

Chairperson Commissioner Sherene Hess called the meeting of the Indiana County Conservation District to order on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 9:30 am at 435 Hamill Road in Indiana. Other Directors present were Craig Andrie, Janis Long, Aaron Simpson and Gregg VanHorn, and Barbara Peace attending virtually. Directors absent: Cindy Rogers

Also present: Douglas Beri Jr. – Executive Director, Tammie Robinson – Office Administrator, Brooke Russick – Conservation Program Manager (Dirt/Gravel Low Volume Roads), Adam Hnatkovich – Conservation Program Specialist (Dirt/Gravel Low Volume Roads), Nathan Edwards – Conservation Program Specialist (ACAP), Blake Mauthe – Conservation Program Specialist (Educator), Tiffany Wirick – Office Administrator in training, Rebecca Caldwell - AmeriCorps, Tom Beresnyak, Doyle Freeman, and John Somonick-Associate Directors, Ariel Coleman – USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Kyle Wirick – PA Fish and Boat Commission. Stephen Campbell – Penn State Extension, and Ben Wenger – Conservation Program Specialist (Watersheds) attended virtually.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - none

Simpson moved to approve consent agenda items including accepting minutes of the previous meeting as presented, treasurer’s report to be filed subject to audit, correspondence, DEP delegated programs reports and staff reports, second by Long, motion carried.

Simpson moved to pay the bills as presented, second by Long, motion carried.

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DELEGATED PROGRAMS REPORT

Six erosion and sediment control plans were reviewed, and five Chapter 102 site inspections were conducted.

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR REPORTS – none

Somonick reported the recycling center has ordered three cardboard collection containers for distribution throughout the county. Cardboard revenue is lucrative enough currently they want to focus on that product.

Beresnyak reported he received a PA Woodland Resilience Enhancement Network (PWREN) grant for his personal property. PWREN aims to improve the health and resilience of forests and deal with pests, diseases, invasive species, and climate change. Well, I will give an update.

FIELD REPRESENTATIVE’S REPORT - none

COOPERATING AGENCY REPORTS

Coleman reported NRCS in Indiana County has 64 active contracts obligating \$3.7 million. They processed approximately \$1 million in incentive payments on 22,000 acres.

Beresnyak reported on available Penn State Extension on-line webinars.

Campbell reported he will have fliers for the pesticide updates meeting and the crops day available for distribution next month. A no till alliance winter meeting is scheduled in January at St. Vincent College. Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant applications are due December 9th. Campbell offered his help as a technical advisor for applications.

Beri reported the Friends of Indiana County Conservation District’s upcoming Thank A Farmer Dash will be held November 22. 50 runners/walkers are registered to participate, and

sponsorships have been secured. This event raises funds for the annual Cambria/Indiana Farmer's Assistance Fund.

COMMITTEE REPORTS - none

OLD BUSINESS - none

NEW BUSINESS

No nutrient management plans are currently under review. No plans were presented for approval.

Simpson moved to accept a \$1000 donation from Ahold Delhaize USA Inc (GIANT Grocery Store) for observance of Farmer Day, second by Peace, motion carried.

Andrie moved to ratify personnel committee decision to hire Nathan Edwards and Adam Hnatkovich for two Conservation Program Specialist positions, second by Long, motion carried.

Simpson moved to approve selection of Robin Lee Dunlap for the 900-hour AmeriCorps Conservation Coordinator position starting January 16, 2026, second by Long, motion carried.

Simpson moved to accept the Section 319 Nonpoint Source Management South Branch of Plum Creek WIP Revision grant contract in the amount of \$254,758.00, second by Long, motion carried.

Simpson moved to accept a grant award from the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies in the amount of \$7,500 for the Growing Together project, second by Long, motion carried.

Andrie moved to accept a grant award from the Pittcairn-Crabbe Foundation for the Indiana County Food Hub Planning & Development Project in the amount of \$20,000, second by Peace, motion carried.

Simpson moved to authorize Beri to send a letter supporting H.R. 4708 regarding the Spotted Lanternfly Research and Development Act, second by Van Horn, motion carried.

Andrie moved to approve a one-year extension of the contract with Spence, Custer, Saylor, Wolfe & Rose, LLC for ICCD solicitor representation, second by Long, motion carried.

Simpson moved to approve a one-year addendum to the Sub-Lease Agreement with the County of Indiana. The addendum would retain the Districts' planned 2026 allocation but would include a one-year increase in the District's lease payment on the 435 Hamill Road facility, second by Van Horn, motion carried.

DISCUSSION - none

The next Conservation District Board of Directors meeting will be held Tuesday, December 16, 2025, at 9:30 am at 435 Hamill Road, Indiana, PA 15701. Andrie moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:11 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammie L. Robinson  
Administrative Assistant