

Minutes

Agricultural Advisory Board Meeting and Nutrient Management Advisory Board

August 29, 2019

PA Department of Agriculture
Harrisburg, PA

In Attendance - AAB Members

William Neilson – PA Farm Bureau
Aneca Atkinson – PA DEP Office of Water Programs
JV Lamb – PA Grange
Darwin Nissley – Livestock
Kerry Golden – PA House
Destiny Zeiders – PA House
Duane Hobbs – Syngenta
Walter Moore – Dairy
Matt Matter – Crop Farmer
Greg Hostetter – PDA

In Attendance - NMAB Members

Leslie Bowman – Egg Poultry Producer Representative
Sarah Dohle – Academia Faculty Member in Agronomy or Plant Science Representative,
Delaware Valley University (DVU)
Scott Hauseman – Commercial Ag Lender Representative
Charles O. Stowe – Local Government Representative
Chris Young – Fertilizer Industry Representative
Fausto Solis – Feed Industry Representative
Eileen Fabian – Academia Faculty Member in Animal Science from a PA College of AG. *or*
University with Expertise in Odor Mgmt., Penn State University (PSU)
Joseph Duris – Hydrologist
Katie Turner – Environmental Representative
Adam Serfass – Non-Farmer Citizen Representative
Andrew Flinchbaugh – Swine Producer Representative
Edward Hartman – Dairy Producer Representative
Michael Brubaker – Meat Poultry Representative

In Attendance - Agencies, Advisors, and Guests

Kelly O'Neil – Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Jay Braund – PA DEP Bureau of Clean Water
Jill Whitcomb – PA DEP Bureau of Clean Water
Steve Taglang – PA DEP Bureau of Clean Water
Megan Porta – PA DEP Bureau of Clean Water
Shelby Freyermuth – PA DEP Office of Water Programs

Ron Ohrel – ADANE
Brian Chalfant – PA DEP Policy Office
Frank Schneider – SCC
Mike Brubaker – PDA
Karl Brown – SCC
Charles White – PSU
Nate Crawford – PA DEP Bureau of Clean Water

The meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Board and Nutrient Management Advisory Board was called to order by JV Lamb and Leslie Bowman at 9:12 AM in the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture Building, Room 309.

Members of the board introduced themselves, as did the other meeting attendees.

Meeting Minutes — The AAB did not have a quorum therefore no vote was taken on the meeting minutes. With 13 NMAB members attending, a quorum was present.

Legislative Update

Ashley Fehr shared an overview of the Pennsylvania Farm Bill's conservation provisions, with the main components of those provisions being the new Conservation Excellence Grant Program, significant changes to the REAP Program, and the re-establishment of the Agriculture Linked Investment Program. The Conservation Excellence Grant Program provides \$2.5 million to provide financial and technical assistance to farmers to install Best Management Practices (BMPs), using grants, tax credits, and / or low interest loans. The Program establishes priority locations (Tier 1, Tier 2 & 3, all others) as well as priority BMPs, and is designed to encourage applicants to combine grants, loans, and tax credits.

Karl Brown spoke on the REAP Tax Credit Program, sharing that the program has been expanded by \$3 million to both increase the lifetime cap, and to increase availability. 8 significant changes to the program were detailed, including an expanded cap (\$250,000 over 12 years), a 90% reimbursement opportunity on some BMPs, and an additional \$3 million with the SCC's allowance to reserve and target these credits to certain BMPs within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

Karl Brown also shared that the Agriculture Linked Investment Program (Agri-Link) is being re-established, funded at \$500,000 in subsidies to fund low interest loans for implementing BMPs. Among other significant changes to this program, is the increase of the cap from \$75,000 over 7 years, to \$250,000 over 12 years, and clarification that eligible BMPs are those required to implement applicants required compliance plans (NMP, MMP, OMP, Conservation Plan, Ag E&S Plan).

Manure and Nutrient Planning Technical Team (MNTTP) – Doug Goodlander (DEP) and Karl Brown (SCC)

Doug Goodlander and Karl Brown spoke to the group concerning the Manure and Nutrient Planning Technical Team (MNPTT), a new group still in the making that came out of a DEP

workgroup and was the result of requests from the Ag Industry to reevaluate current planning and permit processes. The group is charged with reevaluating MM and NM planning standards, with team members representing various planning companies, integrators, statewide Ag organizations (Penn Ag Industries and PFB), manure haulers, PSU, the SCC's NMAB, DEP's AAB, and the CBF. The MNPTT is expected to make recommendations to the DEP and SCC for revisions to their planning standards within one year, where they, along with the NMAB when applicable, will take the recommendations into consideration. Initial input includes the following topics:

- a. Providing more allowances with Plan Amendments and Updates;
- b. Providing Flexibility in plans;
- c. More direction on plan review, and possible change in agency responsibilities;
- d. One plan format (NMP & MMP);
- e. Including soil health;
- f. Additions to Chapter 91;
- g. Streamlining CAFO record keeping.

