VENANGO DIRT GRAVEL AND LOW VOLUME ROADS

QUALITY ASSURANCE BOARD MEETING

June 23, 2021

PRESENT

BOARD: Justin Gribble, USDA NRCS Mark Kerr, PAFB Dan Rockwell, OCTU Alternate Tom Young, OCTU Lance Bowes, VCD

PROGRAM STAFF: Lisette Lane, VCD

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

**Lance called the meeting to order at 10:43am.**

1. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

1. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES**

NOVEMBER 17, 2020 MEETING

**Mark made a motion to approve the November 17, 2021 meeting minutes. Tom seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

1. **OLD BUSINESS**

CORNPLANTER UNION STREET PROJECT UPDATE

* Lance reported that after much back and forth with the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads Studies, the State Conservation Commission, Cornplanter Township and their engineer, the Township chose to cancel their DGLVR contract.
* Lance added that the Township installed the original structure and that Canal Township (who was to use the structure on their Old US 322 Road project) has had to re-engineer their work plan for a new structure.

1. **NEW BUSINESS**

REVIEW OF QAQC PRELIMINARY REPORT

* Lance provided a copy of the preliminary report.
* Lance reported that overall the district is meeting program expectations, is exceeding financial and administrative expectations and is meeting expectations on projects.
* Lance asked the group to review the report and send any comments his way so that he can forward them on to the program for use in a finalized version of the report.

ALTERNATE MEMBERS FOR NRCS & PAFB

* Lance reported that the QAQC report recommends that NRCS and PAFB appoint alternate members to the Venango DGLVR Program QAB
* He said the alternate members do not have to be employees of the agencies.
* A sample appointment letter was provided for agency use.

VENANGO DGLVR PROGRAM POLICY CHANGES

* DSA Policy
  + Lance reported that the QAQC report recommends that the Venango policies issue the following policy change:
    - At a minimum, follow the *DSA* policies *and specifications* of the Pennsylvania State Conservation Commission Dirt Gravel and Low Volume Road Program Road Maintenance Program Manual, dated July 1, 2019. These policies can be found in Chapter 7 of the Administrative Manual and specifically 7.2 *– 7.2.4*. *All DSA projects will be supplied with DSA Specifications.* Additional policies may be recommended to the Venango Conservation District by the QAB.

**Justin made a motion to recommend to the VCD Board of Directors to update the Venango DGLVR Policies with the italicized changes listed above. Mark seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF A STREAM CROSSING NOTIFICATION LETTER

* Lance provided a sample letter developed by the Allegheny County Conservation District.
* He said the purpose of a notification letter is for a municipality to notify the district before the application process of their intent to apply for Venango DGLVR Program funding for a stream crossing project. This would give the district time to collect data for the project before the application is considered for funding.

**Tom made a motion to recommend to the VCD Board of Directors to adopt the Stream Crossing Notification Letter developed by the Allegheny County Conservation District for use in Stream Crossing project planning and to approve a policy that the Notification Letter should be received from the applying municipality no less than 4 weeks prior to submitting an application for funding. Justin seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF A STREAM CROSSING ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

* Lance provided a draft Stream Crossing Assessment Criteria form for review.
* He explained that he developed the criteria for use in ranking stream crossing applications separately from road applications.

**Tom made a motion to recommend to the VCD Board of Directors to adopt the Stream Crossing Assessment Criteria for a one-year trial period, after which the QAB will re-evaluate the document to determine its effectiveness. Mark seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

APPROVAL OF A STREAM CROSSING RANKING WORKSHEET

* Lance provided a draft Stream Crossing Ranking Worksheet form for review.
* He explained that he developed the form for use in ranking stream crossing applications separately from road applications.

**Tom made a motion to recommend to the VCD Board of Directors to adopt the Stream Crossing Ranking Worksheet for a one-year trial period, after which the QAB will re-evaluate the document to determine its effectiveness. Justin seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

LIMIT OF STREAM CROSSING APPLICATION FUNDING

* Lance suggested that the QAB consider recommending a policy in which the district would limit the funding of stream crossing applications to one project per funding year.

**Mark made a motion to recommend to the VCD Board of Directors to approve a policy which states that the Venango Conservation District will fund a maximum of one stream crossing project application per funding year for a one-year trial period, after which the QAB will re-evaluate the policy to determine its effectiveness. Tom seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

STREAM CROSSING APPLICANTS WILL WORK WITH PROGRAM AGENCIES

* Lance suggested that the QAB consider recommending a policy that states that successfully funded stream crossing project applicants will work with agencies to complete a successful project.

**Justin made a motion to recommend to the VCD Board of Directors to approve a policy which states that a successfully funded stream crossing project applicant will work with district staff, technicians** **from the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads Studies and State Conservation Commission personnel to create a design, to review and approve of program permitting requirements and in project implementation to complete a successful stream crossing installation. Tom seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

COST EFFECTIVENESS RANKING CRITERIA

* Lance suggested that the cost effectiveness portion of road work ranking worksheet may not be an effective tool.

**Mark made a motion to recommend to the VCD Board of Directors to update the Cost Effectiveness dollar values on the Dirt & Gravel Road and the Low Volume Road ranking worksheets per the following: “Very High Benefits” - $0 -$25, “High Benefits” - $26 - $35, “Moderate Benefits” - $36 - $50, and “Low Benefits” - $51 and above. Justin seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

REMOVAL OF LIQUID FUELS RANKING

* Lance suggested that municipalities simply do not utilize the fact that they can get extra points in ranking if they combine DGLVR funding with Liquid Fuels funding.

**Tom made a motion to recommend to the VCD Board of Directors to eliminate the Liquid Fuels criteria portion of the Dirt & Gravel Road and the Low Volume Road ranking worksheets. Justin seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

1. **ADJOURNMENT**

**Justin made a motion to adjourn. Tom seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 12:18pm.**