



MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES
October 21, 2021

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

DISTRICT STAFF: Kristina Heaney, Roger Spotts, Lori Kerrigan, John Motz, Michael Wilk, Drew Wagner, Barbara Bistras, and Diana Flint.

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS: Edith Stevens

Cooperating Agencies: Shane Kleiner-DEP, Jennifer Matthews-NRCS,

PUBLIC: Paula Heeschen-BWA, Amelia Thomas-Tobyhanna Army Depot.

Bob Armstrong called the meeting to order at 8:01 am.

Growing Greener Account: Bob Armstrong asked for approval to add a motion for the Growing Greener Account. This would be for the board to vote for a separate bank account for these funds.

A motion was made by Chuck Gould, seconded by Roger McFadden, to add item 8C to the agenda. The board will vote on the Growing Greener Account, to open a separate bank account for the funds.

Public Comment-none

Board Meeting Minutes: Bob Armstrong asked for approval of the September 16, 2021 board meeting minutes.

A motion was made by Chuck Gould, seconded by Roger McFadden, to approve the September 16, 2021 board meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Technical Report:

Lori Kerrigan provided the report in the board packet, which she reviewed with the board. She mentioned that two notices of termination were processed. DEP asked that an inventory be completed of all outstanding permits that haven't been terminated. They have instituted a fee system, with the first round of bills recently going out. The bills will be in cycles, depending on when the permit expiration dates are. Lori briefly reviewed the general permits that were given out under the Chapter 105 program. She noted that there were several meetings about ACT 167 storm water management plans. She also

mentioned that several projects are underway for dirt and gravel road, along with correspondence and meetings.

EE Report: Roger Spotts provided his report in the board packet. He stated that the EE staff has been working with local schools, with most fall programs occurring. He said they're getting ready for winter bird feeding programs and is hopeful that most will occur in the schools. Roger informed the board that the bog walks have been very well attended, and several walks have been added to accommodate the demand. The Nature Conservancy limits the public walks to twenty people. Roger explained that the public programs would normally be limited to twenty five people, so it isn't much of a difference.

Roger stated that the bird seed sale is this Saturday and that there are extras available. He said the Elk trip in September was a full bus and the trip went well. The Chincoteague trip, which is this Sunday, is also a full bus. Next, Roger mentioned that Mary Ann Moore and Nancy Tully, two of our long time members, have published a children's book that's for sale in the gift shop. The book is a story about Kettle Creek, written through the eyes of some of the animals here. They are donating all the profits to Kettle Creek.

Bob asked how the bird seed sale went and if stopping the membership fee made a difference. Roger stated that the sales are about the same as in the past, noting that the price of birdseed has gone up. There were a number of donations given with bird seed orders. Barbara informed the board that a number of people rounded up their orders and were donating what they would have paid in membership fees.

District Managers Report: Kristina provided the report in the board packet. She stated that the Strategic Planning is going well, with the last meeting being very well attended, and that staff has been talking internally about goals brought up in the meeting and how they'll be achieved. Kristina stated that she's hoping to have another quarterly regulatory forum in January. Next, Kristina informed the board that she had a conversation with Jennifer Matthews about the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. This program provides funding that is allocated for stream, bank and erosion protection for stream restoration projects for private and commercial land owners.

Craig asked Kristina for a staffing update. She stated that there has been recent turnover in the agricultural and watershed positions. Alex and David have written bios and listed the programs that they handle. Kristina will be updating all municipal and legislative officers every January so that everyone is aware of staff changes and what each staff member is responsible for. Sharon mentioned that Kristina can ask to go to the COG meeting, which is the last of the month. Next, Craig asked about the condition of Sand Spring and if it's deteriorated further after the recent storms. Kristina was there last week with Northampton County Conservation staff and stated that it has deteriorated further and that there are bare banks and a large beaver dam. The damage from recent storms hasn't changed the scope of the project. Shane asked when they will be breaking ground for the lay back of banks and Lori replied that timber work will be done this winter with ground breaking being in late spring or early summer.

