

PACD Legislative Committee
Ramada Conference Center, State College, PA
January 24, 2017

Welcome and Roll Call

Chairwoman Jo Ann McCready called the meeting to order at 10:03 AM with a quorum.

Committee members in attendance: Chris Strohmaier, Chester; Murray Laite, Mifflin; Kelly Stagen, Pike; Maryruth Wagner, Columbia; Donna Fisher, Blair; Jim Shaner, Beaver; Jo Ann McCready, Lawrence.

Guests in attendance: Molly Burns, PACD; Brenda Shambaugh, PACD; Jason Childs, Potter; Joan McCarty, Columbia; John Dryzal, Cambria; Jay Russell, Mercer; Lorin Boggs, NRCS; Kerry Fetter, McKean; Bill McFadden, Lehigh; Daina Beckstrand, Centre; Dean Druckenmiller, Berks; Bill Deitrick, Union; Ben Vaupel, Schuylkill; Samuel Worley, Franklin; John Akers, Bedford.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of July 27, 2016, were provided for review.

It was moved by Mary Wagner and seconded by Chris Strohmaier to approve the minutes of the meeting on July 27, 2016. Motion carried.

Proposed Policy on a Water Resource Extraction Fee

Brenda Shambaugh reported that all six PACD regions supported the policy proposed by the PACD Legislative Committee on a water resource extraction fee:

PACD supports the concept of a water resource extraction fee that funds water quality improvements and includes exemptions for public and agricultural users.

This policy will go before PACD Executive Council tomorrow for adoption and inclusion in the PACD Policy Book.

State Budget Update

Brenda reported that the state budget will likely be a long drawn-out process again this year, and that districts should be prepared for funding delays as a result.

Growing Greener III

Brenda also reported that Andrew Heath will be presenting on potential Growing Greener III legislation this afternoon. PACD already has policy supporting Growing Greener legislation and



Brenda has been working with the coalition to support up-front funding for conservation districts in the proposed legislation.

Conservation District Legislative Week

Brenda discussed a planned Conservation District Legislative Week April 24-30, 2017, the week following Earth Day. The goal of the effort is to educate legislators, particularly new legislators, about the conservation districts and what your district brings to your county.

Districts who are interested in meeting with their legislators in Harrisburg are encouraged to participate in a Capitol Day on April 25 when the legislature is in session. Districts who would like to hold local events or make local visits are encouraged to coordinate those events on April 27 or 28, 2017, when legislators are in their home counties. Brenda encouraged districts to send the link to the conservation district video to their legislators and county commissioners to provide them with an introduction to conservation districts.

Update to the PACD Policy Process

The proposed policy procedure changes were supported by the PACD regions during the last round of region meetings and will be voted on the Executive Council on July 25, 2017.

New Issues Discussion

Brenda encouraged the committee to discuss and develop policy to be considered by the membership at the 2017 Spring PACD Region Meetings and come before PACD Executive Council at the 2017 PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference in July.

Murray Laite noted that it might be worthwhile to educate legislators in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia about the work of conservation districts. Perhaps PACD can coordinate a group to meet with these legislators during legislative week. Chris Strohmaier recommended reaching out to Philadelphia Water about how to reach Philly legislators.

The committee discussed the water resource extraction fee, as well as the Clean Water Fund that the Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) has proposed. The CBF does support the extraction fee.

The districts asked about vacant field representative positions, as well as other positions that are currently open, which are resulting in understaffing in some regions.

Adjournment

It was moved by Murray Laite and seconded by Kelly Stagen to adjourn the meeting at 10:56 AM. Motion carried.