

MONTGOMERY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
October 14, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) was held Friday, October 14, 2022, in person and virtually on the GoToMeeting platform.

People Present:

Robert Butts, Vice Chairman
Tim McGrath, Treasurer
Linda Lewis, Supervisor
Doug Tregoning, Supervisor
Tom Linthicum, Associate Supervisor
Joe Lehman, Associate Supervisor
Jeremy Criss, OAG
Mike Scheffel, OAG
Kelly Nichols, Extension
Natalia Salazar, Extension
Sam Engler, District Conservationist (NRCS)
John Zawitoski, District Manager (MSCD)
Kathleen Sigwart, (MDA)
Karen Walker, Office Service Coordinator (MSCD)

Having a quorum of 3 supervisors, Robert Butts, Vice Chairman called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Supervisor Tregoning joined the meeting shortly after the meeting was called to order. John explained that Adam Lyons was not available for the meeting and asked Jeremy to present the report for OAG.

Agency Reports:

OFFICE OF AGRICULTURE: Jeremy presented the report for OAG, and he addressed the items listed below.

- **Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)** The Bill 40-21 will be discussed during the October 24, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee. The OAG remitted to the agricultural groups an amended copy of the Bill 40-21 that removes all the sections that would be burdensome to property owners. The OAG suggests that the agricultural groups need to schedule a meeting with the County Council President Gabe Albornoz to request this Bill be delayed until next year when the new County Council begins. Jeremy noted that OAG has been tracking this bill for quite a while and the goal is to slow things down before a vote is taken. OAG has made an appeal to the County Council President to delay voting until the new council begins.
- **Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments-** This Bill 18-22 was introduced back in June and the Public Hearing was on September 20, 2022. Jeremy provided as an attachment to his report, a letter from the AAC opposing this Bill 18-22. Several Ag groups have submitted letters of opposition to the bill, and it appears there is more time to address this bill. Jeremy shared that due to the election, there is a limitation that any legislation must pass by October 25th in order to be considered. He also shared there will be 6 new council members starting in January. A link to this Bill is incorporated into the minutes as outlined below:
https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220920/20220920_9.pdf
- **Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads-Amendments from the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee (RRAC) -** The Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads will be discussed during a Work Session with the Transportation and Environment Committee on October 17, 2022. The RRAC is recommending amendments to Bill 24-22

that will increase the number of RRAC committee members from 7 to 9 and remove the income requirements for farmers. Jeremy provided a letter from the AAC on the amendments to Bill 24-22 as an attachment to his report. Jeremy shared that OAG has been monitoring the legislation to modernize and update road codes. He shared there is really no changes but mentioned there was a change in the terminology of roads. Neighborhood connectors is a proposed terminology change. It was not until the Department of Transportation contacted Jeremy with the RRAC 2 recommended amendments to the bill that Jeremy realized the amendments would be problematic for farmers. There was a planned work session for both Jeremy and Mike to attend but the meeting was cancelled, and later Jeremy learned the entire Planning Board was terminated. Jeremy noted we now have an opportunity to educate new members of the planning board. Jeremy and Mike met with the County Executive on the matter, and Mike remarked that the County Executive was non-committal. While in the meeting, the County Executive stated that maintenance on Rustic Roads has improved. Jeremy mentioned that trees have been cut down, but the debris is left by the shoulders of the roads preventing mowing etc. It's not road maintenance but tree cutting. This led to a lengthy discussion and Jeremy noted that councilmember Hans Riemer supports the farmers view and not in support of the recommended amendments. Hopefully councilmember Evan Glass will be on board. A link to this Bill is incorporated into the minutes as outlined below:

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2022/20221017/20221017_TE1.pdf

- **Office of Legislative Oversight on the Status of TDRs and BLTs** - The Office of Legislative Oversight-OLO staff has presented draft sections of the final report and the OAG and MNCPPC are providing comments and additional information. The total supply of TDRs in the AR Zone=Sending Area +4,000 and the total demand from 131 TDR Overlay zones=Receiving Areas 1,117 TDRs. The OAG believes the findings from this report will show that the County Government and MNCPPC have not proposed new receiving capacity for TDRs for the past 10 + years. The Delmarva Farmer authored an article entitled: Saving suburban farms, and their value that provides the farmers perspective on the importance of how farmers use the equity from the TDR and BLT programs. There is another group meeting scheduled for October 26, 2022, and OAG believes the final OLO report should be completed in November. Jeremy explained to the Board, that the OLO is hearing OAG point of view and they are really evaluating the TDR numbers. The program has had no activity for 10 years. Jeremy noted we will have the opportunity to educate and show the success of the TDR Program to the new planning board members. Over 10,300 TDRs created and resulted in additional houses built above the base zone density, but the program needs improvements, particularly with new receiving capacity to be successful once again.
- **Bill 13-22 Buildings-Comprehensive Building Decarbonation scheduled for Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee on October 17, 2022.** All agricultural groups provided letters to the County Council in opposition. Hans Riemer has provided the language to exempt agricultural and farming uses from Bill 13-22 and added to the existing exemptions for manufacturing, production, crematory, and commercial kitchens. A link to this Bill is incorporated into the minutes as outlined below:

https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/cm/2022/20221017/20221017_PHED2.pdf

