

**LUZERNE CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
325 SMITHS POND ROAD, SHAVERTOWN, PA 18708  
November 17, 2022**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Vice Chairman Jack Hanish called the meeting of the Luzerne Conservation District Board of Directors to order at 6:00 PM, noting that the meeting was being held in-person and via video/phone conference and that it was being recorded, and he led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL - BOARD MEMBERS:**

John J. Wilkes, Jr.	Excused
John P. Hanish, Jr.	Present
Tracey Chonko	Present via phone
Leonard J. Burger, Jr.	Present
Thomas Herbert	Present
Gary A. Moyer, Sr.	Excused
Gregory S. Wolovich, Jr.	Excused

**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/written report submitted
Jennifer Lauri, Ag Conservation Specialist	written report submitted
John Levitsky, Watershed Specialist	written report submitted
Joshua Longmore, Executive Director	Present/written report submitted
Michael Schlauch, Conservation Specialist (Ag & Roads Programs)	written report submitted

**AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES:**

Andrew Kears	NRCS	Present via phone
Caitlin Skibiell	DEP	Present

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

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

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

**MINUTES:**

**\*\*Motion by Herbert, seconded by Burger to approve the October 20, 2022 meeting minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously.**

**FINANCIAL REPORTS:**

Hanish noted the financial reports in the board packet and invited questions. Longmore noted E&S fees continue to trend lower than budget, and most third-quarter program reimbursements haven't been received yet.

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

**COOPERATING AGENCY REPORTS:**

NRCS – Kears provided a written and verbal report.

DEP – Skibiell provided a written and verbal report, and then left the meeting at 6:10 PM.

PACD – A written report was included in the board packet. Longmore noted that Thomas Herbert was elected to serve as the PACD Northeast Region Director at the recent regional meeting.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

Hanish noted that staff reports were included in the board packet as item 4.

**BUSINESS ITEMS:**

**Contract Amendment for Jake More Rd. (Dallas Twp.) LV Roads Project**

**\*\*Motion by Herbert, seconded by Chonko to approve the contract amendment to provide an additional \$6,155.49 to fund eligible costs for the Jake More Rd. Low-Volume Roads Project and to extend the contract with Dallas Township until 12/31/2022. The motion carried unanimously.**

**2023 Countywide Action Plan Implementation Grant Application**

Longmore noted item 5b in the board packet. He informed the board of the projects that were included in the 2023 Countywide Action Plan grant application. No board action is needed until the grant is approved.

**Proposal For Building Repairs**

Longmore noted item 5c in the board packet. Pennco Contracting, Inc. provided a proposal in the amount of \$1,230 for repairs that are needed on the left side of the building.

**\*\*Motion by Burger, seconded by Herbert to accept Pennco Contracting's proposal in the amount \$1,230 to make the necessary repairs. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Employee Step Increase Acknowledgment**

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

**2023 District Budget – Draft Presentation**

Longmore presented the draft 2023 operating budget, included as item 5e in the board packet, and recommended tabling action until after the executive session. Hanish tabled the motion until after the executive session.

**Executive Committee Personnel Recommendations**

Hanish tabled action until after the executive session.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

NRCS Local Workgroup Meeting in Bloomsburg – 12/12/22 at 10:00 AM

December LCD Board of Directors Meeting – 12/15/22 at 6:00 PM

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** None

Kearse and Josuweit left the meeting at 6:38 PM.

**Executive Session**

The board went into executive session at 6:39.

**Return to Regular Session**

The board returned to regular session at 7:11 PM.

**\*\*Motion by Burger, seconded by Herbert to approve the recommendations presented by the Executive Committee from the November 9, 2022 meeting (see attached notes). The motion carried unanimously.**

**\*\*Motion by Chonko, seconded by Burger to approve the 2023 operating budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.**

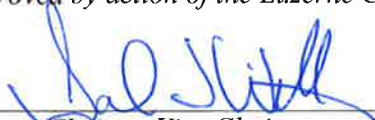
**\*\*Motion by Burger, seconded by Herbert to create the new position of Special Projects Coordinator and to hire Keith George as a Program Coordinator/Step 10 effective January 1, 2023. The motion carried unanimously.**

**\*\*Motion by Burger, seconded by Herbert to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Josuweit, Office Administrator.

Approved by action of the Luzerne Conservation District Board of Directors on December 15, 2022.

  
Chair or Vice Chair

  
Treasurer/Secretary

**ATTACHMENT**

**Luzerne Conservation District  
Executive Committee Meeting Notes  
November 9, 2022**

Attendance: Tim Ference, Jay Wilkes, Josh Longmore

Committee Recommendations:

**1.) 2023 Budget approach for salary and benefit costs**

- a. 8.7% COLA following longstanding practice of using SSA COLA as a basis.
  - i. This accomplishes a planned salary review/adjustment that was planned due to changes in the employment market and increases in state funding that was advocated for partially because of the need for districts to provide more competitive salaries to improve employee retention.
- b. Maintain current high deductible health insurance plan which will have a 3.85% premium increase in 2023 with deductible reimbursement policy.
  - i. Actual annual cost will stay about the same even though an additional staff member is proposed because the increase will be offset by savings from employee transferring to Medicare.
  - ii. Offset by \$3,588.34 premium rebate from Highmark (approx. 3.84% of 2023 budgeted amt.)
  - iii. Continues approximate \$11,000+ savings over prior lower-deductible plan without reimbursement
- c. Budget for potential performance-based step increases and bonuses in 2023.

**2.) Proposed Special Projects Coordinator position**

- a. Create new position to:
  - i. Oversee mosquito program
  - ii. Increase outreach to municipalities, etc.
  - iii. Coordinate special projects
  - iv. Provide support to the E&S Program
- b. Hire Keith George as a Program Coordinator/Step 10 effective January 1, 2023.

**3.) Heather Graham's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Recognition**

- a. Longest serving staff member of LCD ever
- b. Purchase computer as a longevity bonus

**4.) Josh Longmore's annual evaluation and step increase eligibility**

- a. Approve step increase based on favorable performance

**5.) E&S Fee Increase**

- a. No increase in over 10 years
- b. Increase fees 5% each year over the next 5 years

**6.) End of Year Performance Bonuses recommended at same amounts as 2021**

