

**PACD Legislative Committee
Toftrees Golf Resort State College, PA
January 17, 2018**

Minutes

Welcome and Roll Call

Acting Chair Donna Fisher called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. without a quorum present.

Committee members in attendance: Murray Laite, Kelly Stagen, Donna Fisher, Jim Shaner, Maryruth Wagner

Guests in attendance: Brenda Shambaugh, Dave Stoner, Jay Russell, Dennis Beck, Ray Gorman, Ben Vaupel, John Dryzel, Jason Childs, Adam Schellhammer, Ian Herrell, Joan McCarty, Shannon Wehinger (notetaker)

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

There was not a quorum present.

PACD Strategic Planning Report

Brenda and several Strategic Plan Committee members provided a review of the strategic planning meeting that took place on January 16, 2018. The number one priority was to have PACD continue to be the advocate for conservation districts with legislature, partners, and the general public. The second issue was lobbying efforts and how to include the general assembly in workings of local districts. In addition, there was talk of working closer with agencies and partners and ask them to be better advocates for conservation districts. Seven priorities were identified. We will reassess on an annual basis and in five years do a final assessment and start a new strategic plan. The priorities will be shared with the districts through the PACD listserves.

HB 1932 Update

Brenda told the Committee that the PACD Executive Council will be voting on the following resolution. This resolution has already been vetted by the PACD Legislative and Conservation Committees and at all the PACD region meetings.

PACD opposes legislation to shorten the permit review period for Erosion and Sedimentation, Nutrient Management, and/or National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) plan reviews and permit approval.

PACD has been meeting with Rep. Zimmerman, prime sponsor of HB 1932, the legislation requiring that all nutrient management permits be deemed approved if not acted upon by the



authorizing agency within 90 days. PACD has also met with the House Agriculture Committee staff and stakeholders to develop legislation strengthening the requirements for nutrient management planners. The group is meeting again in the end of February to further work on the legislation. Districts are encouraged to talk to their farmer members asking them to contact Farm Bureau about this issue. If the district has a member on the Ag Committee, then they should contact them with their concerns. 93% of plans do not need an extension. This info has been shared with stakeholders.

Update on Conservation District Fund

PACD Executive Director Brenda Shambaugh reported the implementing legislation allowing the state to spend money was passed in the fall allowing the Governor to make further cuts if necessary. It appears that the conservation district line will stay intact for the rest of the fiscal year. This is a huge success and comes as a result of PACD and conservation district efforts to restore that funding. PACD is focusing on new tools for conservation districts to use when continuing to network with legislators. Brenda suggested that districts speak to the Secretaries of Department of Environmental Protection, PA Department of Agriculture, and the new deputy for water at DEP Tim Schaeffer. about the concerns about the fund for the next fiscal year.

Conservation District Highlights Project

Brenda urged all districts to complete their “Highlights” page so PACD can use the document to contact local legislators. This project should be completed by the end of January. PACD will then send each PA House and Senate member the “Highlights” page for the counties in their legislative district. Brenda urged conservation districts to follow up with their legislators in February.

New Issues Discussion

Invasive species and the spotted lanternfly were brought up by Berks County at the Strategic Planning meeting yesterday. Their producers are having products returned so it is an economic issue. The Department of Agriculture has been engaged and working diligently to contain the outbreak. There is a statewide meeting January 25 at the PA Department of Agriculture office in Harrisburg.

There is a House Appropriations Committee meeting on January 25. DCNR and DEP is being called in to talk about their special funds.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

