

Monongahela Conservation District
Board Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2022
@ 9:30 a.m.

Jim McDonald called the Finance Committee meeting to order @ 9:30 AM.

Jim stated all financial records are not present to review at this time. Jim did report the balance on the credit card, everything looks good. Jim made motion to pay credit card statement, Seconded by Chuck Motion Carried. Mark Myers asked Rick who holds the Credit Cards for this district. Rick stated that he holds one card and Jim McDonald holds the other one. Rick went on to state this will hold up , unless the board decides otherwise. Rick then asked if Jim, Art and Mark could form a committee to nominate a member for treasure. Mark Myers nominated Art mouser to chair this committee. Art accepted.

Finance Meeting adjourned at 9:40 AM

Call to order

Chairman Rick Abel called to order the regular meeting of the **Monongahela Conservation District** at **9:45 a.m.** on, **January 13,2022**, in person and via teleconference.

Roll call+

Present: Supervisors: Rick Abel, Chuck Cienawski, Art Mouser, Mark Myers (Video), Andy Price Associate, H.R. Scott Associate, Dustin Adkins NRCS (Video), Rudy Williams WVDOF, Jim McDonald supervisor, Ed Utterback supervisor, Ron Southern Quest, Davin White WVCA, Andy Deichert State Conservation Engineer NRCS, Bill Shockey WVU Extension, Chris Ellison WVCA, Sigrid Teets WVCA Conservation Specialist, Jean Conley Associate Supervisor, Sigrid Teets Conservation Specialist, Jeremy Slayer WVCA (Video), Dee Altman WVCA (AS).

Pledge of Allegiance

Was recited by all present led by Art Mouser

Prayer

Prayer was given by Ed Utterback

Approval of December Meeting Minutes

Ed Utterback moved to approve the December 2, 2021, minutes. Seconded by Jim McDonald Motion carried.

Approval of financial statements

Credit Card Receipts and Statements- Jim moved to approve the Credit Card Receipts Seconded by Chuck Motion carried.

General/CDO financial statements- Mark moved to approve these statements. The General/CDO Financial Statements Seconded by Jim McDonald. Motion carried.

Co-Administered Funds Financial Statements- Mark moved to approve these statements. The Co-Administered Funds Financial Statements. Seconded by Ed Utterback. Motion carried.

Visitors Comments – None

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Cooperating Agencies - No Report

WV Division of Forestry- Rudy Williams stated that the positions for Marion, Taylor, Barbour and Tucker Counties have been posted. But no Candidates currently.

Watershed Division

Andy Deichert State Conservation Engineer NRCS Stated They are working on the Upper Decker's Creek Gate Closure, and water still moving through. Discussion on rate share is under way, not sure if state monies will be available. Rick Abel stated he would share some information with Art Mouser, that came from Hillary, regarding invoice on site # 16. WVCA is to reimburse MCD these monies. Andy then stated that NRCS has decided to place someone in a position to be over the dam rehabilitation, and this person's name is Donny. Infrastructure approved monies, deadline for this is 1/19/2022, then it will go to the Congress, for approval. DEP has sent out 35 letters of non-compliance in our districts on Dams # 2-7. Andy suggests the MCD could combine dams and look at rehabbing them. This could even be 5-6 years down the road, but now is the time to throw in our hat. Upper Buffalo Creek Damns should be fine. Curtsville Dam is getting some repairs and rehab currently. NRCS requires that the dam, where built under them. However, most dams are under the Army Corp of Engineers. Rick explained that the channel in Mannington needs repairs, and Gene doesn't have enough monies to complete this work. Rick went on to state the Mayor and City Council in Mannington are extremely concerned about flooding. Andy explained pools and thought process, including primal spillways.

EWP and SSRP- No Report

Conservation Specialist –

AgEP Ranking Forms:

Committee meeting to be held on 1/26/2022. @ 10:00 AM. Committee includes Jim, Art, Mark, Jean and Sigrid. Mark asks if a Drone would help Sigrid in completing her site visits, she stated she thought it would. Sigrid went on to state she would like to be certified to fly drones. Jeremy stated the state is getting drones, and Davin White is working on this. Mark Myers ask if the MCD would like to purchase one of the drones, and let Sigrid use it. Rick stated he would like to get a cost share on this with WVCA. Andy, Davin, and Sigrid could work together on this. Rudy then stated a person in his office is an expert on drone and they both would be willing to help as well.

Conservation Agreement Approvals

Eric Lewis Preston County

Motion was made by Art Mouser to approve this cooperator, Seconded by Mark Myers. Motion Carried.