Phosphorus Index (P-Index) Update – Jennifer Weld (PSU)

Jennifer Weld provided the NMAB with a brief overview of the basics for phosphorus management as well as the process for revising PA's Phosphorus Index (P-index). PA's P-index focuses on phosphorus sources and transport factors, and the management of those factors within critical source areas. The P-index evaluates source and transport factors to estimate P loss risk, then helps to manage P within critical source areas. Ms. Weld shared that 90% of soil P comes from about 10% of the area. As part of the process for revising the P-index, researchers are evaluating the identification of critical source areas, and looking at the effectiveness of certain BMPs, with the overall objective being to revise PA's P-index to better identify critical source areas and target BMPs, while keeping the process simple.

PaOneStop, Manure Management Plan Module Introduction – Jennifer Weld (PSU)

Jennifer Weld provided an overview of the Manure Management Plan (MMP) module that is being developed, with the overall objective being to develop an online spatially based option for MMP development. This module is based on MMP guidance, as well as, Nutrient Balance Sheet (NBS) and NMP calculations, reports, and reference tables, with calculations being based on the NBS approach. PSU will continue to coordinate development by field testing, improving report development, and adding features (including mapping) to be consistent with the standard plan format.

Ammonia (N-Fractions) / Total N Planning – Charlie White (PSU)

Currently NM planners have two approaches for estimating N fertilizer equivalence (or N availability), the Total N method, which is allowed for typical, non-treated manures; and the N Fractions method, which is required for treated or un-agitated manures (separated, un-agitated, or composted manure, biogas, etc.).

Dr. White explained that manure nitrogen availability based on the Total N method assumes a certain composition of the manure (mineral + organic) and works ok for “typical”, untreated manures. The N Fractions method of calculating nitrogen availability gets similar results, but research indicates it is more accurate.

As he did at the last meeting, Dr. White asked NMAB to consider removing the Total N Method for Act 38 NM planning. He shared that although the advantages to allowing the Total N method is that the calculation is slightly shorter when doing it by hand, the advantages to disallowing the Total N method is that there will be fewer options, making planning in the spreadsheet easier, and there will be fewer plan review issues because N fractions method is acceptable for all manures. Additionally, Dr. White shared that the N Fractions method is easier to teach and has shown to have more accurate results.

A motion was made by Sarah Doyle to move forward with removing the Total N Method, using only the N-Fractions Method for calculating N-availability. The motion was seconded by Katie Turner. Motion carried unanimously.

Manganese Water Quality Standard Proposed Rulemaking – Rodney McAllister (DEP)

Rodney McAllister from the Bureau of Clean Water presented a proposed rulemaking to revise the water quality standards for manganese (Mn), including consideration of the known toxic effects of Mn on human health.

PAG-01 – Low Impact Project Chapter 102/NPDES Permit and PAG-02 Chapter 102/NPDES General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Stormwater Construction Activities – Nate Crawford (DEP).

Nate Crawford of DEP gave the group a presentation on the status of the new PAG-01 and the existing PAG-02 NPDES permits. The Ag Advisory Board appointed a workgroup at the June 20th meeting to review the permits and provide comments to DEP. The workgroup met on July 12th and July 30th. The consensus of the Ag Advisory Board was that their concerns over the new PAG-01 have been addressed and they are supportive of DEP moving forward to publish the draft permit for public comment. There was discussion of the publication of PAG-02 in the August 17, 2019 PA Bulletin.

CAFO GP Update – Steven Wm. Taglang (DEP)

Steve Taglang of DEP reminded both boards that CAFO Annual Reports and Annual Fees for all holders of PAG-12 are due on December 31st. If a CAFO permittee has not submitted either their permit fees or an annual report, their permit coverage will lapse. Mr Taglang encouraged the group to remind CAFO permit holders of this requirement.

Chapter 91/92(a) Fee Regulations – Steven Wm. Taglang (DEP)

Steve Taglang of DEP provided an update on the status of the Chapter 91/92a fee package. The fee package was proposed at the December 2018 EQB Meeting and published in the Pa. Bulletin on March 30, 2019. The public comment period ran through May 14, 2019. There was also a Public Hearing on May 1, 2019 (Harrisburg). The fee package was presented several times at the AAB and WRAC. Prior to final publication, the Chapter 91/92a fee package will be presented to AAB.

The next meeting of the AAB will be November 7th, 2019 at the DEP Laboratory.