

**PACD Executive Council Meeting Minutes
Toftrees Resort and Conference Center, State College, PA
January 31, 2019**

Call to Order

PACD President Charles Duritsa called the meeting to order at 9:50 a.m. and the winning 50/50 raffle ticket was drawn.

Roll Call

PACD Secretary Kelly Stagen called the roll.

Minutes of the Preceding Meeting

Kelly Stagen presented the minutes of the previous meeting.

It was moved by Bill McFadden (Lehigh) and seconded by Lance Bowes (Venango) to approve the minutes of the preceding meeting. Motion carried.

President's Report

Charles Duritsa thanked everyone for paying their dues and noted the addition of new Leadership Development Coordinator Matt Miller, as well as the move to the new space.

Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Brenda Shambaugh thanked everyone for coming and noted that attendance is up from last year, which is exciting.

- She asked districts to let her know as soon as possible if they are interested in applying for an NACD technical assistance grant. She will need to have these applications by February 15 so NRCS can rank the applications and submit them to NACD by March 1.
- DCNR provided PACD with almost half a million dollars for multi-purpose riparian buffer grants. Please contact Amy at PACD if you are interested in applying.
- PACD received all 66 conservation district highlights pages, which were distributed to legislators and decision makers. Districts are urged to contact their legislators to follow up.
- PACD continues to meet with partnership members, and to nurture the partnership.
- The staff conference will take place February 27-28, 2019, at the Genetti in Williamsport. Anyone interested in attending should contact Matt Miller.
- The PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference will take place July 17-18, 2019, at the Genetti in Williamsport.
- Leadership Development Coordinator Matt Miller has opened registration for regional director training sessions.
- The project promotion toolkit for districts is available on the PACD website.
- PACD will be coordinating a legislative day in early May. PACD will send out talking points



and information and strongly recommends that districts come to Harrisburg or contact their legislators at that time, which is the beginning of the budget process.

Treasurer's Report

PACD Treasurer Sonia Wasco provided the following report:

- As of Jan 25, 2019, PACD has collected \$104,87.50 of the \$142,750.00 of dues from 47 districts, which represents almost 72 percent of districts.
- Sonia thanked the membership for their support and noted that, due to their support, PACD has been able to maintain a sound financial condition.
- The association received a clean audit with no findings. The financial report and budget report are in the packet and have been reviewed by both the PACD Executive Board and the PACD Ways and Means Committee. Recommendations for the next budget have been made and will continue. That budget will be presented for final approval in July.

It was moved by Jim Shaner (Beaver) and seconded by Blaine Smith (Blair) to accept the 2019 financial report. Motion carried.

Report from the PACD Managers Meeting

Lance Bowes with Venango County Conservation District thanked the board and staff for putting on the conference and presented the following report:

- They discussed the state budget and the line items. Brenda is working hard to promote increases in both line items.
- The group discussed the SCC SWAT analysis and strategic planning efforts. They discussed why the districts who didn't participate didn't take part. It appears to have been an issue of timing for many.
- There was a request for the SCC to continue their efforts in supporting districts in high-level internal meetings.
- They are asking the SCC to give districts a chance to review the initial strategic plan prior to it going before the SCC for final approval.
- It was suggested that future strategic planning be done via a third-party professional rather than in-house.
- The ICIS system was down for a while, probably due to the government shutdown.
- The reimbursements from DEP have been slow for the Chesapeake Bay and CDWS reimbursements, and DEP is asking for materials that were not required in the initial contract. A heads-up to the managers would be helpful when there are going to be changes to the submission requirements.
- One or two districts have received Chapter 105 permits via the new ePermitting system. Districts are not receiving notification when permits are ready for review, which is an issue.
- Districts believe they will need to get special equipment to implement the ePermitting process. Some estimate start-up costs of \$12,000, plus more in maintenance fees. The districts may need to increase E&S fees to cover this cost if they are not going to receive financial assistance.

Report from the PACD Directors Breakfast

President Charles Duritsa reported the Directors Breakfast went well. Leadership Development Coordinator Matt Miller presented information on training opportunities and they received an excellent presentation on parliamentary procedure.

On a separate note, Chuck reiterated that PACD purchased a condominium in Linglestown and moved in November. The total cost of the move, including renovations on the new condo, is estimated to be \$480,000. Our building was listed for \$655,000, which has since dropped to \$595,000. He noted that PACD will be selecting a new realtor to continue with the listing.

Reports, motions, and resolutions from the PACD Conservation & Legislative Committees

Chairwoman Donna Fisher reported a joint meeting of the PACD Conservation and Legislative Committees was held on January 30, 2019, with a quorum present for both committees. The committees discussed the following items.

- PACD is pursuing an increase in both the DEP and PDA district line items.
- Two regions need to vote on the proposed policy opposing third party reviewers during the spring region meetings. The policy will then go before the PACD Executive Council in July.
- We may see legislation on shifting ag permit responsibilities from DEP to the SCC. It was noted that any such change would require significant additional funding for the SCC to carry out these responsibilities.
- The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee estimates their report on E&S fees will be completed in the spring, with a formal hearing in June.
- PACD received and sent out **all 66** conservation district highlights pages and distributed them to legislators and decision-makers.
- The deadline to submit comments on the Ag E&S Manual Update is March 1. Brenda is collecting comments to submit collectively up until February 15.
- DEP, PDA, NRCS, and others are partnering on the new High Performance Farms Initiative, which recognizes farms that go above and beyond in implementing conservation.
- The Conservation and Legislative Committees are currently not planning to merge.
- NACD will be considering a resolution to include the spotted lanternfly on their list of invasive species during their upcoming annual meeting.

