

**LUZERNE CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
325 SMITHS POND ROAD, SHAVERTOWN, PA 18708
December 14, 2017**

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Timothy Ference, Chairman called the meeting of the Luzerne Conservation District Board of Directors to order at 6:02 PM at the district’s office and noted that the meeting was being recorded to aid in the preparation of the meeting minutes. The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance to the flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL - BOARD MEMBERS:

Timothy Ference	Chairman	Present
John J. Wilkes, Jr.	Vice-Chairman	Present
Timothy J. Connolly, Jr.	Treasurer	Present
Tracey Stevens	Secretary	Present
Leonard J. Burger, Jr.	Member	Present
John P. Hanish, Jr.	Member	Present
Eugene Kelleher	Member	Present
Chris Maylath	Member	Present
Gary A. Moyer, Sr.	Member	Present

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR:

Carl R. Urbanski Director Emeritus

DISTRICT EMPLOYEES:

Heather Graham, E&S/NPDES Program Coordinator	written report submitted
Deborah Josuweit, Administrative Assistant	Present/written report submitted
John Levitsky, Watershed Specialist	written report submitted
Joshua Longmore, Executive Director	Present/written report submitted
Amber Martin, Program Technician (MDC Program)	written report submitted
Amy Salansky, Agricultural Conservation Specialist	written report submitted
Michael Schlauch, Conservation Specialist (Ag & Roads Programs)	written report submitted
Phil Trowbridge, E&S/NPDES Conservation Specialist	written report submitted

AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES:

Andrew Kearse	NRCS	Present/written report submitted
Shane Kleiner	PA DEP	written report submitted

ORDER OF BUSINESS

(**Denotes motion or action taken by the district board)

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

MINUTES: Submitted by Josuweit.

****Motion by Moyer, seconded by Hanish to approve the November 9, 2017 meeting minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.**

FINANCIAL REPORTS: Submitted by Josuweit.

Longmore referenced the Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual report showing the Net Income loss of \$29,966.79 for the year. He explained that the income reported doesn’t reflect account transfers anticipated from the Roads Program or the reimbursements that have been delayed for the 3rd quarter from the State. The District should

end the year with a \$48,000.00 positive income. Final numbers will be in by the end of the month after all reimbursements request have been made.

****Chairman Ference ordered the Financial Reports to be filed for audit.**

ACTION ITEMS:

2018 Budget

Ference referenced the revised final Budget for 2018. Longmore explained that there are a few changes in the revision due to savings in Business and Auto Insurance by approximately \$1,000.00. Those funds have been moved over to General Maintenance of the building and vehicle fuel to keep the budget balanced. A brief discussion was held on the funding of the employee retirement fund.

****Motion by Kelleher, seconded by Connolly to approve the 2018 Budget operating budget as revised. The motion carried unanimously.**

Cell Phone Stipend Policy

Ference noted that the cell phone stipend policy is still being discussed, the action was tabled until a later date.

****Motion by Hanish, seconded by Wilkes to table the Cell Phone Stipend Policy to a later date. The motion carried unanimously.**

New Vehicle Purchase

Ference noted the new vehicle purchase has been discussed at previous meetings and he referenced item 3c Vehicle Options handout. Longmore provided the Board with four Dealer pricing options. The purchase will be through the State COSTAR purchasing program and will paid for through the general fund. This cost will include the trade-in value of the Gray Jeep. A brief discussion was held on options of splash guard \$190.00, floor mats \$140.00 and the spray bed liner cost is approximately \$350.00.

****Motion by Connolly, seconded by Wilkes to authorize Longmore to move forward with the Nissan Frontier, King Cab V6 purchase from Ken Pollock Nissan. The motion carried unanimously.**

Personnel Committee Recommendations

Ference noted three changes considered by the Personnel Committee:

1. To promote Mike Schlauch from Conservation Specialist 1, step 3 to a Conservation Specialist 2, step 1, which will equate to a \$3,200.00 raise.
2. To promote Amber Martin from a Seasonal Program Technician step 9 to a Fulltime Conservationist 1 step 1, which will equate to a \$2,200.00 raise as well as being eligible for full time benefits.
3. To apply a 2% living adjustment to the District's pay scale effective January 1, 2018.

****Motion by Wilkes, seconded by Hanish to approve the Personnel Committee Recommendations as stated. The motion carried unanimously.**

Lehman Twp. D&G Roads Grant Amendment

Ference reference the grant amendment in the Board packet, item 3e. The adjustment to the D&G Roads Agreement for Swamp Road is to cover underestimated cost for this project. The amendment is for additional monies to fund eligible costs not to exceed \$1,275.43.

