

**PACD Legislative Committee Minutes
Wyndham State College, Boalsburg, PA
January 22, 2020**

Welcome and Roll Call

Chairwoman Donna Fisher called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. with a quorum present.

Committee Members in Attendance: Dennis Beck, Cambria; Doug Beri, Indiana; Jon Burgess, Allegheny; Donna Fisher, Blair; Chuck Gould, Monroe; Murray Laite, Mifflin; Michele Long, Pike; Kelly Stagen, Pike; Chris Strohmaier, Chester; Chris Thompson, Lancaster.

Guests in Attendance: Chuck Duritsa, Westmoreland; Jeff Werner, NRCS; Joan McCarty, Cumberland; Kerry Fetter, McKean; Celina Seftas, Huntingdon; Randall Leisure, Lebanon; Larry Butler, Clinton; Adam McClain, Adams; Dean Druckenmiller, Berks; Sharon Pletchan, Northampton; Lynn Stauffer, Northampton; Jack Hanish, Luzerne; Sam Worley, Franklin; John Akers, Bedford; Mari Myers, Somerset; Meade Myers, Somerset; Seleen Shives, Fulton; Ted Veresink, Northampton; Carl Goshorn, Cumberland; Duff George, Cumberland; Lenny Lichvar, Somerset; Jay Russell, Mercer; Shaun Wessell, Jefferson;.

Minutes of the July 17, 2019 Minutes

The minutes of the July 17, 2019, meeting were provided for review.

It was moved by Murray Laite and seconded by Kelly Stagen to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2019, meeting as presented. Motion carried.

General Legislative Update

PACD Highlights Pages

Brenda thanked everyone who submitted their 2019 highlights pages. We have 64 of the 66 so far and Brenda will send them out to the legislators after the Winter Meeting to update them on the good work the districts are doing. She will copy each district when she sends out their page, and this will be a good opportunity to contact your legislators and follow up with them.

House Ag and Environment Committee Information Session

Brenda thanked Donna Fisher, Sandy Thompson, and Chris Thompson for presenting on district programs. The session went well and we are hoping to set up a similar session with the Senate.

HB 960

This bill would move all agricultural responsibilities from DEP to the SCC. Brenda has spoken with Rep Zimmerman regarding this legislation and he is aware that there would be a significant shift in staff and funding from DEP to the SCC to make this work.



HB 509

This is Third Party Reviewer Legislation that has passed the House and is in the Senate. The Senate does not appear to be in a hurry to run the legislation. If they do move forward with the bill, PACD will do what we can to ensure that the conservation districts are included as third-party reviewers.

SB 891

Was introduced by Senator Yaw and would create a Statewide Expedited Review Process. Three potential policies on this will be coming before the membership tomorrow for a vote. Two give us a seat at the table and one opposes the legislation outright. When Brenda spoke with Senator Yaw, she informed him that many districts already have an expedited review process. He was not aware of this. In light of this, Brenda has provided an amendment to the Senator that would give the districts the option to participate if they wish to.

HB 414

The bill has been tabled for now. HB 414 would allow for automatic approval of E&S permits if reviewed by an engineer.

HB 1107

This legislation would disband the DEP permit process, eliminate those related positions, and create a five-person permitting commission.

SB 619

This bill redefines the term “pollution” in the Clean Streams Law and creates a threshold, below which a spill would not need to be reported to DEP. Adam McClain with Adams County Conservation District explained the unintended consequences that may occur if we oppose regulation as part of this policy, rather than just legislation. This point will likely come before PACD Executive Council tomorrow and it may be proposed from the floor tomorrow.

It was moved by Kelly Stagen and seconded by Jon Burgess to make the following recommendation to the PACD Executive Council during their meeting on January 23, 2020.

The PACD Legislative Committee recommends that the PACD Executive Council strike the words “or regulations” from the Policy on Unreported Discharges, so that it reads:

PACD opposes legislation allowing for unreported discharges, spills or releases into waters of the Commonwealth that are not authorized by a DEP permit.

Motion carried.

The legislature has presented legislation that would require the SCC to provide more information to the legislature.

The Budget Process

On February 4, the Governor will present his proposal to the General Assembly. The House and Senate will then hold budget hearings, one for every department and will then reconvene and begin to the final state budget.

Ad Hoc Permit Committee Report

Brenda Shambaugh provided a report on the PACD Ad Hoc Permit Committee. The purpose of the committee is to find solutions to reduce the timeframes for permit approvals satisfying legislator concerns. The ad hoc committee was formed and met via conference call twice, once in December and once in January. They discussed both legislative and non-legislative solutions to permitting challenges.

Brenda has spoken with DEP in general terms about committee discussions and will send a letter to DEP outlining some specific items the committee feels can be addressed now. However, the committee wants to see how the recently approved permit regulation and SOP changes affect the process before moving forward with other suggestions.

Adjourn

It was moved by Dennis Beck and seconded by Chris Strohmaier to adjourn the meeting at 10:58 a.m. Motion carried.