

PACD District Employees Committee
Penn Stater Conference Center, State College, PA
July 28, 2008

These minutes are pending approval of the District Employees Committee at their next meeting.

Chair: Don McNutt, Lancaster Conservation District

Welcome

Chairman Don McNutt welcomed everyone to the meeting and determined that a quorum was present.

Committee Members in Attendance:

Don McNutt, Lancaster
Larry Kehl, Berks
Greg Phillips, Westmoreland
Lynn Sandieson, Crawford
Wayne Sweitzer, York
Ernie Tarner, Franklin
Deb Wilson, Jefferson

Others in Attendance:

Susan Marquart, PACD
Molly Burns, PACD (Recorder)
Dan Greig, Chester
Larry Martick, Adams
Seleen Shives, Fulton
Earl Brown, Erie
Chris Snyder, Juniata

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting (January 16, 2008) were provided to committee members for their review.

It was moved by Deb Wilson and seconded by Ernie Tarner to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2008 previous meeting. Motion carried.

Conservation District Training Matrix and E&S Training

Don McNutt reported that the greatest training deficit identified by the Conservation District Staff Training Coordination Steering Committee was consistent, sequential E&S training from DEP. The current training is clearly not sufficient, and the primary barrier is funding. Barb Bashore with DEP has been working to get funding to provide sequential E&S training that would mirror the format of the Boot Camp training provided by the ACT program, but she has not met with any success so far. The fact is that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) gives only a fixed amount of money DEP, and there is no line item for E&S training. However, the delegation agreement between DEP and the districts specifies that DEP will provide sufficient training.

The committee discussed the creation of a subcommittee to create an official request for training to submit to DEP, including the subjects to be covered, a logical progression for the topics, and an estimate of the cost to accomplish it. A training program similar to Boot Camp would be excellent. This could take place as an independent training session, or during the PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference. The initial work would be intensive, because individuals who really understand what needs to be covered have to get together and create a curriculum.

The committee set a goal to begin an E&S training manual, and to work toward holding an "E&S 101" training session to take place during the PACD/SCC Joint Annual Conference in July of 2009. Dan Greig volunteered to chair the subcommittee, and Ernie Tarner agreed to participate,

as well. Since Barb Bashore has been working hard to get this training in place on behalf of districts, PACD should invite her to be a member of the subcommittee, and allow her to choose another DEP representative if she is unable to participate.

In the meantime, districts should consider a mentoring program between districts, where experienced E&S staff can mentor new E&S staff.

It was moved by Ernie Tarner and seconded by Lynn Sandieson to approve the following policy statement:

Recognizing that the PA Department of Environmental Protection provides some training opportunities for E&S Technicians, PACD feels that supplemental basic training is necessary in order to deliver a uniform and quality 102 program. Therefore, PACD asks that the PA State Conservation Committee and the PA Department of Environmental Protection commit to working with us to provide a mechanism and funding to initiate a basic training program.

Motion carried.

PACD Representative on the PCEE Board

Don McNutt brought forth a recommendation from the District Managers Meeting (held on Monday, July 28) that a conservation district employee serve as the representative to the PCEE Board.

It was moved by Deb Wilson and seconded by Ernie Tarner that:

The PACD District Employees Committee recommends that a Conservation District Employee be appointed as a member of the PCEE board. Additionally, the committee concurs with the recommendation of the PACD Education and Outreach Committee.

Motion carried.

It was moved by Lynn Sandieson and seconded by Ernie Tarner that:

The PACD District Employees Committee recommends that Jaci Lucas, Environmental Educator from Northumberland Conservation District and Chair of the PACD Education and Outreach Committee, and Rich Gulyas, Environmental Educator from Bradford Conservation District, be appointed to the PCEE Board.

Motion carried.

PACD Appropriation Request

The District Managers Meeting has requested that PACD change the priority order of the Appropriation Request, so that programs in danger of being dropped take first priority, existing programs take next priority, and new programs take final priority. Some individuals felt that PACD should remove the Fair Share Plan from the Appropriation Request, and submit a separate request for those monies through the Fair Share Coalition.

It was moved by Wayne Sweitzer and seconded by Larry Kehl that:

PACD reprioritize the Appropriation Request to include only existing programs that are included in the current allocation by the PA State Conservation Commission (SCC). This will remove items number three and number five. PACD should create a separate document requesting items number three and five for the PA Fair Share for Clean Water Plan request.

Motion carried.

Discussion of New Joint Annual Conference Format

Don McNutt asked how people feel about the new conference format. The committee had positive things to say about the training, and noted that keeping costs down is important, since conservation district budgets are tight.

New Chair will be needed January 2009

Don McNutt reported that he will be resigning his position as District Employees Committee Chair as of January 2009.

Adjournment

It was moved by Ernie Tarner and seconded by Deb Wilson to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.