

**Panel Discussion: Building District Boards
Ramada Conference Center, State College PA
July 28, 2016**

Handouts and Panelist Information

Our Panelists:

David Rupert, District Manager

Armstrong County Conservation District
Armsdale Administration Building
124 Armsdale Rd., Suite B-2
Kittanning, PA 16201
Phone: (724) 548-3425
Fax: (724) 545-3699
drupert56@gmail.com

Sally Corrigan, Executive Director

Pike County Conservation District
556 Rt. 402, Suite 1
Hawley, PA 18428
Phone: (570) 226-8220
Fax: (570) 226-8222
scorrigan@pikepa.org

Mark Kimmel, District Manager

York County Conservation District
118 Pleasant Acres Road
York, PA 17402
Phone: (717) 840-7430
Fax: (717) 755-0301
mkimmel@yorkccd.org



Working to Build Your CD Board:

- Involve your nominating organizations at board meetings by sending them the minutes of the preceding meeting, the upcoming monthly agenda, and asking them at the beginning of each year to appoint a representative to attend district board meetings.
- Give each nominating organization the opportunity to provide a monthly written report to the board or time to present a verbal report at the district board meeting.
- Give everyone (directors and associate directors) a seat at the table. In our county, the district conference room is set up as a rectangle with roughly 20 seats available for each director, associate director, the district manager and office manager. Seats are available around the room for staff members and other cooperating agency personnel.
- Consider asking each nominating organization to have one of their members serve the district as an associate director. This promotes the “team” concept.
- Sponsor an informal dinner meeting every other year with the district board, county commissioners, chief clerk, associate directors, and each nominating organization to review the district director nomination process and the process for an interested organization to become a nominating organization.
- Search out and invite prospective nominating organizations to the bi-annual nominating organization meeting. Follow up with those organizations that attend.
- Assign staff members to attend meetings of your current and prospective nominating organizations. Examples of this would be: the watershed specialist attending watershed association meetings to keep abreast of current developments; the ACT technician attending meetings of the Farm Bureau, the Farmland Preservation board, the FSA county committee, and the PSU Cooperative Extension board; the DGLVR specialist attending the township supervisors conventions, the borough’s association meetings, and occasional township supervisors meetings; and the manager filling in where needed so that all current nominating organizations have contact with the district on an ongoing basis - such as the countywide sewage enforcement agency, etc. Our goal is to visit these organizations at least twice a year.
- Cultivate your associate directors as a possible recruiting ground for district director retirements, deaths, or not being reappointed by the county commissioners. When attending nominating organizations, seek out those individuals that exhibit leadership qualities. They are potential candidates for associate directors and possible director candidates.
- Include directors in your annual budget plans. For 2016, our district budgeted \$5,000.00 specifically for district directors. This covers their travel, trainings, meals, uniform pieces, various events (such as the spring legislative breakfast and fall legislative tour), and other occasional get-togethers like our holiday dinner meeting or summer picnic.
- Include associate directors in your annual budget plans. For 2016, our district budgeted \$1,750.00 for Associate Director Expenses. Ask your board to consider appointing them to serve as delegates or representatives to PACD, RC&D, WPCAMR, EPCAMR, or other

Panelist: Dave Rupert, Armstrong

organizations. Give them training and give them the responsibility of representing the district at such meetings.

- Make sure that your associate directors serve on one or more of your standing or ad hoc committees. This provides for some committee diversity and avoids 4 or more directors gathering and creating a quorum. Listen to your associate directors' ideas and try to incorporate their thoughts and requests into your annual plan of work. Don't be afraid to assign them various responsibilities to implement your annual plan of work.
- If your district owns or has access to district vehicles, please make sure that your directors and associate directors can drive them. This demonstrates to each of them that they are a valued part of the organization.
- If your district has staff uniforms, consider purchasing a uniform piece for each director and associate director so they can proudly show off your district wherever they go. In Armstrong County, we also buy ALL of our county commissioners a district uniform piece, such as a shirt or light jacket, so they can show our district colors when they are out in public. Our directors, associate directors, and county commissioners wear them quite often to events such as our county fair, various field days, the Envirothon, and other related events. They usually wear them to each district meeting and always wear them to every "press event."
- Buy your directors, associate directors, and your county commissioners a hat with your district logo or name emblazoned on it. It's nice to see your board members and elected officials wearing your district hat at functions.
- Note to all of my fellow district managers: Stay in contact with your district board members. When you're out in the field try to stop in at their farms and/or places of employment (if you are permitted) and keep an open line of communication with them. You need to talk with them, especially your Chairman, more than one or two hours per month at or preparing for board meetings. When possible make time to do the same with your associate directors too.
- Make a concerted effort to keep your commissioner board member informed of your district projects and offer to take him or her on tours around the county to showcase your district's projects or problem sites. It is a very nice way to have informal conversation with him or her out of the public limelight. I usually will offer to take all three of our commissioners on tours of the county on roughly a semi-annual basis. They can show you their constituent problems while you show them your district's work accomplishments. When dealing with new commissioners, it also helps them to "learn their County." **Another bonus: it really helps out at budget time when you are trying to show your worth to them.**
- Use your annual plan of work and your strategic plan when setting priorities with your district board. Quite often, we districts are pulled in many directions and are constantly being asked to do this or that. One way to stay on track and help your board to resist these efforts, is to have a copy of the annual or strategic plan available and to refer to those goals or objectives in your decision making process.
- For further information, please contact Dave Rupert at dr Rupert@co.armstrong.pa.us or by phone at 724-548-3425.

