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**LANCASTER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
May 6, 2020**

The 817th regularly scheduled Board Meeting of the Lancaster County Conservation District (LCCD) was held on Wednesday, May 6, 2020, at 7:30 PM, conference call.

The following Directors were present: Daniel Heller, Herb Kreider, Robert Shearer, Kent Weaver, Jay Snyder, Sonia Wasco and Commissioner Lehman.

The following Associate Directors were present:

The following District Staff were present: Christopher Thompson, District Manager; Gerald Heistand, Business Manager; Stacey Meyer; Finance Manager, Jeff Hill; Ag Department Manager; Matt Kofroth; Watershed Department Manager, Sallie Gregory; Education Program Department Manager, Eric Hout, Rich Snyder; E&S Department Manager, Francesca DePrator, Kent Bitting, Adam Hartz, Samantha Adams, Madolyn Klein, Dennis Eby, Emily Corkhill, Justin Furnia, Greg Heigel, Jim Saltsman, Kevin Lutz, Kevin Seibert, Joseph Robinson and Amanda Goldsmith.

The following Cooperating Agency representative was present: Heather Grove, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Elwood Blake, Department of Environmental Protection.

The following guests were present: None

Chairman Dan Heller called the meeting to order at 7:36p.m. Sonia Wasco provided the invocation for the meeting.

The following additions to the agenda were announced:

Chris announced two additions to the agenda. First addition was #5, Penn Township Service Agreement, which falls under the Additional Business category director's action. This addition moves down the items that follow, changing the numbers of the item.

The second addition, #6, Review of House Bill #1822, under Report & Information category.

An opportunity was given for public comment. None was offered.

Agency Reports

1. USDA, NRCS

Heather Grove announced a new hire who started on May 13th and will be Administrative support. She is currently working one day a week in the office due to Covid-19. She has been doing webinars and screen sharing as part of her training.

Heather also announced they have advertised and conducted interviews for the vacant Soil Con position. They selected a candidate last week and are hoping to hear in the next week if the candidate has accepted the position. Looking at a June timeline to bring someone new on to staff.

PA DEP Field Rep Report

Elwood Blake discussed how the State is trying to keep the Districts in the loop and up to speed using an Alerts webpage through DEP and a PE Nightly Bulletin. There is also COOP plan that will be discussed later in the meeting.

Elwood also reported that payments to the Districts will not be processed by paper check. DEP is sending all payments electronically

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The State Conservation Commission will be requesting to conditionally approve the Nutrient Management program budget at their meeting on May 12th. There won't be any final approval because they have to wait for the final State budget to pass.

Lastly, the Nutrient Management Program Delegation agreement as part of the 5-year delegation agreement, is due for review this year. The commission has requested their staff to conduct a workload analyses after 3 years of implementation. Lastly, DEP had some retirements occurring this quarter and all the people who have been-selected to be hired were put on hold. They will be approached again once the state removes the hire freeze.

Dan Heller asked Commissioner Lehman if he had any information on when Lancaster County will open. Commissioner Lehman informed the board that once the county has met the metrics it will not be held back due to the region of where the county is. No one knows the timeframe at this point. There is a process to reopen the county government by bringing back a modest amount of staff on May 11th. The folks that are working remotely from home will continue to do so.

Consent Agenda

Chairman Daniel Heller gave the opportunity for directors to withdraw any of the other items from the Consent Agenda in order to have additional discussion. There was none. Sonia Wasco moved to approve the consent agenda and Herb Kreider seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The Consent Agenda as voted on includes the following approved items.

- #1 – Minutes of March 4, 2020 Board meeting**
- #2 – Technical Assistance Requests/Cancellations**
- #3 – Nutrient Management Plan Approvals**

Additional Business

1. Items removed from Consent Agenda

There were no items removed from the Consent Agenda.

2. Treasurer's Report

Gerald Heistand referred to the treasurer's report on page 11 to 13 and stated that last year at this time we had \$377,000 in our General Operations and now we have \$297,000. Gerald mentioned that this is not a big difference. He also informed the board that this year's reimbursement requests were \$450,000 compared to last years \$366,000 and the total assets last year at this time was the same as this year.

The E&S Reserve Account is slowly dropping. Two years ago, we had enough money in the reserve account to keep E&S running for a year and a half. Now we are down to one year. Even though the reserve account is dropping slowly we are still meeting expectations and expect to resume account growth once the economy rebounds post Covid-19.

Another comparison is the reserve account for health insurance. We have added an extra \$26,000 from the 2018-2019-time frame to the Health Insurance Reserve account and we should be at least another \$25,000 this September to the account.

The Nutrient Management reserve account has an additional \$20,000 that we were able to use to help pay for SWAT due to the deficiency of 25% we are not been getting for SWAT. Overall the report is positive. Moving to the Income and Expense accounts, E&S is minus \$46,000 and the beginning of the year it was \$10,000 or so positive. This would be a way to watch how that changes. Other than that, nothing is unusual. There were no questions.

