

**Monongahela Conservation District
Board Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2024
Preston County Inn
Kingwood, WV
9:30 am**

Attendance:

Supervisors: Mark Teets (chairman), Mark Myers, Bob Spaid, Art Mouser (Associate), Chuck Cienawski, Brandon Linton, Andy Price, HR Scott

FSA: Andrea Atkinson, April Savage

Friends of Cheat: Amanda Pitzer

Division of Forestry: Rudy Williams

WVCA: Kaitlyn Jones, Don Whetzel, Adrienne Hoalcraft, Sigrid Teets (virtual)

WVU Extension: Carrie See

USDA NRCS: Christi Hicks, Saahirah Walton

Visitors: Gary Walls

Chairman Teets called the meeting to order at 9:54 AM.

Brandon Linton led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bob Spaid led the prayer.

Everyone went around the room and introduced themselves and the agency they represent.

Meeting Minutes:

- **Myers motioned to approve the Monthly Board Meeting minutes from 8/1/24 and the Special Board Meeting Minutes from 8/29/24. Spaid seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

Cooperating Agency Reports

- USDA-NRCS: Christopher Toothman provided a written report for NRCS.
- Hicks discussed the watershed PIFR for the Cheat River watershed. The PIFR is an overview of how NRCS can help. It leaves the door open for a local sponsor to request a full planning effort. It doesn't obligate MCD financially, it just needs to be signed in case a local sponsor wants to work on it in the future. **Myers motioned to sign the PIFR for Cheat River watershed. Linton seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- Hicks requested more information on a PIFR for the Mannington Channel. Cienawski spoke on how badly the channel needed maintenance. The district is working with WVCA on maintenance. Cienawski spoke about land in Mannington available for use as a flood control dam. Hicks reported that was probably more of an Army Corp type situation. Myers spoke about the high-risk nature of dams. He believes the focus should be on rehabbing current dams. Hicks discussed a NRCS buyout program similar to FEMA that can be an option for landowners under EWP. Cienawski requested more information on the location of

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- dams that were considered but not built. Cienawski reported the district was working with WVCA to pursue mechanical means for cleanup of the Mannington channel.
- Hicks also reported on the ongoing full planning effort for three fork creek watershed in Preston County. Hicks and Price discussed the importance of recreational opportunities related to streams in WV.
 - USDA-FSA: FSA is working on their drought program. A program to cover 75% of the cost of well creation may be coming. FSA encourages farmers to keep track of gallons of water hauled and mileage incurred hauling hay and water. There is not currently a pond program in place.
 - DOF: Williams reported there is not currently a burn ban, but it has been discussed. Williams reported on the Spotted Lanternfly meeting held in Monongalia County. There have only been a small number of sightings in Marion County. He spoke on the importance of getting rid of Tree of Heaven and reported on canker worms in Preston County and their danger to lumber.
 - WVACD: Heather Duncan provided a written report. Cienawski is working with Carrie See from extension to apply for their grant program. Myers reported on the awards banquet on October 22nd. Hoalcraft provided registration forms.
 - Friends of Cheat: Pitzer spoke about the work Friends of Cheat is doing to “let fish swim where they need to”. She spoke on replacing and upsizing culverts and their flood work. They have seen an increase in landowner interest and are working on breaking into new areas. She reported on the Albright dam removal process and the hope for a full removal by the end of 2026.
 - WVU Extension: See inquired about the target audience for the WVACD grant program. She reminded everyone about the upcoming Buckwheat Festival in Preston County. She discussed the possibility of grazing school in Preston County on November 1st or 2nd and gave late November to December as a possible timeframe for the video for pesticide licenses.

WVCA Reports:

- Watershed: Whetzel presented the agreement for Upper Buffalo 39. **Myers motioned to sign the agreement between MCD and WVCA for Upper Buffalo Site 39 repair work. Cienawski seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- Whetzel presented a letter regarding Upper Deckers 5 to be sent out to provide notification of upcoming reservoir drawdown. **Myers motioned to sign the letter and send it to the appropriate recipients. Linton seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- Conservation Services: Conservation Agreements: **Myers motioned to approve the following conservation agreements:**
 - **Big Sandy Livestock LLC**

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- **Roger Collins**
- **Mark Falkenstein**
- **Forrest Miller**
- **William Warnick**
- **Kelly Wise**

Price seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- Drought Exigency Application Approval: **Myers motioned to approve the exigency application for Kelly Wise. Price seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- Drought Exigency Payment Approval: **Myers motioned to approve the \$383.75 payment to Kelly Wise for the drought exigency program. Spaid seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- AgEP-Jones presented a list of eligible applicants with their ranking scores and cost share amounts. Reducing the max cost share amount for Heavy Use Area Protection in the future was discussed. **Myers motioned to give authority to the AgEP Committee to make approvals of the FY25 applications. Cienawski seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- Teets discussed the issue of the state fiscal year not lining up with the calendar year. Possible changes to how the program is handled were discussed. Whetzel will report these concerns to WVCA.
- Administrative Specialist Hoalcraft provided a written report and reminded the board of the upcoming audit and annual dam inspections.
- District Operations Manager Whetzel provided a written report. He gave September 24th as the cutoff date for drought exigency applications.

