

**LUZERNE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
325 SMITHS POND ROAD, SHAVERTOWN, PA 18708  
January 21, 2021**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Timothy Ference, Chairman, called the meeting of the Luzerne Conservation District Board of Directors to order at 6:01 PM, noting that the meeting was being held via video/phone conference and that it was being recorded.

Ference asked for a moment of silence in memory of Carl Urbanski, who served on the district board for many years. He also extended condolences from the board and staff to Heather Graham who recently lost her father.

**ROLL CALL - BOARD MEMBERS:**

Timothy Ference	Chairman	Present via phone
John J. Wilkes, Jr.	Vice-Chairman	Present via video
Tracey Chonko	Secretary/Treasurer	Present via phone
Leonard J. Burger, Jr.	Member	Excused
Walter Griffith	Member	Absent
John P. Hanish, Jr.	Member	Present via video
Gary A. Moyer, Sr.	Member	Present via phone

Ference noted the attendance of Carl DeLuca, DEP and Andrew Kears, NRCS by phone. Longmore indicated that no members of the public were in attendance.

**DISTRICT EMPLOYEES:**

Hunter Bednarczyk, Conservation Specialist (E&S/NPDES Program)	written report submitted
Heather Graham, E&S/NPDES Program Coordinator	written report submitted
Deborah Josuweit, Office Administrator	Present via video/written report submitted
Jennifer Lauri, Ag Conservation Specialist	written report submitted
John Levitsky, Watershed Specialist	written report submitted
Joshua Longmore, Executive Director	Present via video/written report submitted
Michael Schlauch, Conservation Specialist (Ag & Roads Programs)	written report submitted

**AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES:**

Andrew Kears	NRCS	Present via phone
Carl DeLuca	DEP	Present via phone

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**BOARD REORGANIZATION:**

Ference appointed Joshua Longmore as the Chairman Pro Tem to conduct the election of officers.

Longmore opened the floor for nominations for Chairman.

**\*\*Motion by Wilkes, seconded by Moyer to nominate Timothy J. Ference as Chairman. Longmore asked if there were any other nominations. Receiving none, he closed the nominations for Chairman and called for a vote on the election of Timothy Ference as Chairman of the Board of Directors. An affirmative vote was made by all members present, except Ference abstained.**

Longmore opened the floor for nominations for Vice-Chairman.

**\*\*Motion by Moyer, seconded by Chonko to nominate John J. Wilkes, Jr. as Vice-Chairman. Longmore asked if there were any other nominations. Receiving none, he closed the nominations for Vice-Chairman**

**and called for a vote on the election of John J. Wilkes, Jr. as Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors. An affirmative vote was made by all members present.**

Longmore opened the floor for nominations for Secretary/Treasurer.

**\*\*Motion by Hanish, seconded by Wilkes to nominate Tracey Chonko as Secretary/Treasurer. Longmore asked if there were any other nominations. Receiving none, he closed the nominations for Secretary/Treasurer and called for a vote on the election of Tracey Chonko as Secretary/Treasurer of the Board of Directors. An affirmative vote was made by all members present.**

Longmore congratulated the re-elected officers and turned the meeting over to Ference.

#### **Appoint 2021 Committee & Advisory/Work Groups**

Ference referenced Item 1 in the board packet, and he asked board members if changes to the appointments were desired. Josuweit pointed out that Pete Tarby is listed on the Ag Program Advisory Group, but he retired from DEP in 2020. Longmore noted that his position has not been filled by DEP, and DeLuca reported that filling the position is on hold because of issues related to the state budget and COVID-19. Ference noted that the position will remain vacant for now.

**\*\*Motion by Chonko, seconded by Wilkes to approve the district appointments for the 2021 year as discussed. The motion carried unanimously.**

MINUTES: Submitted by Josuweit.

**\*\*Motion by Wilkes, seconded by Hanish to approve the December 17, 2020 meeting minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.**

FINANCIAL REPORTS: Submitted by Josuweit.

Longmore noted this report is for the end of 2020. E&S income was about \$41,000 higher than budgeted. On the Profit & Loss Budget vs. Actual report, he pointed out the negative \$13,969 net income at the bottom isn't quite accurate because the report doesn't reflect Roads Program income that offsets administrative costs. Because of the way these funds are received from the state, there isn't a way to reflect them as income on the report. The issue has been ongoing for years, and the bottom line has to be adjusted yearly. An additional \$20,343 from the Roads Program should be reflected on the income side, making the year-end's bottom line a positive net income of \$6,374, which was good considering the unexpected building repair expenses in 2020.

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

#### COOPERATING AGENCY REPORTS:

DEP – Carl DeLuca provided the written DEP Talking Points report and gave a verbal report as well. He noted DEP will continue teleworking until July 1<sup>st</sup>.

NRCS – Andrew Kears provided a written and verbal report.

PACD – Ference noted a written report was included in the board packet.

Ference noted staff reports are included in the board packet.

#### BUSINESS ITEMS:

Ference noted items 6a and 6b in the board packet. Longmore reported on the Growing Greener grant applications that Levitsky and Lauri submitted. Lauri's was to implement an ag BMP project on Ron Taylor's farm along Huntington Creek, and the grant was approved for \$375,315. Levitsky's application was to continue stream restoration work in the Toby Creek watershed. This grant would continue work that was started at The Lands of Hillside Farms to remove a dam and stabilize the stream channel. Another deliverable is engineering studies on a streambank retaining wall that was replaced after flooding in 2011 in the Shavertown area near the Rt. 309 and Center Street intersection. That wall has been undercut by Toby Creek, and the Kingston Township engineer reported ongoing issues in that area which has been manipulated heavily over the last 100 years or more. The township engineer and Levitsky agreed that more geological studies are needed to develop a design before a grant can be requested to repair the wall issues. Also, a house near this creek, about 1/3 of a mile downstream, has been threatened by streambank erosion for a while. Funds that were allocated to this project through DEP's Stream Improvement Program had to be redirected to sites in northern counties due to recent flooding issues. These three projects received grant approval in the amount of \$268,906. Levitsky and Lauri are in the process of

providing updated and additional materials to execute the grant contracts. Longmore requested board approval to accept the grants and to authorize Stevens, Ference, and/or Wilkes (officers) to sign the grant contracts when they are received from DEP.

**\*\*Motion by Moyer, seconded by Stevens to accept the Toby Creek Watershed Restoration Projects grant in the amount of \$268,906 and the Huntington Creek Watershed Ag BMP Project grant in the amount of \$375,315 and authorize the appropriate officers to complete the necessary paperwork. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Employee Step Increase Acknowledgement**

Ference acknowledged that Schlauch successfully achieved a step increase within the district's Employee Pay Schedule.

**CORRESPONDENCE & ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- PACD Executive Council Video Conference – 1/28/21 at 10:00 AM
- Board Leadership Training – 2/16 & 2/17 – information is provided in the packet or on the PACD website. All directors are welcome to participate.
- February LCD Board of Directors Meeting – 2/18/21 at 6 PM

**Public Comment:** None

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

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 PM.

*Respectfully submitted by Deborah Josuweit, Office Administrator.*

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*Approved by action of the Luzerne Conservation District Board of Directors on March 18, 2021*

  
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*Chair or Vice Chair*

  
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*Treasurer/Secretary*