Greenhouse Practice Extension FY 2022

Rick stated this is the only practice having issues. Committee can offer extension and the district pay out of pocket with district funds. Jeremy stated the cooperators involved would have to receive a letter from Sigrid explaining this process. Sigrid, Chuck, and Jim reported on possible delays with ordering greenhouses and installing them by the May deadline. Some greenhouse companies are anticipating delays beyond the end of the fiscal year. Sigrid explained that current year fiscal funding could not be used, and it could affect FY23 funding allocation if there are any funds left in the AgEP account after June 30th. She explained that Districts may use General Funds if they intend to extend a deadline beyond the end of the fiscal year or allow a cooperator to

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reapply for the same practice the following fiscal year. Jeremy mentioned the district may need to track those funds. Rick mentioned that general funds were always a possibility due to over-obligating funds. Sigrid said it would be a good idea to work with AgEP Committee to come up with a new deadline if beyond the current one. Committee decided to meet on January 26th at 10AM to discuss a new deadline for the practice and if oversized greenhouses could be allowed.

AgEP Payments

Bale Grazing

Jennifer Kahly – Possum Tail Farm \$532.07

Lime

Charles Cline \$ 1,502.25

Watering System

Tyler Brown \$ 1,500.00

Heavy Use

Tyler Brown \$2,318.86

A motion was made by Jim McDonald and Seconded by Mark Myer to pay these cooperators. Motion Carried.

WVU Extension

Bill Shockey stated he has been helping Marion and Mon County. Also, that Mon County is still searching for someone to replace HR Scott. Ed Rayburn is doing a Bale Grazing Study, if you know anyone wishing to join in, contact Bill Shockey.

December Report:

Provided training for 26 private applicators. Training was conducted with in-person with limited number of seats and via Zoom.

Assisted with conduct of the Beef Quiz Bowl. A total of 19 junior teams and 12 senior teams of 4 participants each competed.

A hemp implementation grant application has been submitted to construct processing facility to support the Western MD, Southwestern PA, and North Central WV region. Grant awards expect to be announced in March.

Year-end reports

January Calendar:

January 11: Educational Winter Dinner Meeting, Dr. Kevin Shafer, The Value of Gain, Kingwood Volunteer Fire Department, Doors open at 5:30.

January 18: Planning meeting for Mid-Atlantic Consortium Dairy Beef Extension In-Service Training Conference. Zoom

January 25: WVU Day at the Legislature, Charleston. 9 to noon.

February 1: Master Gardener Meeting, 7 pm, via Zoom

NRCS- Dustin Adkins reported the following.

USDA-NRCS, Mon. Work Unit Report to the Monongahela Conservation District Board

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Meeting Date: 12/2/2021

- All 3 FY22 CSP-Renewal applications were approved prior to the holiday break.
- FY 2022 program sign-up closed 11/5/2021 for AMA, EQIP and RCPP-EQIP. The next deadline is 2/4/2022 to have all assessments completed. We currently have 40 eligible applications and will be out in the field working on those for the remainder of January.
- COVID-19 Status update:
 - o White Hall - Service center doors remain locked, 1-2 employees will be available in the office, customers are not permitted entry to the office. We will work with customers in the parking lot or on their farms as needed. Masks are required inside the office regardless of vaccination status for employees.
 - o Kingwood - Service center doors remain locked, 1-2 employees will be available in the office, customers are not permitted entry to the office. We will work with customers in the parking lot or on their farms as needed. Masks are required inside the office regardless of vaccination status for employees.
 - o Overall: Encourage anyone you speak with to call either service center to schedule a meeting. Staff may or may not be available on site, entry is not permitted.
- Feel free to contact me at 304-368-6910 (White Hall) or 304-441-3767 (Kingwood) with any questions or need for further information.

FSA- No Report

Solid Waste Authority-

Ed Utterback -Nothing to report. Jim McDonald reported that Marion County is having a hard time keeping people that are willing to work. Last week was a good week. We have two employees doing sorting duties and one part time driver. The timber sale is almost completed. Chuck Cienawski stated they are trying to get someone and pay them a little more to run SWA in Marion County.

Administrative Specialist-

Dee Stated

FY 21 Audit: The FY21 Audit information was sent to Lowe & Associates for their review, waiting to see what else they may need to complete.

AgEP: Payments and completions are getting done.

Supervisor Elections:

If you plan to run in the 2022 election you need to this month (January).