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3. COOP Update

Chris reviewed for directors that we are currently operating under the Covid-19 Continuity Plan, meaning the office is open, but staff have been working remotely. We have been doing so for the past 7 weeks. Most of the staff working from home have been completing paperwork, receiving plans, processing permits and applications.

There has been a slight decline in plan reviews in E&S, but not nearly as much as we were expecting. They are still receiving roughly, 3 to 4 plans a day. Staff are busy and actively pursuing and/or processing all permits and paperwork.

On May 4th we revised our COOP and resumed field operations-completing field inspections and site visits. Staff have also been getting back out in the field processing complaints.

On May 18th, we anticipate-staff returning to the office, but still will be closed to the public. The staff will be working in teams on a schedule to do some of their office duties. We will operate on a rotating schedule to maintain that separation so no two people will be sitting next to each other. This will also help us be able to quickly isolate those people possibly exposed if someone on their team is infected and monitor those people who may have come in contact with that person. When not in the office the staff will still be working remotely. If everything goes as planned we expect to be fully operational by June 1st.

With bringing staff back in we have taken precautions. Masks have been supplied to all staff along with practicing social distancing and following all the CDC guidelines to minimize any potential for infection. Sanitizing wipes and Lysol spray have also been purchased for each of the isles and office spaces. SOP's have also been set up for office work spaces and fleet vehicles usage (the number of people in a vehicle which was set at one). With this we will be spending more on mileage reimbursements for people to use their own personal vehicle. The lunch room and water fountain has also been closed to prevent potential cross contamination.

4. Personnel Committee Report

Sonia Wasco started with the introduction of the new employees who started with us. First employee is Emily Smedley. She started working for the Clean Water Partners under the Foundation on February 18th. She is the new Communications Coordinator.

The 2nd set of new employees,-Amanda Goldsmith and Joseph Robinson, who started on March 2nd. Amanda was our summer intern in the Education and Outreach Department. Joseph was previously self employed as an event planner and public speaker. Both Amanda and Joseph are our new Spotted Lanternfly Technicians.

The last new employee introduced was Richard Snyder who started May 4th as our new E&S Program Manager. He comes from Dauphin County where he was the E&S Program Manager for about 20 years. Sonia made a motion to make Richard's hiring formal as our new E&S Program Manager. Bob second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Penn Township Watershed Specialist Service Agreement

Matt Kofroth reported that the agreement is a description of a potential opportunity that the Watershed Program has to assist the local municipalities to do some stormwater improvements on a stream. Their engineer on record had a conflict of interest because it was owned by one of their employees. They asked the District, most notably Nate Straw to do the design and permit for that project. They ok'd it with the funder, NFWF, and said they would be willing to pay for our services. It's possibly a way to help fund the Watershed Program in the future. The document in the board packet is the agreement that Penn Township would like our approval and signature to allow us to work with them at the contracted rate. San Heller entertained a motion to approve. Bob Shearer made the motion, Kent Weaver second the motion. Motion was passed unanimously.

5. Conservation Excellence Grant Approval to Participate

Jeff Hill supplied a screen shot of the CEG Delegate Agreement for review between the District and State Conservation Commission. This is for overseeing management of the CEG Program. It has been introduced

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to the Board over the past couple of months to bring them up to speed with details. We need to make a formal vote and formal approval on it tonight so the District can get started on working through some of the paperwork and getting some of the applications into the District for the implementation of BMP's. The State will be voting in May to approve everything they need to do on their side. It is a cost share program that utilizes grants, Reap Tax Credits and a low interest loan through the Agra Link Program. The District will be in charge of accepting applications, ranking applications and running contracts. -It resembles the old Bay Program that the District worked on for many years.

Kent Bitting added that it's a million dollars for BMP work and the District will be receiving \$250,000 for Admin work. Dan Heller entertained a motion be made. Jay Snyder made the motion and Herb Kreider second. The motion passed unanimously.

6. Watershed Specialist Contract Approval

Matt Kofroth explained the Watershed Specialist contract is a five-year contract. It started two years ago and his actual contract goes through till 2023, but the State requires us to renew every year to make sure all deliverables are met and if fits with DEP's goals and objectives. It's a formal agreement to continue with the five-year agreement.

Commissioner Lehman made the motion that they approve the proposal as presented. Sonia second the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. DGR Report

Matt Kofroth informed the Board that it's a contract amendment approved by the DGR Quality Assurance Board which Herb Kreider, Jay Snyder and Heather Grove sit on, along with Frank Burkhart and Officer Schmitt. There was a funding request by Rapho Township to alter their Johnson Mill DGR Project by adding an additional \$4,000 to their contract. Policy requires that amendments be brought to the Board for a formal approval.—Sonia made the motion and Jay second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chris asked Matt to update the Board on the DGR audit. They are going to Zoom a meeting with the Quality Assurance Board and also with the staff that are involved with the program probably on May 19th.

