

**PENNSYLVANIA BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP**  
**Executive Board Meeting**  
**27 September 2001**  
**Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission Headquarters, Harrisburg, PA**

**Board Members or Alternates Present:** Bill Adams, Jacqui Bonomo (for Larry Schweiger), Don Brown (for DEP), Joan Clippinger (for DCNR), Cal DuBrock (for PGC), Tom Ford (for PFBC), Randy Gray, Paulette Johnson, Cliff Jones, Tom Kerr, Andrew McElwaine, K.C. Kim, Tom Pauley, Ann Rhoads, Bill Robie (for Tom Buzby), Janet Wright (for Michelle Cohen). **Also Present:** Steve Balzano, Jim Drager, Frank Felbaum, Ron Ramsey, Sue Thompson. **Excused:** Dick Whiteford

Chair Randy Gray welcomed Janet Wright, alternate for Michelle Cohen and Steve Balzano, DCNR's newly appointed Biodiversity Director. Gray announced that Wilbur Wolf was recently nominated as a fellow of the Society of American Foresters.

Minutes of the June 28, 2001 meeting were approved. Treasurer, Tom Kerr, presented a financial report showing a balance on hand of \$238,012.44, the report was approved as submitted.

Interim Executive Director Sue Thompson announced that proposals have been submitted to the Heinz Foundation for 2002 (\$391,760) and WRCF (Wild Resources Conservation Fund) for 2002-2003 (\$30,114). A request submitted to DEP for \$383,835 was not funded. In addition the following organizations have pledged support to the November conference of the Partnership: PABS (Pennsylvania Biological Survey), DEP, PCEE (Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education), and ERG (Eastern Research Group).

Thompson also called attention to several recent publications, copies of which were made available at the meeting: Environmental Law Institute's summary of state biodiversity programs entitled *Innovative State Strategies for Biodiversity Conservation*, K.C. Kim's booklet entitled *Biodiversity Our Living World: Your Life Depends on It*, and PCEE's environmental "report card" entitled *The First Pennsylvania Environmental Readiness for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Survey Report*.

Gray reported that the search for a president is proceeding. With two more days remaining before the deadline, 12 applications have been received. The search committee will shortly begin the screening process. He asked for volunteers to serve on a Personnel Committee to develop PBP personnel policies.

Kerr, with assistance from Thompson, presented a proposed PBP operating budget for 2002, which lists \$199,859 in expenditures. It was noted that only \$88,000 of that is currently in hand. Proposals pending with Heinz and WRCF would complete the income required. If those requests are not funded, other sources will have to be found or the budget scaled down accordingly. The budget was approved as presented.

Gray presented a recommendation that we contract with the Tides Center of Western Pennsylvania to provide administrative support to PBP at an annual cost of 10% of our income. After some discussion, the recommendation was approved with the stipulation that we attempt to negotiate with grantors to specifically require that interest on unexpended grant funds accrue to PBP rather than to Tides.

#### **TASK FORCE REPORTS**

**Policy** – Ron Ramsey, speaking for the Policy Task Force, presented a draft process that described a procedure for the Partnership to follow in determining if to adopt a formal position on an issue. The draft process was approved with one change, a requirement that the board provide reasons for denying a request to issue a policy was deleted.

**Membership Fees (Funding Task Force)** – Tom Ford presented a written report from the Funding Task Force outlining alternatives for establishing a membership fee structure and asked for feedback from board members on the following questions:

Should we have a membership fee structure?

What does it mean to be a member of PBP, what are the perks?

What should the membership fee(s) be?

Which of the schemes outlined on the task force's report best fits our needs?

Jim Drager, of Tweed Weber, volunteered that preliminary results of the membership survey now underway indicated unanimous support for a membership fee. Thompson noted that Heinz and other funders want to see evidence of internal financial support for the organization.

**Biodiversity Conference (Public Relations Task Force)** – Frank Felbaum reported on plans for the First Annual Pennsylvania Biodiversity Conference to be held on November 29-30, 2001 at the Atherton Hotel in State College. Maximum attendance is 200. A proposed agenda was presented and speakers are now being contacted. The main focus will be presentation and discussion of information now being compiled for the state of the state report. Each task force will be asked to provide a presenter to give a summary in their subject area and a moderator for a discussion of that section of the report. A brochure is being prepared for mailing. Deadline for reserving rooms at the Atherton under the negotiated conference rate is October 29.

#### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

Kerr reported that four current board terms expire this year, all of which are renewable for a second 3-year term. Three additional new board positions will also be filled. He asked that recommendations of potential nominees be forwarded to him for the committee's consideration. Thompson requested all current board members send her a short biographical sketch for the record.

#### **STATE OF THE STATE (SOS) REPORT**

Gray reported that the Biodiversity Conservation Planning Team met prior to the board meeting. Timing of the report was discussed and it was concluded that in order to issue the SoS report in time to be relevant in the gubernatorial campaigns, we would have to proceed simultaneously on several parallel tracks. Depending on available funds, a writer/editor will be sought to convert the summaries and reports each contractor is to provide into a readable format for the target audience(s). At the same time (and again dependent on funding), a consultant will be sought to advise us on strategies for publicizing the report.

#### **Task Force Input**

**Bioinformatics** – Tom Pauley has been unable to contact Dessie Severson and could not report on the status of the database of databases project other than that a template had been designed and circulated to task force members for comment. Pauley stated that he will be unable to continue as Task Force chair but will convene the group to select a new chair and will try to meet the November deadline for SoS input.

**Education** – Joan Clippinger reported that a survey is under way of biodiversity education programs. Initial results indicate many programs dealing with biodiversity content, but few using the term "biodiversity."

**Policy** – Ramsey reported that ELI (Environmental Law Institute) is making progress on the survey of laws, regulations, and policies as spelled out in our contract with them.

**Science** – Janet Wright reported that Roger Latham was selected to conduct the survey of biological resources; he met with Thompson prior to the meeting to clarify the scope of the project.

**Stewardship** – Thompson reported that five proposals have been accepted, all from Penn State, final contracts are being readied for signing and the work has begun. The task force met recently with both contractors, Jay Stauffer and Bob McKinstry.

## **MEMBERSHIP AND STAKEHOLDER SURVEY**

Drager reported that the survey being conducted for PBP by Tweed Weber is going very smoothly. The project is ahead of schedule, 52 interviews have been conducted so far. A database is being developed of the responses.

## **LOGO**

Felbaum reported that the PR Task Force has contacted several PR firms for *pro bono* logo design with the potential “hook” that the firm whose work is selected will be contracted to design the rest of the materials (e.g., stationery, business cards, etc.). Submissions will be made available to board members for evaluation; firms were given a 15 October deadline.

## **AGENCY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PFBC** – Ford reported on a recent meeting with legislators regarding the agency’s critical financial status. They desperately need a license fee increase to fund mandated water quality improvements in hatchery effluents and other programs.

**PGC** – DuBrock reported that the Commission is in deficit spending despite the recent license fee increase. At next week’s meeting, grants under the WCRA program will receive final approval. A request of \$157,000 for PBP is included.

**DCNR** – Clippinger introduced the new Biodiversity Director, Steve Balzano. Balzano reported that the internal DCNR Biodiversity Work Group report is in press and will be available for distribution soon. An update of PNDI procedures is underway.

**Pennsylvania Center for Environmental Education** – Johnson reported that PCEE has initiated a \$600,000 program to provide grants for teacher preparation in environmental education designed to meet the objectives of the new curriculum standards.

Thompson reported that a proposal is being prepared by PBP in conjunction with partners to provide teacher workshops on biodiversity and to develop a resource list and concepts.

**Earth Day Packets** – Clippinger reported that the production of 7,500 Earth Day packets to be distributed to schools and other education programs is underway. A new poster featuring biodiversity will be included. PBP will contribute a list of biodiversity resources and with WRCF will offer a reduced price to teachers on the biodiversity video. Joan is working on a teacher’s guide for the biodiversity booklet.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING**

Drager led the group in a brainstorming session to develop a vision statement for PBP in preparation for a strategic planning session, which he will conduct at the Nov. 29<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

**Next meeting: Thursday Nov. 29, 1-8 pm, at the Atherton Hotel in State College**

Respectfully submitted,  
Ann F. Rhoads