Supervisors up for re-election:

Art Mouser- Preston County

Mark Myers- Monongalia County

Jim McDonald -Marion County

Need to get locations for MCD Board Meeting in Marion and Preston Counties. Which Months?

WVCA Area Director -

Jeremy Stated the following:

Covid-19

The WVCA continues to monitor the COVID situation and a return to office decision is expected in early 2022.

Ag Day/Legislative Meet and Greet

A legislative meet and greet is scheduled for the evening of **Feb 7** in Charleston. Please contact your local legislators and invite them to attend the reception, which will be in the Gaston Caperton Center between buildings 5 and 6. Each district

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is to provide Davin White with two photos for a slide program. Conservation Day is set for Feb. 8 with supervisors encouraged to travel to the State House to meet with their local lawmakers.

The 2022 session will be an important one for conservation and all 114 supervisors need to reach out to their lawmakers and talk to them about the value of conservation and how it's important to West Virginia.

WVCA Budget:

Initial budget talks look good, and we are anticipating that things will stay as they are now.

The WVCA has asked the governor to provide a \$2 million increase in base funding with the new money going to fund a stream and agriculture mitigation program.

Now is the time for districts to explore additional local funding opportunities/partnerships to maintain local programming. It's also time to talk to their local representatives about the work of their districts, and why it's important to maintain funding.

IMPORTANT dates for 2022:

District Supervisor Election Filing Period

January 10 - January 29, 2022, is the filing period for those district supervisors who are up for re-election and choose to run again.

Dates for WVACD Quarterly Meetings

January 18, 19 & 20 Stonewall Resort

April 18 & 19 Cacapon State Park

July 18 & 19 TBD

October 17 & 18 Days Inn, Flatwoods

AgEP:

- **February 2022-** Comments reviewed and forms revised
- **March 2022-** State AgEP committee meeting to finalize upcoming FY AgEP
- **April 2022-** Presentation of upcoming FY AgEP to SCC
- **May/June/July 2022-** CDs to finalize upcoming FY program, update AgEP agreement addendum, take action to approve LORs

West Virginia Legislature – 2022 Legislative Calendar

January 12, 2022 - First day of session

January 31, 2022 - Legislative Rule-Making Review bills due

February 15, 2022 - Last day to introduce bills in the House

February 21, 2022 - Last day to introduce bills in the Senate

February 27, 2022 - Bills due out of committees

March 2, 2022 - Last day to consider bill on third reading in house of origin

March 12, 2022 - Last day of session

District Video Conferencing Equipment

The district video conferencing equipment is now 4-5 years old and it's time to think about replacing the video conferencing computers because some of them are starting to slow down.

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The WVCA pays the yearly license fee for the system, which is \$475.

We are asking the board to approve up to \$475 for a replacement computer. The cost will likely be less than that. Chris Ellison will do his best to get it as low as possible without sacrificing quality.

The district will order the computer on Amazon, and have it shipped directly to Chris Ellison. He will then set the computer up and mail it to the district. The AS will then install the new computer.

Please place on your January or February agenda for your board discussion/approval, and Chris Ellison will coordinate with the AS to help them get it ordered.

Agricultural Enhancement Program (AgEP) Administrative Review

To comply with the requirements from the program documentation, including the Legislative Rule, the traditional AgEP spot check procedure has been re-evaluated and is now referred to as the Administrative Review.

Each District's Administrative Specialist will conduct a review of 10% or a minimum of 3 files with applications that fiscal year and submit the Administrative Review Form to their District Operations Manager by January 31. By completing this review halfway through a fiscal year, staff will have time to find possible procedural errors and take steps to prevent them from happening in the future.

The Administrative Review process will allow WVCA to ensure that all proper documentation is physically accessible in the district cooperator file, and that the districts' online database records system is in agreeance with WVCA financial records system.

Request to Conservation Districts

The WVCA is encouraging Conservation Districts to review and update their **District Policy Manuals, especially relating to travel/per diem payments**. In addition to your policy manual, you are encouraged to review your CD Employee Manual (if you have one) and your CD Plan of Work.

If you are already doing the reviews, please disregard this request. However, please let us know with a written response that you are already reviewing or will be reviewing the documents.

The **district personnel plan is due to SCC in March**, so please add to your February agenda for review and approval.

Conservation Districts are asked to begin the **Agreed Procedures Engagement (APE) audit** if you haven't already. Please check your current agreement to make sure it is valid.