Donna reported the committees had no motions to bring before the council.

Reports, motions, and resolutions from District Employees

Chairwoman Sandy Thompson reported the committee met with a quorum on January 30, 2019.

- Amy Brown provided an update on 2019 Conservation District Training Opportunities.
- Matt Miller provided an update on the Leadership Development Program, including the 2019 Staff Conference and 2019 Regional Director Trainings.
- Sandy Thompson reported on information from Penn State pertaining to Internship Opportunities for conservation districts.
- The committee talked about identification and assessment of district staff needs
- The committee discussed funding for setup of ePermitting (including software and hardware such as widescreen monitors and large-format printers)
- The committee discussed the need for QuickBooks training for district staff and passed a motion to put before the council.

It was moved by Tom McClure (Erie) and seconded by Bill McFaadden (Lehigh) to approve the following motion:

That PACD and the PA State Conservation Commission (SCC) form a workgroup with representation from PACD, the SCC, the PA Department of Environmental Protection, the PA State Conservation Commission, an accountant, and at least one district staff member or manager from each region, to communicate district interests and support the standardization of district accounting systems and financial reporting.

Motion carried.

Reports, motions, and resolutions from the PACD Education and Outreach Committee

Chairwoman Laura Anderson reported the committee met on January 30, 2019, with a quorum.

- The committee received a report on the 2019 Farm Show. The conservation district booth was co-located with the NRCS booth. Volunteers from the conservation districts spoke with almost 300 people from 47 counties.
- The PACD photo library is up and running.
- The PACD project promotion toolkit is available on the PACD website.
- PACD staff provided an update on grants available.
 - The manure mini-grants have about \$14,000 remaining.
 - The nonpoint source mini-grants will open when PACD receives the contract from DEP.
 - The new round of CREP mini-grants will open mid-February.
 - The buffer grant program PACD has with DCNR currently has allocated \$82,785 out of \$250,000 and another \$451,000 is available to be spent in the next round. This is a lot of money for multi-functional buffers. There is no match and there is no limit to the amount of funding districts can request. See the PACD staff for more information.

Laura reported the committee had no motions to bring before the council.

Reports, motions, and resolutions from Operations

Chairman Mike Price reported the committee met on January 30, 2019, with a quorum.

- The committee reviewed two resolutions and forwarded them to PACD Executive Council:
- A resolution from the PACD District Employees Committee about QuickBooks training for district staff, which was just passed.
- A resolution from the PACD Ways and Means Committee regarding PACD dues, which will come before council shortly.

Mike reported the committee had no motions to bring before the council.

Reports, motions, and resolutions from Ways & Means

Chairwoman Sonia Wasco reported the committee met on January 30, 2019, with a quorum.

- The committee received a report on the 2018 Fall PACD Region Meetings.
- The committee also reviewed fiscal year 2018-19 mid-year financial reports in order to make recommendations for the fiscal year 2019-2020 dues structure and budget plan.
- The committee received a report from the PACD Ad Hoc Committee which included three scenarios for the 2019/2020 budget.

It was moved by William Mihalco (Westmoreland) and seconded by Bill McFadden (Lehigh) to forward the following motion from the PACD Ways and Means Committee to the Spring 2019 PACD Region Meetings.

To increase the PACD dues by \$65 per district in 2019-2020, \$55 per district for fiscal year 2020-2021, and \$45 per district for fiscal year 2021-2022. The Ways and Means Committee will review the dues on an annual basis.

Motion carried.

Report from the PA State Conservation Commission

SCC Executive Secretary Karl Brown provided the following report:

- The thanked the PACD Executive Board and staff for putting the meeting together.
- The SCC is excited about the work that Matt Miller is doing in his capacity as Leadership Development Coordinator and is happy to be able to fund and support that program.
- The SCC discussed their strategic planning document during their meetings yesterday. He thanked the 29 districts who provided input.

Report from the PA Department of Environmental Protection

Fred Fiscus provided the following report:

- Chesapeake Bay Ag Planning Reimbursement Program – This program helps farmers to recoup some consultant costs to put together ag E&S and nutrient management plans. Since July, 1,370 plans have been registered encompassing 66,535 acres with reimbursements totaling \$340,885. There are still funds available and the plan registration deadline is April 1, 2019.
- Growing Greener grants are being announced on an on-going basis. So far, eleven districts have been awarded grants totaling \$3.6 million.

Report from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

State Conservationist Denise Coleman distributed a document on NRCS accomplishments and provided an update on NRCS programs. She reported that NACD has \$10 million in technical assistance grants to fund technicians and planners technical. She encouraged districts to apply for these grants. She noted that the deadline to apply is March 1, 2019, and districts need to provide 20% of the matching funds.

Adjournment

*It was moved by Daryl Miller (Bradford) and Bill McFadden (Lehigh) to adjourn at 10:49 a.m.
Motion carried.*