Kristina stated that she attended the Kettle Creek Environmental Fund board meeting. They are starting

the Kettle Creek Project Initiative and she invited board members to join this committee. The purpose will be to use memorial donations for Karen to set up static displays or for another educational purpose. Brian Winot offered to serve on the committee, he noted that his children were influenced by Karen and that he has a personal interest in the cause.

Personnel Committee Update: Kristina attended a personnel committee meeting last week concerning staff updates. Alexandra Dutt has decided to retain her current position as Resource Conservation Specialist, which opened up an Environmental Educator position.

Recommendation to Hire: Environmental Educator: Kristina requested that the board approve the hiring of Barrett Donna for the Environmental Educator position.

A motion was made by Bob Armstrong, seconded by Roger McFadden, to hire Barrett Donna for the Environmental Educator position. Motion carried. Sharon abstained from the vote.

Request to advertise: Office Assistant Sr. Pending the results of a comprehensive personnel questionnaire and while waiting to see if the position can be re-graded, Kristina has asked for the Office Assistant Sr. position to be advertised.

A motion was made by Chuck Gould, seconded by Roger McFadden, to advertise for an Office Assistant Sr. position. Motion carried. Sharon abstained from the vote.

Karen Books stated that the board chairperson position would need to be filled by someone who qualifies as a public director but they can't qualify as a farmer director. It can be someone that's been an existing associate director for at least two years or someone that was on a list presented to the commissioners in the past year. It would go out to the nominating committee if there is no one that meets these qualifications.

Recommendation to hire: Resource Conservation Specialist-Watershed Specialist: Kristina requested that the board approve the hiring of David Hooker for the position.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Chuck Gould, to hire David Hooker for the Watershed Specialist position. Motion carried. Sharon abstained from the vote.

Next, Kristina mentioned that funding is available for the Conservation District to spend on a spotted lanternfly project. There are 23 counties in the quarantine list that are eligible for the funding. There are three different projects that the funds will be used for. They are: create your own circle trap, a chat about spotted lanternflies at a local vineyard and a municipal/homeowner association workshop.

Recommendation to submit approval for spotted lanternfly grant:

A motion was made by Chuck Gould, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to request a spotted lanternfly grant totaling \$9,500. Motion carried.

Invoice List as of 7/15/21: The invoice list is included in the board packet. Bob asked what the SGL 38 project is. Lori stated that is the Growing Greener Project.

Kristina stated that the security system will be finalized next Friday with a training on the locks. Four parking lot security cameras have been installed with monitors at several locations inside the building.

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Chuck Gould, to approve the July 15, 2021 invoice list. Motion carried.

Balance Sheet as of 6/30/21: A motion was made Roger McFadden, seconded by Craig Todd, to approve the balance sheet for 6/30/21.

Donations: A motion was made Chuck Gould, seconded by Roger McFadden, to approve the donations, as listed in the board packet. Craig amended the motion to specify that \$3,179.10 was for environmental education and \$9,050 was for a stream gauge, for a total of \$12,229.10. A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Chuck Gould, to approve the amended donations, Motion carried.

Out of County Travel: Kristina asked for a motion to approve out of county travel for staff to go on public kayak trips and for the overnight Conservation Camp canoe trip.

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to approve out of county travel. Motion carried.

Other Business: Brian asked if there have been any updates to the phone system. Kristina responded that you can now dial by last name. She also announced that a strategic planning meeting will be held tonight from 6-8pm at the MCCD. This is open to the public and there's been a response from approximately 25 people that will be attending. Kristina is trying to relay that the Conservation District is here to be a partner and not an enemy. Brian noted that the third Thursday of the month was the best time according to the responses from people he spoke with.

Bob asked if the ramp work has been completed. Kristina stated that it is finished and in use, but can't be painted for six months. There were a few revisions to the contract that were addressed. The parking lot lines have been painted. Bob asked for an update on accepting credit cards at MCCD. Kristina said that there is an online credit card option for the tech section and she's working with Barbara to be able to accept credit cards for the gift shop, events and activities at the EE Center. Barbara noted that some companies require a laptop to be connected and access to our computer system in order to accept a credit card, this would be difficult when there are volunteers helping at the center. Barbara also added that there is a five percent holdback from payment for the ramp work that was completed, this is for fifteen months until the ramp warranty is over.

Cooperating Agency Reports

NRCS-Jennifer Matthews referred to her report supplied in the board packet. She stated that they've been busy with their CSP applications for the last month or so.

DEP-Karen Books referred to her report supplied in the board packet. She noted that the ACT applications are due tomorrow. The spotted lanternfly applications are also due. She said that Tuesday was the State Conservation Commission meeting. They set allocations for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. The levels for manager, tech and ACT remained consistent with last year. The cost share for manager is \$22,350, for E & S and ACT techs is \$16,225 and the unconventional gas well funds is \$27,874 per district,

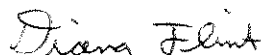
about \$880 more than last year. She stated that DEP will start doing one on one training for E & S. There is a link to the training in the Clean Water Academy dashboard portal.

Craig mentioned that he's glad that sponsors gave to Conservation Camp, Roger said that any student that wanted a scholarship was given one.

Public comment: None

Pat Ross adjourned the meeting at 9:05am

Respectfully Submitted,



Diana Flint
Office Assistant Sr.

**THE NEXT MCCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY,
August 19, 2021 AT 8:00 AM at the Monroe County Conservation District**