



**MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 21, 2024**

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

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

COOPERATING AGENCIES: Deborah Basalyga- NRCS (via Zoom), Julia Sherer- MCPC (via Zoom), Mike Dwyer- Middle Smithfield Township's Supervisor and Cory Lyon- Middle Smithfield Township's Roadmaster.

PUBLIC: Alex Jackson PhD (via Zoom), Linda Snyder and Janet Dooner, artzulick2024 (via Zoom,) and bhainna (via Zoom.)

Bob Armstrong called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

Public Comment:

None

Board Meeting Minutes:

Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of the February 15, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes.

A motion was made by Sharon Laverdure, seconded by Roger McFadden to approve the February 15, 2024 Board Meeting Minutes. Motion carried.

EE Report:

The report was provided to the board in their packet. Roger Spotts informed the board that the maple season was very short this year. The Sugar Shack produced only twenty nine (29) gallons of syrup as compared to thirty six (36) gallons last year. Public Sugar Bush



tour on March 2nd was attended by one hundred fourteen (114) people out of two hundred fifty (250) registered. Two hundred thirty six (236) people, out of three hundred fifty (350) registered, were present on March 9th, 2024. The attendance was affected by heavy rain on both days. The event was still a success thanks to the volunteers serving pancakes.

Roger reported that the EE center's spring schedule is filled with local schools. Presently, the educators, with help of technical staff, provide Envirothon training in local schools. The center is also accepting registrations for summer camps.

Bob inquired regarding center's scheduled participation in community events. Roger replied that it is an effort to promote the program and summer camps. The educators will attend the Waste Authority's Earth Day and Pleasant Valley's Children's Fair.

Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of Contracted Service Providers- Alesia Gallo and Christina Stefan to help with school programs at the rate of \$14.00 and \$12.00 per hour respectively.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Jason Smith to approve Contracted Service Providers- Alesia Gallo and Christina Stefan at the rate of \$14.00 and \$12.00 per hour respectively. Motion carried.

Tech Report:

The technical report was provided to the board in their packet. Kristina disclosed that in the month of February the District received twelve (12) new applications, issued two (2) individual NPDES permits, processed three (3) minor modifications and acknowledged five (5) notices of termination. The inspection report and project review status report were provided to the board in their packet as well. Bob inquired regarding the sites number one (1,) two (2) three (3,) six (6) and seven (7) from the inspection report. Listed sites received fill of unknown source and content matter. The inspection sites prompted board discussion on the topic of clean fill. The board elaborated that states such as New York and New Jersey have different definitions and levels of acceptance of clean fill, therefore educating Pennsylvania residents is crucial in preventing deliveries of contaminated fill. OC, Resource Conservation Specialist, suggested multilingual instructions due to the fact that four (4) out of five (5) suspected contaminated fill sites' property owners communicate in language other than English. Kristina reminded the board that fill is not one of the District's delegated programs and is enforced by the DEP. She added that eleven (11) counties submit daily referrals to the DEP's Solid Waste unit. Craig added that the adequate DEP funding for staffing in Harrisburg is crucial in this case. Middle Smithfield Township's Supervisor Dwyer suggested that the estimate of cost and time of soil remediation could be

helpful to the townships to impose fines. The verbiage to add to the township ordinance could also aid in residents' compliance. Kristina responded that she will resubmit a copy of a model ordinance to the Planning Commission and COG.

Brian Winot inquired regarding a recent Public Hearing for the Core5 Warehouse. Mike Wilk advised the board that he has been working with the DEP and their legal advisors on establishing a template for a public comment response document. Brian continued to elaborate that if a permit is adequate, it will be issued regardless of public comment. Mike justified that the public comment process allows public to have an opinion on the project and significant public interest extends the permitting process by three (3) to four (4) months. The permit is issued with the comment document attached and allows for addition of conditions such as post construction monitoring to exceptional value wetlands. Donna added that New Jersey recently passed a regulation requiring new warehouses to establish 40% of their energy use to be solar.

Watershed Specialist Report:

The watershed specialist report was provided to the board in their packet. David Hooker informed the board that the Emergency Watershed Protection Program sponsored streambank stabilization project's contract documents and easements were all signed, and the project is currently advertised at the PennBid website. The pre-bid conference on site will be held March 28th and bidding will close on April 10th. The bid award is expected to be on the April board meeting agenda. In February, David provided landowner assistance and reviewed completed ACAP application for a poultry, a farm in Jackson Township. The project entails the installation of approximately thirty five (35) acres of perimeter fencing to improve the farm's rotational grazing system and eliminate seasonal Animal Concentrated Areas. The landowner will provide an in-kind match of \$7,090.44 in the form of temporary fencing for interior paddocks, field preparation and agricultural plan writing.

Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of ACAP Application for Jackson View Farms' Rotational Grazing Improvement Project in the amount of \$68,648.46

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Brian Winot to approve ACAP Application for Jackson View Farms' Rotational Grazing Improvement Project in the amount of \$68,648.46. Jason Smith abstained from the vote because he is the property owner. Motion carried.

DGLVR Program Report:



John notified the board that he received one (1) new application for the Dirt and Gravel Road program. He conveyed that \$113,420.50 grant would enable rehabilitation of 3,760' of the Firestone Road in Middle Smithfield Township including additional drainage pipes, swales, road fill and Driving Surface Aggregate installation. The maintenance work will facilitate better road drainage and correct the erosion issues caused by an entrenched road surface, eroded ditches and excessive loss of road fines. The project will minimize sediment discharges to multiple tributaries to Bushkill Creek, a high quality stream that supports natural trout reproduction. Firestone Road provides access to the Resica Boy Scout Camp and several residences which see heavy use in the summer months. The township will offer an in-kind contribution of \$151,193.44 labor and equipment for the total project value of \$264,613.94.

Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of Dirt and Gravel Project: Firestone Road in Middle Smithfield Township in the amount of \$113,420.50

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Jason Smith to approve Dirt and Gravel Project: Firestone Road in Middle Smithfield Township in the amount of \$113,420.50. Motion carried.

John and Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of additional DGLVR funding for already contracted projects that are underway and have incurred expenses up to the maximum allowable 70% of the grant amount to accommodate meeting the two year spending requirement. Historically, the program fronted 50% and paid the remainder at project completion, but under the SCC policy, the District is required to hold only 30% till project completion. This will facilitate meeting, or at least reducing the impact of not meeting, the spending requirement under the program's five (5) year contract which ended last year

A motion was made by Brian Winot, seconded by Roger McFadden to approve Additional DGLVR Funding for Already Contracted Projects that are Underway and Have Incurred Expenses up to the Maximum Allowable 70% of the Grant Amount to Accommodate Meeting Our Two Year Spending Requirement. Motion carried.

District Managers Report:

Kristina Heaney provided her report in the board packet.

Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of Purchasing Policy Updates*.

**Purchases below \$11,500 require no formal bidding or written/telephonic quotations.*

**Purchases between \$4000 and \$24,999 require three written/telephonic quotations*

** Purchase quotes/estimates between \$11,500-\$25,000 should be presented to the District Board of Directors.*

** Costs for a single good or a related series of goods and for any services with a dollar value greater than \$25,000 requires competitive bidding.*

** Professional services with contracted vendors are exempt from the requirements of the purchasing policy but still subject to Pennsylvania Public Bidding Requirements (Title 62). For the following: maintenance, repair, replacement of existing infrastructure, vehicles, and equipment.*

** Purchases made through State or Costars contracts do not require a formal bid process.*

A motion was made by Brian Winot, seconded by Roger McFadden to approve Purchasing Policy Updates.

Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of Recommendation to Monroe County to Hire David Hooker as Head Resource Conservationist at the rate that the previous Head Resource Conservationist was hired, and as per Personnel Committee advice.

A motion was made by Brian Winot, seconded by Craig Todd to approve Recommendation to Monroe County to Hire Head Resource Conservationist. Sharon Laverdure abstained from the vote because she will vote on that recommendation at the Commissioners meeting. Motion carried.

John Motz added that the technical team is looking forward to working with David in his new role. He applauded him for being very studious and detail oriented. Bob wished David best of luck.

Bob Armstrong asked for the approval of Skytop Contract for the NPDES Workshop in the amount of \$10,593.75. This year's workshop is scheduled for May 10th, 2024 and the board members are welcome to attend.

A motion was made by Sharon Laverdure, seconded by Jason Smith to approve Skytop Contract for NPDES Workshop in the amount of \$10,593.75. Motion carried.

Bob Armstrong asked for the approval to Advertise Resource Conservation Specialist.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Jason Smith to approve Advertisement for Resource Conservation Specialist. Motion carried.

Brian Winot asked for approval of Bid Opening- Contractor for 8073 Demo Project.

A motion was made by Jason Smith, seconded by Donna Foulk to award the 8073 Demo Project to the lowest bidder that clarifies asbestos inspection, testing, and abatement.

Brian Winot abstained from vote because Northeast Site Contractors submitted a bid for the demolition project. 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 Jason Smith to approve Out Of County travel. Motion carried.

Work Session Report:

Bob Armstrong requested approval of the February 2024 Work Session Minutes.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Sharon Laverdure to approve February 2024 Work Session Minutes. Motion carried.

Financial Report:

Invoice Lists for March 21, 2024:

Bob Armstrong requested approval of the March 21, 2024 Invoice List.

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Jason Smith to approve the Invoice List for March 21, 2024. Motion carried.

Balance Sheet as of 2/29/2024:

Bob Armstrong asked for approval of the Balance Sheet as of February 29, 2024.

A motion was made by Roger McFadden, seconded by Brian Winot to approve the Balance Sheet as of February 29, 2024. Motion carried.

Cooperating Agency Reports:

NRCS- Deborah Basalyga reported that the agency is finalizing all the documentation for contracting and is planning their second (2nd) virtual local workgroup meeting.

MCPC- Julia Sherer reported that the Monroe County Planning Commission is accepting applications for the preserved farmland until April 5th, 2024.

Public Comment:

Alex Jackson PhD. commented as a concerned resident of Tunkhannock Township. He made reference to the Township's Public Hearing on a proposed warehouse in Tunkhannock Township. Alex stated that he believed the landowner grievance should not have been with the permitting agency and should instead have been with the three (3) Tunkhannock Township supervisors and the zoning decisions made in 2020. Alex stated that it is an unfortunate situation, he recognized the frustration of the landowner, and respected their concerns, but he respectfully disagreed with grievance being with the permitting agency and stated that most of these issues were due to zoning decisions made by supervisors who didn't really take the context of a surrounding environment into their consideration.

Bob Armstrong adjourned the meeting at 11:18 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Iwona O'Connor /s/

Iwona O'Connor
Office Assistant Sr.

The next MCCD Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Thursday, April 18th, 2024, at 10:00 AM at the Monroe County Conservation District.