



**MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**September 17, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Pat Ross, Bob Armstrong, Sharon Laverdure, Roger McFadden, Chuck Gould, Dave Moyer and Randy Rice

**DISTRICT STAFF:** Kristina Heaney, Barbara Bistras, Roger Spotts, Lori Kerrigan, John Motz and Drew Wagner

**ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS:** Craig Todd, Brian Winot and Amalia O'Brien

**COOPERATING AGENCIES:** Christine Meinhart, Monroe County Planning Commission and Carl Deluca, DEP

**PUBLIC:** Paula Heeschen and Annie Lamberton, residents

**Pat Ross called the meeting to order at 8:00 am**

Roll call for the board was taken and all board members were in attendance.

**Public comment:** None

Pat called an executive session at 8:01am for personnel matters.

Board meeting resumed at 8:05am, Pat mentioned that in executive session they discussed personnel matters.

**Board Meeting Minutes:**

Pat asked for a motion of the August 20, 2020 board meeting minutes. Kristina interjected that we do have to strike the motion to hire the new Resource Conservation Specialist. It was noticed that Sharon voted and since she is a Commissioner, she is unable to vote on personnel matters since ultimately she makes the final determination. She requested to have that motion stricken from the minutes. Pat responded that the motion needs to be kept in the minutes, so these minutes will be approved as amended with the original motion included. Roger McFadden made the motion to approve the minutes as amended, Chuck Gould seconded the motion, motion carried.

**Technical Report:** Lori gave a brief review of the August technical report. They fielded 112 calls, 241 general correspondences, had 8 pre-application meetings for new projects, 3 individual NPDES permits issued, 3 minor mods were processed and 1 Record of Decision went to DEP for permit issuance. Under Chapter 105, 3 General Permits that were issued. There have been a number of Chapter 105 trainings and revisions to e-permitting system that have occurred. John organized a DGLVR zoom and socially distant training for certifications for townships along with several district staff in attendance who became certified. A lot of time has been spent on interviews and preparation for new staff that will be starting at the end of the month. Sharon asked on behalf of another commissioner, seeing the amount of money that is there for the DGLVR program, has anyone ever requested any of that. John responded that in order for municipalities to be eligible for funding they need to attend ESM training every five years. We routinely send out notices to all municipalities with the availability of funding and have several municipality projects currently in the works. The Game Commission and Fish and Boat are also eligible and the county would also qualify for funding. The district used to receive about \$10,000 a year and now we receive about a quarter million dollars for Dirt & Gravel and Low Volume Roads, about 20% is spent on administration and education and a minimum 80% is spent on projects within the two year spending requirement. Craig asked if county bridge maintenance projects be eligible, John replied that if they meet the program requirements and if it is a paved road with less than 500 vehicles a day. Sharon inquired if she would need to be certified and John will look into that, but potentially yes someone from the county would most likely have to be certified.

**EE Report:** Roger highlighted that we put together a whole menu of options for school districts for programs available virtually, via zoom and on school site. We sent that out about two weeks ago and we are slowly starting to hear back. We are working with East Stroudsburg High School to do some water quality stuff with them on their site with their students outside in the next few weeks. We spoke with another school yesterday and expect those programs to build back up as the schools get into a pattern. We have offered these programs at no fee because of the grants we have applied for, which the school are very appreciative for. Our bird seed sale is going to be held October 24 which we are taking pre-orders on. This has typically been done as a curbside pickup in the parking lot in the past so we didn't have to many any changes this year. The order forms are available online, they were emailed and mailed out with our newsletter. Later on this winter we will be doing regular curbside bird seed order pickups.

Bob asked Sharon for the status of people submitting costs from the storm damage, she didn't have a total but she doesn't believe enough was submitted so from her understanding funding will probably not be available, but she will double check on that.



**District Managers Report:** Kristina mentioned her report was provided and a couple things to go over that came up recently. The location for the Christmas board meeting cannot accommodate more than 25 and they are not doing a buffet style service so we need to consider an alternative approach or putting it off this year all together. The State Conservation Commission in coordination with Leadership Development for PA Conservation Districts is offering a \$1,500 strategic planning grant. We would need to fit into the parameters required and start a committee including partnering organizations such as NRCS, watershed groups, the county, members of our board, staff and the public to put together surveys and work for about a year to completely re-imagine what the conservation district should be doing. Kristina asked if the board in general is interested in strategic planning; in Pat's opinion he feels this is something we should do. It was stated at the last meeting what we are permitted to do under the delegation agreements, but he feels we have a moral obligation to the people of this county to try to help them during these rain events and flooding situations. Pat asked for the board response to start strategic planning, Randy agrees, Dave yes, Chuck yes, Bob is interested in seeing additional information on the grant but he said no, Sharon says yes but we need to be sure we do this with an ultimate goal and we are doing justice to the process, Roger agrees with the strategic plan but shares Sharon's importance of where we want it to go, it is very time consuming and at the end of day need to have something that is actionable. Kristina asked the board if they would consider hiring a consultant to lead the committee, Pat thought hiring a facilitator is appropriate and has worked out well for him at other organizations in the past. Kristina will prepare the information and forward to the board for their review.

