

Watershed Agricultural Council

Agriculture ♦ Forestry ♦ Conservation Easements ♦ Economic Viability

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Executive Committee Meeting November 17, 2015

Meeting called to order at 1:05 p.m. by Sally Fairbairn.

Members Present: Dave Cammer Richard Giles
Fred Huneke Sally Fairbairn
John Riedl John Schwartz
Tom Hutson

Others: Craig Cashman Bud Gladstone
Amy Faulkner

I. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2015 meeting with modifications discussed.

Motion: Dave Cammer

Second: Tom Hutson

Approved

II. Executive Director's Report – Craig Cashman

- **WAC/DEP Contract Negotiations:** Craig updated the group on the timeline for the WAC/DEP contract negotiations for the Agriculture, Forestry and Economic Viability Program contracts. Today he met with DEP regarding the Economic Viability Program portion. He will be setting up meetings with Ag program major subcontractors (DC SWCD and CCE DC) regarding those subcontracts in mid-December.
- **Strategic Planning/WAP Evaluation RFP:** Craig is currently working on an RFP to be released in mid-December to complete an update to the Council's strategic plan as well as conduct an evaluation of the Agricultural Program business process for efficiencies. The two projects, though completely separate, will be completed by the same consultant to avoid having two consultants competing for the time of the Council and involved staff.
- **Advisory Committee:** Craig stated that he felt the Advisory Committee meeting was a success; it was a good way to collect external input and to gauge partners' perspectives of the WAC programs.
- **CREP Reenrollment Funding:** Craig updated the group on the status of the issue regarding the funding of CREP reenrollment. A recent re-interpretation of the agreement resulted in FSA stating that they would not co-fund the re-enrollment. If FSA does not pay the 50% cost-share as WAC had anticipated, this will result in budgetary implications for both WAC and DEP. DEP has been reaching out to USDA in Washington hoping to get an exception to the interpretation for the watershed.

Delaware County SWCD facilitated a conference call with Senator Schumer's Office regarding this issue; Rob Birdsall sat in on that call as a representative from WAC. The staff and Council will continue to work on this.

- **Legal Update:** The legal matter between WAC and Argyle Farms is on the calendar to be presented to the Appellate Court on November 19th.

III. **Chair's Report- Sally Fairbairn**

- **Governance Committee Meeting:** Sally reported that the Governance Committee will be meeting next week prior to the Council meeting, on the agenda is Committee Member attendance, Director terms and she plans to discuss the Directors Only meeting and request that it be moved to a day that will work better for all Directors.
- **Advisory Committee Meeting:** Sally also stated that she felt that the Advisory Committee meeting was a success; she felt it was very important to hear our partners' ideas. Craig and Sally both were impressed with the presentations done by staff as well. Michael will provide a synopsis of the meeting over the next week or so.
- **WAC/DEP/DC SWCD Meeting:** Sally stated that Paul Rush convened a meeting on Friday, November 13th in Kingston; in attendance were herself, Craig Cashman, Fred Huneke, Rick Weidenbach, Bruce Dolph, Frank Bachler, Paul Rush and Dave Warne. The meeting will be further discussed in Executive Session.
- **Finance Committee:** John Riedl reported that the Finance Committee will be informing the Council of the potential need to utilize the line of credit to cover expenses until payments are received from DEP. The Council meeting packet included a memo from Thomas further explaining the delay and the potential need to utilize the line of credit.
- **Other:** Fred Huneke reported that he and Diane Galusha presented to approximately 35 Columbia University graduate students at Frost Valley. The students are majoring in environmental science.

IV. **Executive Session**

Motion to go into Executive Session to discuss personnel matters.

Motion: Fred Huneke

Second: Tom Hutson

Approved

Motion to come out of Executive Session.

Motion: Dave Cammer

Second: Fred Huneke

Approved

V. **Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.