Jeremy noted the challenges farmers face in drying corn associated with the provisions of this legislation and shared that Hans Reimer has agreed and followed up to have ag exempted from this bill. The County Executive (CE) was made aware of the changes that Hans Riemer made and Mike said the CE supported the amendments from Hans with a qualifier that farming is exempted until there is new technology to dry corn in another manner. Additionally, the CE is interested in equipment to be built that can efficiently dry the corn. Also, the CE feels that solar should be a requirement on all farms as accessory solar. Bob Cissel representing MAP, shared with the CE that farmers cannot afford to install

solar panels. Associate Joe suggested offering a tax incentive for farmers and Jeremy responded that tax incentive may not be the best route and suggested offering some cost share.

- **Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-** *On October 3, 2022, the OAG received the press release for the Rustic Roads Master Plan Working Draft. A link to this press release is incorporated into the minutes as outlined below:*

<https://montgomeryplanning.org/rustic-roads-functional-master-plan-working-draft-to-be-presented-to-the-planning-board-on-october-6/>

The MNCPPC staff will be presenting The Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Update Working Draft to the Planning Board on Thursday October 6, 2022, and staff is asking the Planning Board to approve it as the Public Hearing Draft. There is a proposed Planning Board Public Hearing on Thursday, November 17, 2022, with more details to follow. The OAG is developing a power point presentation titled “The Rustic Roads Through the Eyes of the Farmer” that will feature pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MCDOT maintenance and improvements. Jeremy feels that the Rustic Road is not fulfilling is legislative mandate to safely move farm equipment on rustic roads. Jeremy noted the pictures that Mike has taken will reflect the challenges.

- **County/State Staff updates-**The new OAG staff replacing Cathy Yingling will be delayed until November 10, 2022, because the CAO requested a month to help recruit a new Executive Administrative Aide. The new UME staff Arnelle Ngalula Quashine for Alga Piechocinski’s Faculty Tenure position started on September 12, 2022. Rick Walter’s Area Extension Director position was announced, two candidates were interviewed, and the UME announced there was a failed search for this position that will be announced again. The Master Gardeners administrative position to replace Linda Walters was posted and the UME announced there was a failed search for this position that will be announced again. The 4H Agent Associate that Santana Mays held was finally posted on September 29, 2022.
- **FY 23 Operating Budget for the OAG-** The BDS position that Kristin Fisher once held and prior to 2010 was posted and the closing date is October 25, 2022. The MSCD Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds was posted September 29, 2022, by OHR.
- **Update on the FY22 Farm to Food Bank-F2FB Program-** Jeremy provided as an attachment to his report a summary outlining the progress of this program for FY22 where a total of 32 farmers are participating by expanding local food production and selling the food to Manna Food Center for people in need at competitive prices. A lot of good things are happening. Farmers are providing food for persons in need as a matter of fact, so much food was available that Manna Food Center had to stop receiving produce because there was no more funding. This situation had them reevaluate the two grants associated with the program: Direct Purchasing and Capacity Building. Jeremy noted that Mike Protas, Linda Lewis and Ben Butler have utilized the building capacity grant and the funding for capacity building grant was reallocated to Direct Purchasing until a supplemental appropriation can be approved to reinstate the capacity building grants.
- **Full County Council work sessions on the Thrive 2050 Plan -** There are full County Council work sessions to discuss new chapters on the Environment, Economic Development and Racial Equity and the November 2021 PHED Committee Draft. Please see the attached letter from the Office of Agriculture on the Thrive 2050 PHED Committee draft. A link to this plan is incorporated into the minutes as outlined below:
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/resources/Thrive2050/index.html>

- **Survey from the Montgomery County Office of Broadband Programs for Agricultural Reserve resident without** broadband Surveys were to be completed and returned by FRIDAY OCTOBER 7, 2022. For more information, there will be two online community meetings:
 7pm Wednesday September 21, 2022 <https://bit.ly/MoCoComMeet1>
 7pm Tuesday September 27, 2022 <https://bit.ly/MoCoComMeet2>

