



Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB) Meeting

Meeting Minutes | June 18, 2024 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

DEP Southcentral Regional Office – Susquehanna Room A/B and Microsoft Teams

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS – Grant Gulibon, Chair

Jay Braund conducted a roll call of AAB members; 4 of the 11 voting members were present. Grant Gulibon, Chair, noted the absence of a quorum.

Members present:

Chair Grant Gulibon, Vice-chair Christopher Uhland, Jennifer Reed-Harry, Destiny Zeiders, Dennis Harney (in for Bevin Buchheister)*, James Gillis*, Greg Hostetter*, and Tim Peters*

Members absent:

Lynn Dietrich, Brenda Shambaugh, Matt Royer, Kerry Golden, Lily Guthrie, William Evans, and Darwin Nissley

**Non-Voting Member*

REVIEW & APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – Grant Gulibon, Chair

A quorum could not be established. No action taken.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE – Destiny Zeiders

House

Destiny Zeiders did not have any new items to share as the House was not in session due to the Juneteenth holiday.

Senate

Lily Guthrie was not present. No updates were shared.

WATER QUALITY STANDARDS SITE-SPECIFIC CRITERIA AND DEVELOPMENT (Informational) – Kristen Schlauderaff, Environmental Group Manager, DEP Bureau of Clean Water

Kristen Schlauderaff informed the Board that the Bureau of Clean Water has developed a draft final rulemaking that will update the Commonwealth's water quality standards related to site-specific criteria and update the mercury water quality criterion for Ebaughs Creek, located in York

County. The Department previously met with the Board on March 15, 2023 to present the Draft Proposed Rulemaking: Water Quality Standards Site-Specific Criteria and Development. Ms. Schlauderaff shared that the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) adopted the proposed regulation on July 11, 2023 and it was subsequently published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin on November 4, 2023. The 45-day public comment period closed on December 19, 2023. The final rulemaking is tentatively scheduled to be presented to the EQB later this fall.

Mr. Gulibon asked what had occurred to precipitate the evaluation and development. Ms. Schlauderaff advised that this site-specific criterion was requested by the York County Solid Waste Regional Authority for a landfill that discharges to Ebaughs Creek. Jennifer Reed-Harry was curious to know if this development complemented the efforts of the Fish and Boat Commission. Ms. Schlauderaff shared that most site-specific criteria are initiated by permitted dischargers that need something for their permit and request information on criteria. Mr. Gulibon asked if the Department has other similar site-specific criteria determinations in process. Ms. Schlauderaff acknowledged that these are not common occurrences, and that the majority of these determinations are developed for metals.

AGRICULTURE CONSERVATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ACAP) UPDATE (Informational) – Eric Cromer, ACAP Coordinator, State Conservation Commission

Eric Cromer provided an update on the state of the Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program, to satisfy a previous request by a Board member. The State Conservation Commission (SCC) has been collaborating with many different conservation partners, including the County Conservation Districts, the Pennsylvania State University, and National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Of the \$154 million in funds the SCC has in total, \$150.7 million is encumbered, with 66 agreements fully executed and anticipate meeting their deadline in December. Mr. Cromer shared some of the issues they experience in the administration of ACAP are bidding and procurement, tax liabilities, ranking and project selections, policy development, and project certifications, with most issues remedied fairly quickly. Practice Approval System (PAS) will be presented to the Commission Board for approval in July.

Mr. Gulibon asked whether GIS data will be accessible in the future to those outside of the SCC and its partners. Mr. Cromer confirmed that it is an eventual goal. Doug Wolfgang added that they understand the importance of a public interface and recommended that interested parties contact SCC to request specific reports. Mr. Gulibon had questions about ranking and project selections. Mr. Cromer explained that it's a two-part process: (1) applicants are asked questions and are prioritized based on legislation and (2) the districts, on the recommendation of the SCC, make those determinations based on their own priorities. Jeff Lank requested some clarity on fund allocations. Mr. Cromer listed the following influential factors: AG impaired streams, livestock operation numbers, number of farms, and the acreage. Mr. Gulibon asked about the impact of inflation on materials and labor. Mr. Wolfgang approximated a 30% increase in costs.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Grant Gulibon, Chair

No public comments were offered virtually or in-person.

GENERAL DISCUSSION/AGENDA TOPICS REQUEST – Grant Gulibon, Chair

Looking ahead, Mr. Gulibon spoke about the joint meeting with the Nutrient Management Advisory Board and the presentation on the outcome and final report of the Food Processing Residuals (FPR) workgroup. Jennifer Reed-Harry would like to know more about the value FPR brings as a nutrient source and what governs their application, as well as updates on 102 and 105 pilot projects. She would also like to discuss how Ag complaints are processed at DEP and DEP Energy Initiatives and the impacts to Ag. Ms. Reed-Harry would appreciate if each member would provide a short presentation on what their respective organizations do and how they engage with DEP and the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. Gulibon and Ms. Reed-Harry are still working on getting new members seated and approved.

ADJOURN – Grant Gulibon, Chair

A quorum was not established. The meeting ended at 10:00 a.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, August 21, 2024