Solid Waste Authority Reports

- Scott reported for Monongalia County. The full report is on their website. They have an upcoming E-Cycle Collection on September 14th.
- No report was provided for Marion County.
- Preston County-Brode-Parenti provided a written report.

Myers motioned to approve the monthly financial statements and file them for audit. Spaid seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Funding Request

- A letter from the WVCA requesting unused funds from the Upper Deckers Dam Rehabilitation be returned to WVCA was discussed. **Myers motioned to return the funds and any accrued interest to WVCA. Spaid seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- Whetzel clarified that this rehab project is closed. Any future concerns could be addressed through a new LOR.

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Unfinished Business

- Two logo options were presented. **Price motioned to adopt option 1 as the new MCD logo. Linton seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- Hoalcraft reported on banquet planning and requested a list of invitees. Award options were discussed. **Cienawski nominated the following individuals for awards: Ray Carr (Luther Britton Award), Lacen Forbes (Community and Environmental Educator Award), Bill King (Frank Glover Award), Art Mouser (Outstanding Service to the District Award), Becky Williams (Public Service Award), and Jean Conley (Solid Waste Authority Award). Myers seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- When to abstain from voting on AgEP and exigency programs was discussed. Whetzel clarified supervisors only needed to abstain on their own payments and it must be noted in the minutes. Supervisor application approvals are handled by the District Operations Manager.

Correspondence

- Hoalcraft presented correspondence received during the month.

Committee Reports

- Finance: Cienawski discussed 2 uncashed checks. He and Hoalcraft looked into the matter prior to the meeting.
- Legislation: Feb 20th is the projected date for Ag day.
- Safety/Building/Grounds/Equipment: 3 bids were received for a 4 ton spreader. \$35,078 from Ross Tractor Sales, Inc., \$32,000 from D&G Equipment Sales, Inc., and \$31,671 from King & Sons LLC. Past rental for the 2 ton and 5 ton spreaders were reviewed. **Spaid motioned to table the purchase of a 4 ton spreader for now. Myers seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- **Myers motioned to pay the Mills Group LLC invoice (\$12,425). Spaid seconded the motion. Motion carried.**
- Upper Deckers Watershed: Dam monitor training/appreciation for Upper Deckers will be held on October 29th at 6pm at the Reedsville Fire Department. Dinner will be provided by the fire department. County Commission, 911, fire department chiefs, national weather service, Homeland Security, and the Preston County dive team were given as possible invitees. Hoalcraft will work with Spaid to get invitations out.
- Any work on Upper Deckers 5 will go through a job showing and bid process.
- Upper Buffalo Watershed: Cienawski attended a meeting on the Mannington Channel with WVCA's Stephen Starcher and Devon Kokoska. They are looking into mechanical options for clean up. Cienawski is also working on the dam monitor training/appreciation dinner for

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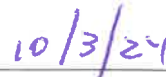
Upper Buffalo. November 6th at the Senior Center in Mannington with Kim Cyphers providing food is the current plan, just waiting on verification. Hoalcraft will work with Cienawski to get invitations out.

- Education: Price and Cienawski reported on various programs including the rotary working on pollinator seed collection, RC&D's work with pollinators and cover crop, Welcome Home's work with high tunnels, and changes to the application process for honeybees Nucs by the Marion County Beekeepers Association.
- Grasslands: The WVAGC will hold a meeting on September 26th at 10 and there will be a Biochar meeting on September 26th at 1pm, both at MCD's office. Grasslands training is scheduled for October 18th in Elk district and an Envirothon training will take place in October.
- Myers suggested honoring the Morgantown Envirothon team at the annual banquet.
- The possibility of entering executive session for remodel finances was discussed. Scott presented the board with the construction cost estimate provided by Mills Group. The timing of the remodel was discussed. The board agreed to look into different financing options and rates. Potential issues with the heating and cooling system were discussed. Future contracts and rent rates were considered. A follow up meeting with Mills Group may be scheduled.

Spaid moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:55 PM.



Mark Teets, Chairman



Date