****Motion by Wilkes, seconded by Moyer to approve the Lehman Twp. D&G Roads Grant Amendment not to exceed \$1,275.43. The motion carried unanimously.**

Farmland Preservation Program Update

Longmore noted that Luzerne County transferred the Farmland Preservation Program from the County to the District last year. County Council approved the move and entered a MOU to do so. The transition has been running smooth with Salansky learning the program. Farmland Preservation direction is governed by a Board of Directors that is appointed by County Council. The County was on the State's email list as the coordinator to the program; the County Planning Director didn't tell us he informed the State to include Salansky's name to the

list. In verifying the information Salansky did not receive the emails; but the Director and an employee of the Planning office were getting notification from the State that there was unused money (\$335,000.00) from 2016 was needed to be earmarked for a conservation easement on a farm by the end of this year or the money would be lost. In the beginning of November, the State reached out to the County Planning Director who told the State they should be reaching out to Salansky at the Conservation District on this matter. Salansky, Longmore and Linda Thoma met once they became aware of the situation and it appears the Farmland Preservation Program will secure the funds. The State Preservation Board in Harrisburg met and approved the encumbrance of the funds for the next two or three farms on the list. Salansky informed Longmore that the farm landowners are interested in moving forward, the Appraisal Company and Title Insurance Company are confident their work will be complete by year end. Longmore wanted the Board to be informed of the matter in case this funding is lost; he is confident after reviewing the situation that this issue was from lack of communication given to Salansky. Going forward the State is copying all emails to Longmore. An easement from the previous year has been on hold and it appears it will be going to the State Board for approval. Ference acknowledged on behalf of the Board the extra effort under pressure for the work of Salansky and Longmore on correcting this matter.

Voting Items for PACD Executive Council Winter Meeting

Ference noted the various meetings held throughout the year with the PACD and State Conservation where the individual Conservation Districts have a say to support or reject moves that are under consideration. He referenced item 3g; Items for PACD Executive Council on January 18, 2018 in the Board packet. He would like a consensus from the Board as to how he should vote on the issues to reflect the Board's preference.

Items from Fall Region Meetings:

1. Proposed Policy Opposing an Abbreviated Permit Review Period – the Board concurred to oppose this action.
2. Armstrong Resolution Regarding Distribution of UGWF by the SCC 9 (Attachment A) – the Board concurred to oppose the action.

Recurring Items are:

1. Proposed Bylaws Change – Region Director Eligibility (Attachment B) – the Board concurred to support the action.
2. Proposed PACD Bylaws Amendment – Executive Board Voting Rights (Attachment C) – the Board concurred to support the action.

Ference will vote accordingly at the PACD winter meeting.

Additional Items:

Ference noted that Judge Tupper has been available to swear in new Board Members through the years and has retired from his service; for the record the District will acknowledge his distinguished service and support to the Conservation District with a plaque.

Ference informed the Board of two Growing Greener Grants the District has received. One for \$140,000.00 which will deal with possible three sites in the Nescopeck watershed and \$318,000.00 for Ag BMP's. The amount we have received is less than the request so there will be continued discussion with DEP. Therefore, we will not be looking for approval at this time and it will be returned to the Board for formal approval in the future.

Longmore referenced a legal agreement between the District and the State Conservation Commission to deliver funds through the Conservation District Fund for the Agriculture Conservation Technician. This amount is for \$16,219.00; the old agreement expired on June 30, 2017. The Commission just sent an extension document that is retroactive from July 1st through June 30th, 2018; a revised document will be sent prior to the new expiration

Date and will be brought before the Board for approval.

****Motion by Hanish, seconded by Wilkes to approve the extension of the Agriculture Conservation Technician funds. The motion carried unanimously.**

COOPERATING AGENCY REPORTS:

NRCS – Kears provided a verbal and written report.

PA DEP – Kleiner provided a written report.

PA DEP – Tarby provided two written reports.

PACD – Longmore referenced the written report provided by PACD. Longmore reminded Board Members of the upcoming PACD Winter Meeting in State College. Members interested in attending should contact Longmore.

CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Thank you note from Heather Graham for the recognition of her years of service.
- Letter from Carl Urbanski on his resignation as an Associate Director of Luzerne Conservation District.
- January LCD Board of Directors Meeting – 1/11/18 @ 6:00 PM.
- PACD Winter Meeting in State College – 1/17-18/18
- Longmore requested setting the 2018 Board Meeting schedule.

****Motion by Moyer, second by Wilkes to advertise the 2018 Board Meeting Schedule set for the second Thursday of the month at 6:00 PM. The motion carried unanimously.**

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Board entered executive session to discuss personnel issues at 6:45 PM.

RETURN TO REGULAR SESSION:

The Board returned to the regular meeting at 6:59 PM. Connolly proposed a motion to approve the following bonuses for district staff members in recognition of continued outstanding work: Graham and Salansky each will receive \$750.00, all other employees will receive a bonus in the amount of \$500.00, with the exception of the following employees: Jesse will receive \$200.00 and Longmore \$1,500.00.

****Motion by Connolly, seconded by Wilkes to approve performance bonus as stated. The motion carried unanimously.**

****Motion by Wilkes, seconded by Hanish to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

This meeting was recorded on a digital recorder to assist in the preparation of the official written minutes.

Respectfully Submitted by: Deborah Josuweit, Administrative Assistant

Approved by action of the Luzerne Conservation District Board of Directors on January 11, 2018.



(Chair) or Vice Chair



Treasurer or Secretary