Panelist: Mark Kimmel, York

PACD Annual Conference Panel Discussion Outline Recruiting & Engaging Associate Directors

Outline

- I. Recruiting Associate Directors
- II. Training & Orientation for the District Board
- III. Associate Participation
- IV. Challenges

I. Recruiting – we use any/all means

- 1. Past award recipients
- 2. Individuals we have had to educate (even those taken to enforcement) or had complaints of
- 3. Volunteers at events who have shown an interest – Envirothon, IWLA members, other NGO's
- 4. Filling a particular need – approach folks known to be conservation minded, environmentally aware
- 5. Municipal officials – who have been excellent partners, shown interest
- 6. Folks who have contacted us voicing interest/member of your nominating organizations
- 7. Director/staff network – know someone that would enhance the board
- 8. Past directors – maybe schedule won't allow full director participation; stepped down to allow others

We maintain a list of possible associate directors. Nominating committee will meet usually in August to start recruitment process for directors and associates for upcoming year. Each current associate will be contacted (usually by a committee member – not staff) regarding interest in continuing to serve. We will discuss possible new associates to fill in for those who may step down or move up to director slot. For new recruits, first contact is usually by someone they know, followed-up with a packet of information (job description, annual report, newsletters, plan of work) and encourage them to visit our website. If interested we will send a letter requesting they complete a brief bio and/or request a resume.

II. Orientation/Training

- 1. I offer to meet with new associates/directors
- 2. We provide them a directors handbook and if interested the leadership development CD
- 3. Encourage them to call or schedule a time to meet to answer questions
- 4. First few meetings (first year) seat them strategically next to experienced director/associate/staff to guide them through the meeting (we have a mailed agenda packet and day of)
- 5. Encourage them to go through leadership development director training modules – will provide hard copy or link to web
- 6. Try to be respectful of their time

Panelist: Mark Kimmel, York

III. Involvement of Associate Directors

1. Try to connect them to area of interest early on – tree sale, clay shoot, Ag, E&S/NPDES
2. All directors/associates are assigned to at least (2) standing committees – we have about (12)
3. Associates may chair committees – our committees report back to board for formal actions
4. Many of our directors first served as associate director
5. We pay mileage for associates and encourage their participation at PACD and NACD meetings as funds allow

IV. Challenges/Success

If limited director turnover, there can be quite a wait to move interested associate directors to a director seat. Upside is, longtime associates make great directors when they do move up, seamless transition. Diversity is a challenge we've not really focused on. We've been blessed with a great board, engaged, vested, committed, involved. Concern that changes like "Culture of Compliance" may create significant challenges in recruitment and retention in the future.

**POSITION DESCRIPTION
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR,
YORK COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

Overview

As an associate director of the York County Conservation District (YCCD) you have the responsibility for assisting the Board with assuring that the conservation district policies enhance the natural resources of the county. This requires the identification of local natural resource needs and issues, development of management strategies, assisting the Board establishing local policy, and coordination of local, state and federal resources.

The position requires you to be familiar with the district's resources, generally acquainted with the people and resource conservation problems of the district; and a commitment to search for and provide solutions to these problems advising the Board to develop conservation district policies and practices that enhance the natural resources in the county.