Reports/Information

1. E&S/NPDES Monthly Projects Report

Eric Hout reported on the E&S report for the month of April. He compared 2020 to 2019 and informed the Board it's slightly down. The fees are consistent with where we were in 2019 at this time. A little lower with plan submissions but a bit higher with the plan review fees. Expect fluctuations from month to month and year to year. Nothing is a surprise in the report. On page 24 is the E&S Submission report. As listed we had a couple higher profile projects including Runway Rehabilitation at the Lancaster Airport in Manheim Township which brought in about \$8,000 in April. There is also a Fulton Township project called Wakefield Transmission Rebuild project that also brought in about \$8,000 of review fees. This project is a PPL project to-update all their transmission lines in the south-central region. Lancaster County has received a very large amount of NPDES permits.

Rich wanted to make the Board aware that his first official duty in the E&S Program has to do with Eric and himself receiving a notification from Curtis Sullivan. Curt is the attorney at DEP's South-Central Regional office. He is assigned to the chapter 102 and 105 programs. He has placed a litigation hold on a project in Mountville Borough. Rich and Eric will be following up in the next couple of days to discuss the project and what the litigation hold is addressing.

2. Tree Sale Report

Sallie shared a picture from the Tree Sale and thanked all the staff who volunteered to help fill over 500 orders. We had 483 to fill along with an additional 15 or more FFA orders to fill. Everyone that volunteered enabled the Tree Sale to go forward. The staff worked in four hour shifts with masks on in a group of 8

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people to keep the total under 10. Some staff worked extra hours to complete the orders, get everything set up and cleaned up.

Matt echoed Sallies sentiments. Usually takes over 25 District staff over a day and a half and we did it with 8 staff 2 shifts per day over a four-day period. Customer and Nurseries where very happy we went forward with the Tree Sale.

3. Strategic Planning Update

Chris Thompson reported and for the Boards benefit, Francesca has been on point for this and is really helping staff and the Board to pull everything together. She and Sallie have done a great job at helping with everything. With the Covid-19 and as much as we have been able to get things done, we have fallen a little behind on our target date on finishing the Strategic Plan, but we received an extension from PACD for our grant. The update is to let you know we are still working on it and we anticipate to have a draft for the Board to review in July so you can approve it at August Board Meeting. PACE will extent the grant deadline which puts us on target with the new date.

4. Scholarship Committee Report

Gerald reported we would normally bring to the Board two candidates for certification and approval of scholarship winners. We did not have the ability to do a good interview at this point so it was decided that we were going to push off the committee discussion and selection until June right after school is out. We feel interviewing the candidates is beneficial for both sides. Both for us to get to know them better and for them to get exposed to the District and understand how the District operates and what our mission is. We scheduled for the 9th of June to do Zoom interview. Sonia added that they all looked like really great candidates, but they selected 7 candidates from all the applications they received.

5. Youth Conservation School Update

Sallie informed the Board that she and Sonia have discussed the concerns with Covid-19 in relation to hosting the Conservation School this year. They will announce a decision by May 15th. They are looking at all the different concerns and how the state is moving forward with the different levels of opening. If there is a chance to make modifications to change states or different venues in addition to cancelation as it stands now.

Sonia added, should we have to cancel the actual physical holding of school, it was discussed on having day events over the summer. We are taking in consideration that these are kids that don't drive so we would almost have to hold it over a weekend so parents can run them around.

6. House Bill 1822

This bill was a proposed through The House of Representatives and passed very quickly. It essentially froze conservation District funding as well as four other environmental grants. Three of these we utilize for our projects. There was a loud outcry from a lot of our partners and the different organizations that all benefit from those funds. Chris thanked the Executive Committee for helping to craft a letter to our local Representatives. Six responded in person by phone or by email. They were supportive of us and our funding, but they didn't shy away from the fact that the future of Pennsylvania is precarious and there will be many financial obstacles to overcome in the future. They need to make prudent decisions for the whole state and it isn't prudent to agree to new program funding. We totally understand the position they are in and the hard decisions they have to make. Chris did find out that our multi-year grants are excluded from the freeze. The Bill now is in the Senate for their review.

Additional Comments:

Sonia reported that yesterday at the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation District meeting it was decided this summers Joint Annual Conference will not be held face to face. It was also under discussion whether PACD would be part of anything at Ag Process Days if the event is even held this year.

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Chris wanted to give a big thank you to Justin Furnia for setting up and managing Zoom meetings and making it possible to continue operations during the COOP.

June's Board meeting will also be conducted through Zoom meeting.

June 3rd will be the next Board meeting.

Chairman Dan Heller officially adjourned the meeting at 9:05 pm.

Stacey Meyer
Acting Recording Secretary