Pat added that we still want to have that meeting with PennDOT but there was no response from Kristina's email so he requested a registered letter go out requesting the meeting.

Kristina asked for motions to hire the following:

Alexandra Dutt, Resource Conservation Specialist, at the advertised rate. Roger McFadden made the motion to hire Alexandra Dutt at the advertised rate, Chuck Gould seconded, motion carried. Roll call vote was unanimous, except Sharon abstained.

Clara Stalter, Office Assistant Sr, at the advertised rate. Chuck Gould made the motion to hire Clara Stalter at the advertised rate, Bob Armstrong seconded, motion carried. Roll call vote was unanimous, except Sharon abstained.

Diana Flint, Office Assistant Sr, at the advertised rate. Chuck Gould made the motion to hire Diana Flint at the advertised rate, Bob Armstrong seconded, motion carried. Roll call vote was unanimous, except Sharon abstained.



NRCS was not available for the call so we are unable to go ahead with the review of that agreement.

Kristina explained there was a revision that needs to be made to the July 1. 2020 minutes. What was stated at the meeting was correct, what was in the minutes for the cost of the Chestnuthill Township DGLVR contract was understated by \$400. A motion to reflect the change was made by Sharon Laverdure and seconded by Roger McFadden, motion carried.

**OCT:** A motion was made by Chuck Gould and seconded by Roger McFadden to approve the out of county travel as presented, motion carried.

### **Financial Report:**

Financial Statement/Balance Sheet as of 8/31/20: A motion was made to accept the Financial Statements as presented by Roger McFadden and seconded by Chuck Gould, motion carried.

Invoice List as of 9/17/20: A motion was made by Roger McFadden to approve the invoice list seconded by Sharon Laverdure, motion carried.

Pat introduced another donation topic regarding the ramp project outside, it was put out as an RFP but there was no response. At that point, Dave's company offered to donate approximately \$10,500 worth of site work but due to concerns of Craig and Sharon, legal counsel was suggested to be at this meeting. Pat feels that an attorney is not needed since there is no written procedure for us to follow but some board members have reservations about it. Chuck suggested the State Conservation Commission be contacted to see if they have policy on this or some guidance, which would help clarify things. Dave added that we started this with the budget being tight and that's how he got involved in it to help the community out and if it's turning into this much of a problem and issue, he doesn't see the need to spend any money on attorney fees and at this point he offered to withdraw his donation if that is what the board wants. Chuck asked Dave if he would wait for the SCC's response and Carl Deluca interjected that he is 99% sure the SCC has a policy on this and we should contact them and move on from there. Bob questioned if this is because he is a board member, Pat responded yes and because he does business with the Conservation District. Sharon expressed her interest in a written clarification policy from the SCC not only for board member donations so we don't run into this again. Craig added that it was very nice of Dave to offer this donation, but it wasn't because he is a board member, it's because \$10,000 is a substantial donation and Dave is regulated by the District under the delegation agreement, so that is what raised a red flag to him. Pat questioned if anyone regulated in the past ever offer to make those donations, Craig answered there were verbal offers in the past but they were not accepted. Discussion was held on Kettle Creek Environmental Fund being a separate entity and those donations being specific for

environmental education. Chuck made a motion to contact SCC for donation guidance on board members and the regulated community, seconded by Bob Armstrong, motion carried.

Donations 1/1/20 through 9/8/20: Craig stated that part of the requirement is to state what those donations are for. A motion was made by Roger McFadden to approve the donation list as presented, seconded by Randy Rice, motion carried

**Cooperating Agency Reports:**

**DEP:** Carl Deluca, mentioned his talking points were sent out and there are upcoming trainings for district as well as the board. Dave added that he would like to let Carl know that Mike and Chris have been more than responsive to help take care of some issues.

**MCPC:** Christine Meinhart noted that Ryan attended the Agriculture technical training in Lancaster and mentioned that they received the appraisals for the 2020 farms which came in and is at a higher average rate of \$5700 per acre instead of the previous average of \$3000 per acre.

**Public Comment** : None

Pat adjourned the meeting at 8:47am.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Barbara Bistras".

Barbara Bistras  
Administrative Coordinator

**THE NEXT MCCD BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING WILL BE HELD ON THURSDAY,  
October 15, 2020 AT 8:00 AM AT THE MONROE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
OFFICES STROUDSBURG, PA.**