Responsibilities *(Includes but are not limited to)*

1. Become familiar with the Conservation District Law (Act 217).
2. Attend all regular meetings of the district board in an advisory capacity.
3. Accept any office to which you are appointed within the district board. Serve on committees and provide reports on their activities and accomplishments.
4. Participate in the debates to set local policy to reflect balanced needs of York County. ***Associate directors may not make or second motions and they may not vote during the board meetings.*** They may however make and second motions, as well as vote on action at the various committee meetings.
5. Assist the district with communicating and educating the citizens in your local community.
6. Help to enroll landowners as cooperators with the district.
7. As appropriate attend state and national meetings on behalf of the district expressing and representing the feeling of the board, not just your personal feelings.
8. Become familiar with the district programs and laws that govern the programs of the district.
9. Develop a working relationship with municipal, county, state and national officials as well as cooperating agencies of the district.
10. Participate in an advisory capacity with the process of developing the annual budget and goals and objectives of the district.
11. Record mileage and other appropriate expenses related to district activities.

Position Requirements

1. You must be a resident of York County and appointed by the district board annually.
2. You must be capable of attending regular and special meetings of the district.
3. You must be positive, innovative, and action-oriented.

Term

The term of appointment for associate directors is 1 year (calendar), and appointments are approved by the Board of Directors. Associate Directors with two or more years of experience, are eligible to be appointed to an unexpired Director term that has been vacated.

Panelist: Mark Kimmel, York

**YORK COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR CANDIDATE PROFILE**

I. Name:		Date Completed/Updated	
Full address:			
Municipality you live in:		Home phone:	Work phone:
Occupation (previous if retired):		Email:	
II. If previously associated with the county conservation district board, state:			
Number of years:		Office(s) held:	
Director			
Associate			
State and National Board:		Number of years:	Office held, delegate:
III. Other groups/organizations affiliation or projects you have been involved in:			
IV. Education or Specialized Training and/or Certification			
V. A brief statement concerning your interest and qualifications in serving:			

Panelist: Sally Corrigan, Pike

**Director Recruitment Techniques – Case Study
PACD Annual Conference – July 2016**

Pike County Conservation District (PCCD) Board composition (2016)
1 County Commissioner, 2 Farmer Directors, 4 Public Directors, 5 Associate Directors

2015 Strategic Planning

In 2015, PCCD updated its Strategic Plan. Included among the actions identified in the plan were several objectives related to building the Conservation District Board.

Objective: Meet with each nominating organization within the first year of Strategic Plan implementation.

Objective: Recruit at least two new Associate Directors each year.

Objective: Develop a list of Board member strengths and identify gaps in Board expertise.

In 2015, PCCD completed a survey of Directors/Associate Directors. It was a simple survey asking each member to identify three areas of expertise which they feel they bring to the Board. The resulting list was grouped and categorized by the Executive Director (District Manager) and Board Executive Committee.

Board Expertise categories

Governance/Management – human resource management, business administration, large budget management, financial management, project/program management, leadership development, cost analyst

Communications – creativity, communication, writing (technical papers, articles)

Community Contacts – political, municipal, leadership

Specialized Areas – education, science, real estate, construction, engineering, water quality, sportsman interests, biology, building industry, stream watcher

Interest – concern for habitat and green space, deep care for mission of the District, interest in maintaining the County's water quality, empathy for natural resources

Almost all Board members had some type of experience in Governance/Management or served in some leadership capacity in the community. EVERY Board member had an INTEREST in natural resource conservation and/or the District's Mission.

NOTE: Trying to fill identified GAPS in Board Expertise may not provide the best opportunity for recruiting engaged and active Board members. Look for someone with INTEREST. Gaps in expertise can be filled in other ways (ex. paying a consultant to assist with graphic design/marketing, or retaining an attorney for legal expertise).

CASE STUDY – A Diversity of Recruitment Techniques

CURRENT DIRECTORS	RECRUITMENT
Engineer	Landowner adjacent to large earthmoving project – gas transmission line
Human Resource Professional	Avid Sportsman who worked on Youth Conservation School
Conservation Mgmt. Professional	Manager Hunting and Fishing Club which owns District office building
Township Supervisor	Landowner equine operation/Farm Bureau nominee
Township Supervisor	District Assistance with Township Park Purchase/ County Road Task Force
Builder	County Builders Association Nominee/County Preservation Board member
Water Quality Consultant	Interest in District surface water quality monitoring program
Attorney	Retired County Commissioner who wanted to be involved
Teacher	Local Watershed Conservancy (conservancy not a nominating org)
Business Owner – local nursery	Personal Contact by County Commissioner
Mixed Media Artist/Educator	District Environmental Education Grant Recipient