

ACTION ITEMS:

Lake Township D&G Roads Grant Application Changes

Longmore noted that the board approved a grant for \$18,907.81 to Lake Township for the North Mountain Road – Phase 6 project at the June meeting following the recommendation of the QAB. At the township's request, Schlauch further reviewed the project site and concurred that additional work should be done to properly complete the project. The additional work includes addressing drainage issues and placing DSA on a 150-foot section that would connect to a previously completed project. Schlauch reached out to the QAB members and they concurred it was an acceptable change and supported the additional amount of \$2,456.19. Since a contract was not previously executed for the project, Longmore suggested that the board approve a change in the grant total to \$21,364.00.

****Motion by Wilkes, seconded by Moyer to approve the change to the Lake Township North Mountain Road – Phase 6 project grant approval for a new total of \$21,364.00. The motion carried unanimously.**

Consideration of Contractor Bids for Smith & Lipka Ag BMP Project

Longmore provided bid information for two proposed agricultural BMP projects that were combined into one bidding process. Salansky held pre-bid site meetings, and sealed bids were received and opened on July 11th. The Lipka project will be partially funded through the 2014 Ag BMP Growing Greener grant, and the Smith project will be partially funded through the 2015 Ag & Stream BMP Growing Greener grant. Bid amounts were higher than the grant estimates, which is often the case due to the timeframe between writing the grant and implementing the project. Funding is available in both grants for these projects, but the increased cost might affect the ability to address other proposed projects unless additional funding is secured in the future. Martin's Construction, LLC was the low bidder out of the three bids received. The typical practice of the board is to accept the lowest responsible bidder. The district did business with Martin's Construction on a previous project, and staff were pleased with their work. The only outstanding issue is a check by DEP that the company doesn't have any issues with state agencies. Longmore suggested approval contingent upon DEP's approval.

****Motion by Wilkes, seconded by Moyer to contract with the lowest responsible bidder, Martin's Construction, for the Smith & Lipka Ag BMP Projects in the amount of \$386,208.00. The motion carried unanimously.**

Temporary Extension of SWAT Agreement

Ference reminded the board of the Strategic Watershed Action Team (SWAT) Agreement that the district has been working under for some time and changes that have taken place regarding the agreement. Longmore explained that the current agreement covers 50% of Schlauch's position and was set to expire on June 30, 2017. NRCS provides 75% and DEP provides 25% of the funding. With DEP's decision to end their involvement in the SWAT Program, NRCS engaged in a new partnership with PACD as the new statewide grant sponsor. Under the new agreement the district will be responsible for 25% of the position's funding, but NRCS will provide 75%. When the new agreement is executed it will roll Salansky's current technical services contract into the agreement at the same cost-share rates as well. It has not been completed yet, because it is still going the federal contracting process. DEP has agreed to extend the existing agreement to the end of September, and it is anticipated that new agreement with PACD/NRCS will start on October 1, 2017. Formal documents related to the extension of the previous agreement have not been received to date, but DEP has asked how much funding would be needed to continue through September. Longmore requested the board's approval to extend the agreement with DEP and to execute any documents related to agreement extension, should they be received.

****Motion by Hanish, seconded by Kelleher to approve the extension of SWAT Agreement with DEP. The motion carried unanimously.**

Employee Step Increase Acknowledgement

Ference informed the board that Deborah Josuweit successfully achieved a step increase within the district's Employee Pay Schedule.

Additional Items:

Longmore gave an update on the Brown BMP project. He spoke with the contractor after the last board meeting, and the project is in process and should wrap up soon.

COOPERATING AGENCY REPORTS:

NRCS – Andrew Kears provided a written and verbal report.

PA DEP – Shane Kleiner provided a written.

PACD – Longmore reported that he, Ference and Hanish attended the joint annual PACD/SCC conference in Harrisburg. The state budget was discussed during the SCC meeting; districts will maintain the current level of funding for the new fiscal year. PACD voted on the bylaw amendments that have been discussed at past board meetings and are as follows:

- Final approval to remove Article XII: Auxiliary from the Bylaws passed.
- Amendment to allow each Executive Board member to have one vote at all Executive Board meetings passed as the first reading. A final vote will be held at the next council meeting in January.
- Amendment to allow Associate Directors to serve as a Regional Director passed as the first reading. A final vote will be held at the next council meeting in January.

Hanish spoke about the presentation Trilby Libhart, a Botanist from the PA Dept. of Agriculture, gave on the invasive species such as Hydrilla and the Spotted Lantern Fly. Longmore noted that Levitsky is actively involved in efforts to control Hydrilla in Harvey’s Lake. Moyer asked about weeds that are growing in his fields. Hanish will look for more information for identifying invasive species.

Hanish noted the recent Lehman Township family days program he helped with. He commented on the low turnout and interest of the community. Discussion was held on the decline of volunteerism within organizations.

Ference provided an overview of the recent AML/AMD Conference held in Wilkes-Barre. Attendees had the opportunity to tour abandoned mine sites and pollution sources throughout the Wyoming Valley. A historical tour of the city was directed by Wilkes-Barre City Councilman Tony Brooks. An independent film festival also provided a preview of a documentary of the Knox Mine Disaster, short films the mine fires, a Hubert Breaker overview and the impact on the community, and feature length films on Centralia and King of the Mountain. Discussion was held on SMCRA funding. There is an effort for the federal government to adopt an Environmental Good Samaritan Act similar to Pennsylvania’s law that is administered through PA DEP. DEP developed pilot programs for 12-14 projects that were identified for funding, but issues developed getting payments. They are discussing whether the program will continue. Ference will keep the Board up to date on issues and programs.

CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Meeting with Association of Warm Season Grass Producers representatives Bruce Trumbower and Will Brandau on 7/21/17 at 9:00 AM. Board members are invited to attend.
- August LCD Board of Directors Meeting – 8/10/17 @ 6:00 PM

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 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 ~~August 10, 2017.~~

Timothy Ference

Chair or Vice Chair

Tracy Steves

Treasurer or Secretary

September 14, 2017 DJ