Dirt and Gravel, Low Volume Roads: Chestnuthill Township-Extension Request: County Park Rd. .PH II LVR (12/1/21) John Motz mentioned that the stream crossing is in and replaced and that the phase two contract expired on September 30th. This work should be completed in the next week or two,

but an extension until December 1st is being requested. Chuck stated that there are many variables in construction and that concrete and other materials for paving are currently in high demand.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to extend the Chestnuthill Township project until 12/1/21. Motion carried. Chuck Gould abstained from the vote.

Personnel Committee Update: Kristina stated that there was a personnel committee meeting on October 14th to discuss current staffing shortages. The Office Assist Sr. position is available again and is being posted until November 5th. Interviews will be scheduled at that time, the board is welcome to sit in on the interviews. Kristina informed the board that our current agricultural specialist is leaving to pursue another job and that there has been frequent turnover in this position. There is currently an increase in the amount of complaints, inspections and reviews in the chapter 102/105 program. There was a discussion on whether the agricultural technician position should be kept or if the person being hired should be a resource conservation specialist. Kristina explained that if the agricultural specialist position were eliminated, the ACT funding in the amount of \$16,500 would no longer be available. She also explained to the board that the suspension of the ACT program can be temporary, and can be started back up as needed. This was discussed further and it was agreed that a resource conservation specialist would be hired that would spend fifty percent of their time and that two other employees would each spend twenty five percent of their time on the ACT program. There will also be a succession plan in place, to account for employees that retire or leave the Conservation District for other reasons. Kristina asked for a motion to advertise for the RCS position and for another motion to split the ACT program between two staff and to modify the existing agreement.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Chuck Gould, to post a position for a resource conservation specialist, 102/105. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Chuck Gould, seconded by Craig Todd, to split the workload for the ACT program between two staff members, amending the ACT agreement. Motion carried.

Committee Restructuring: Bob informed the board that he'd like to reinstate committee groups. There are currently nine committees, but the board will discuss how many would be appropriate going forward. Bob would like to see MCCD staff, the board and associate directors involved in the committees. MCCD staff would not be included on the personnel committee.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Sharon Laverdure, to reinstate board committee meetings. Motion carried.

Financial Report:

Invoice List as of 10/22/21:

A motion was made by Chuck Gould, seconded by Roger McFadden, to approve the October 22, 2021 invoice list. Motion carried.

Balance Sheet as of 9/30/21:

A motion was made Chuck Gould, seconded by Roger McFadden, to approve the balance sheet for 9/30/21. Motion carried.

District Audit Contract Renewal:

Barbara explained that she contacted several companies for quotes to do our audit, this would be a three year contract. She received three responses and two quotes, from Riley and Company and from Zelenkofske Axelrod. She mentioned that the Riley and Company quote was lower and since they're our current auditors, they are easy to work with and are familiar with the district.

A motion was made by Bob Armstrong, seconded by Roger McFadden, to continue with Riley and Company as the MCCD auditors for the next three years, ending in 2023. Motion carried.

Out of County Travel:

Kristina asked for a motion to approve out of county travel for David Hooker, to attend a Dirt and Gravel road training in Wilkes-Barre.

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

Donations:

The donations were provided in the board packet.

A motion was made by Craig Todd, seconded by Chuck Gould, to approve the donations that were listed in the board packet. Motion carried.

Growing Greener Account:

Kristina explained that Growing Greener Grant has a stipulation for it to have a separate bank account, for interest tracking and record keeping.

A motion was made by Sharon Laverdure, seconded by Roger McFadden, to approve the establishment of a separate bank account for the Growing Greener grant. Motion carried.

Cooperating Agency Reports:

NRCS-Jennifer Matthews stated to the board that her staff is available to assist the farmers in Monroe County as well as MCCD, with any of their conservation needs. Jennifer supplied her report in the board packet. She mention that several potential EWP sites were visited, but the three sites were ineligible due to them being vacant or the work already being completed.

Public comment: None

Bob Armstrong adjourned the meeting at 9:32 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Diana Flint

Diana Flint
Office Assistant Sr.

**THE NEXT MCCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY,
November 18, 2021 AT 8:00 AM at the Monroe County Conservation District**