Invoices:

Invoices

Bookwise Business Service January 2022 \$300.00

King & Sons LLC \$ 3,522.10

CTL Engineering Invoice # WV-122750 \$ 6,600.00 (Pending Gene's Approval)

Invoice Preston County Commission for the EWP work that they are paying Laurita

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A Motion was made by Mark Myers to pay all invoices and seconded by Ed Utterback. Motion Carried.

A Letter of request from Jim Foster Appalachian Grazing Committee for \$ 1,000.00

A motion was made by Art Mouser and Seconded by Jim McDonald to donate \$1,000.00 to them for the conference. Motion Carried.

Approval of Supervisor Travel and Per Diem Claims

Art Mouser-\$	Chuck Cienawski- \$	Richard Abel- \$	H.R. Scott -\$
Ed Utterback-\$	Jim McDonald- \$	Mark Myers- \$	Jean Conley-\$
Andy Price -\$			

Mark moved to approve Supervisor payments as submitted and authorized when they arrive from the bookkeeper. Seconded by Art Mouser Motion carried.

Unfinished Business-

Banquet discussion – All is a go for tonight

New Business:

Davin White shared his computer screen and showed the question on the Rack Cards. He went through each question and documented the answers from this board on what to place on our rack cards. Rick suggested that Clements Tree Nursery be included on the cards. Davin went on to explain that the WVCA is paying for the Rack Cards for Conservation Days. Davin will include pictures of the weed wiper demonstration and pictures of a heavy use area on cards.

Mark Myers stated that Russell Young is requesting a succession list from each district. Rick stated he would get one together and list every supervisor on the list. Mark Myers stated that the rule change version #10 is now out,

Quorums: Mark Myers went over what it takes to make a quorum, if four or more supervisors meet that makes a quorum. Example used: Meeting at Wilson Works, and this not being published and known by all supervisors. Mark went on to state we need to be very careful, so no one gets into trouble. Mark suggested that we have training on Roberts Rule of order along with ethics. Chuck Cienawski stated if we have a committee meeting this is allowed because public is informed.

NACD- Mark Myers stated it would be a great idea if this district could send someone to the National Conservation Conference in Orland Florida on February 11,12,2022. The district voted to allow and pay for one person to attend. Andy Price stated he would be interested and let us know ASAP. Mark Myers then made a motion for up to two people to go, this was seconded by Art Mouser. Motion Carried. Andy Price will be attending.

WVCA Storage Building:

Rick stated that the \$525.00 a month falls within the median of rent in the area. Rick asks for thoughts on getting a five-year contract instead of three year contract. After discussion Art, Jim, ED, and Chuck agreed to getting a Five-year contract, and to complete an addendum until the next contract time comes up. A motion was made by Ed Utterback to get a five-year contract with WVCA, and this was seconded by Art Mouser. Motion Carried. Rick to ask Brian Farkas for last three years of retribution for storage, try and get paid for prior use.

New Computer for Conference Room:

A Request came in from WVCA to replace the computer in the conference room for up to \$475.00 Dollars

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A motion was made by Mark Myers and seconded by Art Mouser to replace computer. Motion Carried Dee to order ship to Chris Ellison for programming, then place in Conference room.

Fall 2022 Banquet Booking:

Andy and Art to look around for a place to book now, for late October.

Supervisors Handbook Committee Formed and will meet before next months meeting. This committee consist of Jean, Andy, Ed and Dee

Rick suggested a meeting for training on The Handbook and policy manual. This will be set up for February Sometime. Dee will speak with Jeremy on what to cover in this training.

Committee Reports:

Finance- Previously Discussed

Education- Previously Discussed

Legislation/Policy- Mark, Art will be attending the Meeting for possible changes for Supervisors, to Represent MCD.

Grasslands- no report.

Safety/Buildings and Grounds Looking forward to the remodel

Ag Enhancement- Previously Discussed

Correspondence- Copies None

Public Comment- None

Supervisor Reports

Mark Myers– Just trying to attend meetings

Ed Utterback – Dealing with Chickens

Art Mouser – No Report

Jim McDonald– Looking forward to Spring

Chuck Cienawski – Been Taking care of Animals

Richard Abel – Abel Ranch going well

Jean Conley – Feeling Better

Andy Price- Working on House in Blacksville

H.R. -No Report

- Adjournment

Art moved to adjourn the meeting seconded by Jim. Motion carried Meeting adjourned @ 1:40 PM

The next scheduled meeting is February 10, 2022 - Steve Lebnick Agricultural Center

Minutes submitted by Dee Altman, Administrative Specialist

Minutes approved by: _____

Rick Abel, Chairman

Date

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