

The **March 22, 2018** meeting of the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project was called to order at 1:17 PM at Laurelwood Care Center in Westmont by Len Lichvar, with John Dryzal, Karlice Makuchan, Melissa Reckner, Robb Piper, Bob Ritchey, and Joe Gorden present.

Thanks to Laurelwood for hosting us! It's good to see Bob!

Reckner said that, so far in 2018, SCRIP has 13 dues-paying members which has brought in \$326. Reckner said she sent 11 renewal reminders out for March/April.

There was no Treasurer's Report. Reckner presented bills for \$36.19 for stamps and envelopes.

Election of Officers

Lichvar indicated that he would like 2018 to be his last year as Chairman, saying it's time for new leadership.

Stonycreek River

Lichvar said MLTU, the Somerset Conservation District, and others will be meeting at St. Francis University next Wednesday to discuss SFU's work to map stream restoration projects, public access points, stream designations and more along Bens Creek. Reckner suggested making all that info into an app.

Lichvar said a TU TAG grant is paying Bob Hedin to look at discharges along Lambert's Run, which is a complicated project. Treatment is dropping out more iron in Lambert's Run than in Stonycreek, but is discoloring the falls. A Phase II project should retain more iron and keep it out of Lambert's Run, but landowner cooperation and funding are needed.

Regarding the Oven Run rehabilitation project, Lichvar said there are not enough funds in current Growing Greener grant to rehab all four systems. It seems the PACD rehabilitation estimates were low and the limestone is armored much more heavily than anticipated, so they will have to buy new stone, though as much as possible will be saved. The rehabbing and upgrading will include new technology and will treat more water. Lichvar said DCED has an AML component and the grant round is open. The District is looking for another \$600K and will be asking for another \$100-\$200K for a trust fund. Current GG funds will be used for Oven Run Site E, the intake on A, and either system D or F. The DCED trust fund might not pay for Site E since E will be done before DCED grants are given, but there could be a way to enhance E with additional stone or something.

Lichvar said Eric Robertson is no longer with PACD TAG so that office is currently operating with 1.5 people, which isn't enough to do all the work. The only applicant for the open position will be interviewed next Thursday.

Paint Creek

Reckner said PCRWA's and the Stream Team's annual litter cleanup will be Saturday, April 7 with volunteers meeting along Route 160 between Elton and Windber at 8:30 AM.

Shade Creek

Lichvar said the Gahagen project is moving forward, but will be short of stone.

Cambria Somerset Authority

Lichvar said the Whitewater Value vibration issue was fixed and the first release should be April 7/8.

MLTU will present CSA the President's Award at this weekend's banquet.

Little Conemaugh River

Dryzal said the Greater Johnstown Water Authority has a new forester on staff who is interested in doing some watershed projects in the headwaters.

Reckner asked the status of the sediment pollution incident on an unnamed tributary to the South Branch Blacklick Creek from a strip mining adjacent SGL79 near Vintondale. No additional pollution has been seen.

Piper questioned the status of Growing Greener. Lichvar said there was a hearing in January, but it seems it was just political grandstanding. GGIII legislation passed, but without anyway to fund it. Currently, there is no GG round open, but rumor says it may open in April.

Education Committee

Makuchan reported NatureWorks went really well and next year's will be March 2, 2019. Reckner said there were over 500 participants. Makuchan complimented Sue Konvolinka and Reckner for a well-organized NatureWorks event.

The deadline for the next newsletter will be June 8. Makuchan said she'll be out of the country in May, so send articles closer to June.

Lichvar shared the Somerset Conservation District's Annual Report.

Event Committee

Reckner said PFBC can't do an Intro to Kayaking event in July as originally planned and said PFBC suggested doing a new Kayaking Fishing program instead. It would be a 4-hour program, done on a weekday evening at the Que (PFBC prefers either July 17 or 18), limited to 20 participants, and all participants must have a fishing license. Piper suggested SCRIP cover the cost of an angler's license if that's the only factor keeping him/her from participating.

Reckner thinks we need a commitment of at least five volunteers to help and someone will likely need to manage registration. Dryzal will see if Ritko or their AmeriCorps could help. Gorden is physically limited, but could help with some preliminary work. The consensus is we'll try it. Reckner will ask PFBC what specifically is expected of us.

Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team

Reckner shared the State of the Kiski-Conemaugh River Basin, which may be downloaded from CVC's new website: www.conemaughvalleyconservancy.org - click Stream Team, then scroll to documents. She shared copies of the three-page Executive Summary, which is also online. She thanked everyone who helped bring this document to fruition.

Reckner said several Trout in the Classroom Release Days are scheduled for this April and May. She said the Stream Team's spring sampling round will be in April.

The CVC/Stream Team is selling chances on winner's choice of either a fishing kayak, a SUP board, or \$750 cash. Please help sell the tickets and buy some too. Chances are 2#s for \$10 and go off of the July 4 PA Evening Lotto number. Contact Reckner for tickets.

Reckner said she recently gave a presentation to a Watershed Management class at UPJ. Mitzy Schaney is the new Environmental Studies director at UPJ and wants to have her classes work on "real world" projects that would benefit groups like SCRIP. Reckner asked that ideas be shared with her by April 4 and then she'll present them to Ms. Schaney. Dryzal suggested drones do videos of projects and waterways. Reckner thought aerial photos of treatment systems and weir construction/installation.

Website

Gorden said he currently can't access our stats.

Sunoco Mariner Pipeline

Rumor has it that Sunoco might be firing Trinity, their contractor in Western PA.

Old Business

Gorden indicated that he questioned the status of the geocache locations SCRIP presented to the Johnstown Visitor's Bureau over a year ago. It seems the Bureau is still reviewing the sites. Tom Gray made some recommendations to Gorden, including tips for doing our own geocache trail, which he shared with the group. No action will be taken right now.

Piper questioned the status of the Que Pipeline Fishery project, and Lichvar said he's had a positive response from sportsmen's groups. He had a good conversation with a gentleman who works with Straub Brewing, which supports the Pine Creek project.

New Business

It was noted that SCRIP may need to educate new legislators as congressional districts change.

Reckner noted that the 20th PA AMR Conference will be June 20-21 at the Ramada in State College. She said the 2019 conference will be a joint one with the NAAMLPA in Pittsburgh. She shared that the 2019 committee is considering field trips to Flight 93, Que Creek, the Incline Plane, Ehrenfeld, and Cresson and St. Michael Treatment Plants.

Gorden thinks SCRIP should get involved with PFBC & PGC related legislation since SCRIP works with both agencies. SB935, which seeks to limit the term of the PFBC Executive Director, passed the Senate. Gorden made a motion that SCRIP send letters to representatives encouraging them not to vote for this in the House. A discussion followed. Reckner will email the letter to the SCRIP Board for an electronic vote.

Next meeting

Next meeting: May 22 at 9 AM at Perkins Restaurant in Richland.

Meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM.

Minutes by Reckner.