

**PACD South West Region Meeting
Westmoreland Conservation District, Greensburg, PA
March 28, 2019**

Call to Order

John Thatcher called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM

Welcome & Introductions

South West Region Director John Thatcher welcomed everyone to the meeting.

In attendance: Kelly McLaughlin, Allegheny; Douglas Beri, Jr., Indiana; John Dryzal, Centre; Todd Thornburg, Washington; Chuck Duritsa, PACD/Westmoreland; Richard Mowl, Washington; Lisa Snider, Greene; Emil Bove, Westmoreland; John Thatcher, PACD/Allegheny; Phil Wilson, PACD; Danielle Kalp, PACD; Jeff Werner, NRCS; Fred Fiscus, DEP; Jessie Albright, Allegheny; Heather Manzo, Allegheny; Ron Rohall, Westmoreland.

Date of Next Meeting

The meeting was set for October 22th 2019 at 10:00 AM at the Allegheny Conservation District Office.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of minutes from 2018 fall meeting.

Motion to approve the minutes of the 2018 fall meeting by Heather Manzo, second by Chuck Duritsa. Passed unanimously.

PACD Business & Report by Brenda Shambaugh (Handouts)

- Discussed the TAG Program to the new district directors
- Discussed State Budget
- Proposed \$869,00 Flat Line Budget. Did not lose any funding from previous years.
- Nutrient Management received a \$3.5 Million Increase.
- DEP Budget \$2.5 Million stagnant, No increase (Handout)
- The Third Party Reviewer Legislation was re-introduced, since it was previously voted on by the SW Region before, no motion was needed at this time. (Handout)
- Discussed E&S Manual for Agriculture Operations (Handout)
- Discussed Conservation District Week May 5-11, 2019 (Handout)
- Discussed ways & Means Committee dues increase (Handout)
- Discussed Ad Hoc Building Committee update (Handout)
- Discussed Directors List Serve (Handout)



Governor requests moving the DEP money to the Environmental Stewardship fund to protect district funding. Difficulties that could arise from moving the money are: If it were zeroed out, nobody would notice, making it difficult to get put back in the budget. Most other districts decided they would rather take their chances with the money staying in the DEP budget.

Motion made by Doug Beri, second by John Dryzal, to oppose using the Environmental Stewardship Fund to pay Admin costs (PACD continues to support utilizing the Environmental Stewardship Fund (ESF) to fund the Growing Greener Program and its success in assisting local communities with natural resource projects. We philosophically oppose using ESF funding from the to pay for agency administrative costs). Motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by John Dryzal, second by Doug Beri, to support Conservation District funding in the DEP general fund to continue in the existing fund structure. Passed unanimously.

Regional Info Sharing

Indiana – New Manager Hired in November (Doug Beri). Received 3 grants from Mariner East (Pipeline Fine). Anticipating doing a few Ag. projects to help keep Buttermilk Falls Clean. Working on a Growing Greener grant for Yellowcreek Watershed. Building a new office building.

Washington – Hired a new Manager (Todd Thornburg). Working on setting up trainings for Municipalities in the county. Talking with WPCAMR about getting AML funding for subsidence and AMD discharges. Having a VIP Brief for conservation week letting people know what the CD does and how they can help.

Cambria – The Envirothon, Trout Release and a meeting with the County Commissioners all happening during conservation district week. Waiting for weather to break so projects can be constructed. ePermits for CH105 items have been problematic so far.

Westmoreland – Holding 70th Anniversary celebration. Fixed up nature trail around office building. Looking to daylight Bull Run near Jeanette. A need for maintenance tax was brought up to commissioners in the form of possibly using a hotel tax. Currently 9 DGLVR projects underway. Bolivar project was sent to bid but came back high, so being re-worked. Over 400 people attended the Engineers Workshop.

Greene – Working on sign-ups for the GRACE Program. Twenty-four DGLVR Projects being processed. Their Envirothon is the Thursday during conservation week, the district will be doing radio ads and Greensaver will be sent out as advertisement. Ch. 105 Permits have dwindled out due to permits going to DEP regional office or to Harrisburg for review.

Allegheny – New Director hired (Heather Manzo). Drafted new manual of Best Practices. Legislator Engagement Committee keeping legislators informed of the work they do. Social Media numbers have doubled recently. Looking to begin Strategic Planning for the future. Helping to launch largest Urban Farm in the U.S. Two farms recently went to contract for farmland preservation.

Partner Agency Reports

Karl Brown, SCC (Handouts)

- Discussed DGLVR funding and extensions
- Discussed PA Farm Bill
- Discussed Restore PA Proposal
- Discussed Spotted Lanternfly

Fred Fiscus, DEP (Handout)

- Discussed needing Envirothon volunteers
- Discussed Gas well drilling trends
- Discussed Allocation vs. Armstrong scenario
- Discussed Allocation vs. Lycoming scenario

Motion by John Dryzal, second by Doug Beri, to support Lycoming Proposition to go to a 15 year average. Motion carried with three in favor, three abstaining, and none opposed.

Ayes: Doug Beri (Indiana), John Dryzal (Cambria), Greg Phillips (Westmoreland)

Abstaining: Heather Manzo (Allegheny), Todd Thornburg (Washington), Lisa Snyder (Greene)
None opposed.

USDA NRCS Jeff Werner and Dan Dostie (Handout)

- Discussed FY 2018 Accomplishments
- Discussed Safety work that has been done
- Discussed upcoming trainings and partnerships
- Discussed Farm Bill Handout
- 13 vacancies in western PA
- Discussed Farm Bill implementation
- NRCS making themselves available to help farmers with weather volatility
- Discussed the July 28th to 31st Soil Conference in Pittsburgh

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:05 PM.