LEHIGH COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING HELD ON MARCH 14TH, 2024

Chairman Bill Erdman called a regular meeting of the Lehigh County Conservation District Directors to order at

7:00 pm at the Lehigh County Conservation District Office, 4184 Dorney Park Rd., Allentown, PA 18104

Present were:

Directors:

 Bill Erdman Chairman/Public Director

 Bill Royer Public Director

 Antonio Pineda Commissioner Director

 Paul Semmel Treasurer/Secretary/Farmer Director

 Arland Schantz Farmer Director

 Adele Bon-Shannon Public Director

Associate Directors:

Staff:

 Kevin Frederick District Manager

Holly Kaplan Assistant Manager

Agencies:

 Austin Drager NRCS

Public:

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS/AGENDA MODIFICATIONS

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 8TH, 2024, BOARD MEETING MINUTES

It was on motion by Bill Royer and seconded by Antonio Pineda to accept and approve the minutes from the

February 08, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting as written. All were in favor.

AGENCY REPORTS

Austin Drager, an NRCS representative, has been actively managing his time between Northampton and Lehigh County, having notable success securing funding for various projects. Three additional pre-approvals are in the works, including initiatives to improve livestock and forestry habitats.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Paul Semmel highlighted the absence of any comparisons in differentials over the past month. Kevin Frederick offered a comprehensive explanation of vendor balances and operating funds.

APPROVAL OF DISBURSEMENTS OF BILLS FOR FEBRUARY 2024

It was on motion by Adele Bon-Shannon and Antonio Pineda to accept and approve the Disbursement of Bills for February 2024. All were in favor.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Vector Borne Diseases Control

Kevin Frederick shared that the 2024 Mosquito Grant has been received via email.

DIRECTOR ACTION ITEMS

Narris Rd, Lowhill Twp, Low Volume Rd Application

Paul briefly explained that the Low Volume Road application requested $130,000.08 in funds to repair an embankment wall at risk of collapsing into Jordan Creek. This project is deemed shovel-ready and is crucial for utilizing the remaining funds available, ensuring receipt of our funds for the 2024/2025 fiscal year. It was on motion by Antonio Pineda and seconded by Arland Schantz to accept and approve the Narris Rd, Lowhill Twp, Low Volume Rd Application. Bill Erdman abstained from voting. All were in favor.

LCCD Application for DEP Pilot Program

This proposed application is designed for applicants seeking to leverage the DEP pilot expedited program. It entails a $500 fee for the mandatory pre-application meeting and a permit review fee set at twice the LCCD permit review fee. Notably, these reviews will necessitate staff working outside the regular 8-hour workday, resulting in overtime payment for the staff involved. The proposed fee doubling is intended to cover these additional costs incurred. It was a motion by Adele Bon-Shannon and seconded by Bill Royer to accept and approve the LCCD Application for the DEP Pilot Program. All were in favor.

LCCD 2024 Budget Amendment

The 2024 budget has been updated to include expenses related to employing two agricultural staff members, and the methods through which these additional expenses will be covered are highlighted in blue. It was a motion by Bill Royer and seconded by Adele Bon-Shannon to accept and approve the LCCD 2024 Budget Amendment. All were in favor.

Ag Resource Engineer EIT position

The district has the chance to recruit an engineer for training specialized in agricultural engineering. This role's core responsibilities include aiding the NRCS, overseeing the District's ACAP program, and supporting the D&GLVR Program. Introducing a District engineer position within our Agricultural Program expands funding opportunities and enhances our competitiveness for various grants. It was on a motion by Paul Semmel and seconded by Bill Royer to create and approve the Ag Resource Engineer EIT position. All were in favor.

DCNR Grant Resolutions (2)

Two members of the District staff are currently drafting grants for the DCNR. Both grant applications for the Lehigh Parkway and Lehigh County Buffer Enhancement 2024 project necessitate a resolution from our Board specifying the authorized signatory. It is recommended that our Board pass a resolution designating our Chair, Bill Erdman, as the authorized signee for these grants. It was on motion by Antonio Pineda and seconded by Paul Semmel to accept and approve the DCNR Grant Resolutions (2). All were in favor.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

LCCD Nominating Organizations Petition

We have received communication from the State Conservation Commission indicating that NRCS is not listed as a nominating organization for Lehigh County. Attached is the draft form to include NRCS and a signed copy will be provided during the upcoming Board meeting. It was a motion by Billy Royer and Arland Schantz to approve the petition to designate NRCS as a nominating organization. All were in favor.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

Strategic Plan Update

Adele Bon-Shannon shared that she met with Holly and Kevin and expressed her satisfaction in confirming that goals are being achieved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CALENDAR

1. SCC Hybrid Meetings – March 12 & May 14, 2024

2. SCC Conference Calls 8:30 – 10:00 am, April 9, and June 11, 2024

3. LCCD Envirothon April 23 & 25, 2024 Covered Bridge Park, SWT

NEXT MEETING DATE: **Thursday, April 11, 2024 – 7:00 pm**

ADJOURNMENT – Paul Semmel adjourned the meeting at

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Semmel Holly Kaplan

Secretary/Treasurer Recorder 8:05 pm