

Lancaster County Ag Council
Thursday, December 17, 2020
12:30 PM
VIA CONFERENCE CALL

Roll Call: Scott Sheely, George Cook, Ron Frederick, Joe Arthur, Mary Henry, Don Hoover, George Hurst, Loren Hershey, Greg Kirkham, Rob Barley, Dale Hershey, Josh Brubaker, Dan Heller, Jack Coleman, Josh Scheinberg, Stephanie Shirk, Lonnie Kauffman, Kevin Stoltzfus, Jim Musser, Mark Lowery

Contractor: Shelly Dehoff

George called meeting to order at 12:35 PM.

Roll Call by The Secretary: Shelly took roll call via “participants list” on the Zoom software.

Shoutouts:

- Mary Henry expressed sincere gratitude, on behalf of the whole Council, to George Cook for the past 2 years for his exemplary service as the Chair, through many meaningful initiatives. A plaque will be presented to George when able. George acknowledged many supportive people during his Chairmanship too. George expressed his appreciation to Mary Henry for being willing to take the helm.
- Lisa Graybeal will be the new Chair of Penn State Extension Lancaster County Council. She is well qualified to lead. The Council’s priority topic for 2021 will be urban agriculture.
- George mentioned appreciation to Andy Bollinger even though Andy wasn’t able to join us today. Andy has been with the Council for many years, and will not be serving in the future due to other opportunities on a different Board. He will be receiving a plaque as well for his years of service.

Reading and Approval of Minutes The November 19, 2020 meeting minutes were noted. *Motion made by Don Hoover, seconded by Greg Kirkham to approve the November 19, 2020 minutes. Motion passed.*

Central Penn Food Bank: Joe Arthur with the Central PA Food Bank provided an overview. Central Penn Food Bank is a critical part of the charitable food system. A week ago, the Ag Council and the charitable food system had a meeting with other critical partners to try to strengthen connections and partnering. Joe provided a powerpoint presentation and took questions. They work with almost 100 organizations just in Lancaster County alone. Keep the word “network” in mind, he stressed. There are more than 1 in 10 people in central PA who struggle with hunger. COVID has made it worse. Most who rely on the food bank are working families. One of the silver linings of COVID is that collaborations have improved to serve more people. The “Central PA” definition is 27 counties currently. Corporate donors donate about 75% of the food distributed. 60-65 million meals will be provided this year. They have a bold goal by 2025 of ending hunger in this region of PA. They encourage fresh foods, so definitely looking to partner with the raw producers and processors (fresh and frozen veggies and fruits and dairy especially). Volunteers are the backbone of it. For every dollar donated they can feed about 6 people. Farmers to Families Food Boxes (USDA program this year) was a huge help too. Joe noted that Blessing of Hope was a huge help with distribution and feeding people this year generally.

Questions and comments included:

- Food security is on the Ag Council’s agenda for sure
- Removing the disconnects in the whole system is still being worked on; Blessings of Hope connections could be very beneficial in future.
- Ag Council doesn’t want to get in the way of anything already going on that is working well; but if we can help organize, close or strengthen gaps that exist, we’ll take that role seriously

Potential Board members: Josh Brubaker is a guest today. He is interested in the Council and was listening today to learn more. Josh is from Mt. Joy, with Brubaker Farms. He graduated in 2017 from PSU, and worked for Fulton Bank for a little, but followed his heart back to the farm, and is now a partner with his dad and uncle.

Review of Monthly Financial Reports: Dale Hershey noted the financial report. There is a net profit of \$10,091 through November. The Council is coming to end of 2020 with books in really good shape. Currently \$13,224 in checking account, and \$8,301 in Savings (earmarked). We have really significant commitments for next year, so that is wonderful. Thank you especially to the County for \$20,000. Greg Kirkham noted that Westfield Insurance has a foundation for charitable donations, and the company decided that the Ag Council will be receiving \$7500 (max amount company will give to one organization) from Westfield. That's appreciated too! Other organizations/people have stepped up too, but weren't mentioned by name today. Motion by Mary Henry and seconded by George Hurst to approve the Profit and Loss sheet/treasurer's report.

Motion passed.

- At last meeting Board authorized Exec Comm to give the Exec Director a year end bonus for excellent work done, so they authorized a \$2000 bonus for Scott Sheely. Thank you for great work!
- Discussion from last time included the option to use some Barshinger funds to provide \$1000 to PA FFA Foundation. That was approved and will be happening soon.

Report of Executive Director:

- Scott S. made a few brief comments.
 - Extraordinary Give netted a few thousand dollars (plus part of the "pool money" is expected, so we will learn the final dollar amount in January). We didn't recoup the costs of having the books audited, but the books are audited for 2 years which will make us eligible for next year's Extraordinary Give without expenses.
 - Scott has been working with North Museum to get access to the Ag Literacty materials and offer them at no cost (from Ag Council anyway); plan is to provide access codes and a "soft rollout" before Christmas. First circle of distribution will be Ag Teachers and other gatekeepers. Also started discussing what the next step/next project with North Museum would be. Possibly fruits and vegetables as the topic (using Lonnie Kauffman as technical input/expert).
 - Family Farm Days—still a little up in the air; planning meeting is anticipated in January.

Priority Business:

- End of Year Openings/Nominations—
 - Reappointment of Board members (Greg Kirkham, Rob Barley, George Hurst, Phil Good, Jim Musser and Kevin Stoltzfus). Their terms are up at the end of December, but are interested in serving another 3 year term. Mary Henry moved and Dale Hershey seconded to reappoint these members to another 3 year term. Motion passed.
 - Election of officers for 2021 is needed. The proposed slat is Chair (Mary Henry), Outgoing Chair (George Cook), Treasurer (Dale Hershey), Secretary (Jedd Moncavage). Rob Barley moved and Greg Kirkham seconded that we cast a unanimous ballot for this slot as proposed. Motion passed.
 - For January business—if you are interested in Executive Comm in 2021 or beyond that, let an officer know. The appointment of the Exec Comm will be handled in January 2021.
- In Washington D.C. they are starting to discuss issues related to COVID fallout. The Ag Council wrote a letter to our PA legislators in D.C. to provide input about how some rulings of the IRS related to PPE loans would impact farmers.
- Recovery Lancaster and connection to strategic planning: In relation to Joe Arthur's presentation, Scott S and George C mentioned that Commissioner D'Agostino is very interested in the charitable food

system, making better connections, and will be addressing the Board or Exec Com soon to request additional strategic planning/focus from the Ag Council on this initiative.

- 2021 is the Ag Council's official 10th year.

Reports of Committees:

- Education/PR— no report today but will be doing something to help recognize the 10th year anniversary
- Economic Development— no report today
- Legislative/ Environmental— Rob had nothing to add today
- Ag Week—

Reminders/For the good of the order:

- From Josh Scheinberg at PDA—there haven't been official announcements yet, but the PA Farm Bill grant programs have been funded again at same levels as in 2019, so more details will come later.
- Stephanie Shirk announced that Lancaster County's (Extension) Nutrition Links was awarded Program of the Year from the Pennsylvania Partnership for Juvenile Services, for the work conducted at the Lancaster Youth Intervention Center by Nutrition Education Adviser Donna Sullivan.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:57 PM.

NEXT MEETING is Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 12:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shelly Dehoff, Lancaster County Conservation District