A map of occupied unserved rural Montgomery County properties – Blue has no broadband service; Yellow will be served by Verizon. If anyone is not in a yellow or blue area and do not have broadband service. You are being asked to respond utilizing the adjacent link: <https://bit.ly/Ruralsurvey>

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Quarterly meeting with CE, MAP, OAG, and MCFB-October 13, 2022; Montgomery Soil Conservation District-October 14, 2022; PHED Committee Work Session- Bill 13-22 Decarbonization-October 17, 2022; T&E Committee Work Session-Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads-October 17, 2022; Agricultural Advisory Committee-October 18, 2022; SCA Event on Regenerative Agriculture-October 22, 2022; T&E Committee Work Session-Bill 40-21 Septic Tank Pump-October 24, 2022; Montgomery County Farm Bureau Dinner Banquet-November 1, 2022; Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-November 8, 2022; Rustic Roads Master Plan Update-Public Hearing-November 17, 2022

After Jeremy presented his report, Doug commented on Thrive 2050 and noted that we need to be careful. Doug agrees the Ag Reserve was not created for biking and entertainment. However, there are several farmers that are selling recreation and entertainment/ag tourism. Doug said there is a need to make the distinction between traditional agriculture and ag tourism. Jeremy responded that Doug is correct. Currently there is no legal definition and code for Ag Tourism or Ag Entertainment. Jeremy provided some background information and noted that it was recommended several years ago to provide distinction /definition, but it has not happened. Currently, these types of activities are happening under Ag Education and Tourism as accessory use to farming. Jeremy noted that traditional agriculture must be the primary use and the other activities are accessory use. After Jeremy addressed Doug’s concern on Thrive 20250, Tim inquired about the dismantling of the Planning Board. Jeremy shared details on what he knew. After the discussion on the situation with the Planning Board, a motion was made by Doug Tregoning and seconded by Linda Lewis and passed approving to provide a letter to the County Council in support for the candidate that will represent agriculture on the Planning Board. Tom commented the Planning Board has been a total mess for the past 5 years.

EXTENSION REPORT– Kelly Nichols - U of MD then presented her report. Kelly explained that her report details some of the same information outlined in Jeremy’s report in reference to the open positions for the University and she is excited to soon see new faces. Kelly mentioned the dates and information for Fall Pesticide and Nutrient Management. She shared her concern and confusion on the certificate of nutrient management compliance as it relates to the cover crop program. MDA is requiring the certification form to be submitted at time of any MDA program open application period. John explained that MDA requires the form at time of application to be eligible to apply MDA’s program. He explained further that the form details compliance with nutrient management at time of application; however, an applicant’s plan could expire during the program year, yet MDA would still proceed with a program payment. Whereas another applicant whose plan is being updated at time of application and would be compliant by the time a program payment is made, would be deemed ineligible to participate. This seems counterintuitive as it would stand to reason that the emphasis should be placed on compliance at time of payment rather than time of application. John shared additional details and noted that reductions in participation will impact the WIP goals. Natalia Salazar, Nutrient Management Advisors shared her concerns, and all agreed that some of MDA program requirements need to be reevaluated. John mentioned this item will be addressed at the MASCD Board of Directors

Meeting on October 25th. After the discussion on the certificate form and cover crop, Kelly shared one last note that was not on her report. If your voucher license expires at the end of this year, MDA for the second year will mail out a postcard to everyone that has their license that will be expiring at the end of the year and ask if you want the license renewed. If you choose to renew the license you must call MDA. She said this process is just for vouchers so keep an eye out for postcards. The official report is provided below.

Fall Pesticide and Nutrient Management Meetings: All meetings will take place at the Montgomery County Extension Office from 6:00-8:00pm. To register, visit go.umd.edu/mcfall2022 or call 301-590-2807.

- Private Applicator Pesticide Exam Training (optional): Thursday, October 27
- Private Applicator Pesticide Exam: Thursday, November 3
- Private Applicator Pesticide Recertification Meeting (for those who already have a license): Thursday, November 10
- Nutrient Management Voucher Training: Thursday, December 1

Can't make it to one of the meetings above? There are more options!

- Additional meetings hosted by Extension can be found at go.umd.edu/agmeetings, or by calling Kelly at 301-590-2807.
- Online self-paced course: To obtain access, visit <https://umeagfs.teachable.com>. Scroll down to the Upcoming Course Offerings sections. The Nutrient Voucher and Farmer Certification Credits course offers nutrient management credits. For private applicator pesticide credits, click on the Private Pesticide Applicator Recertification course.
- Pesticide Workbook: The workbook provides a non-internet and non-computer option for pesticide credits. To obtain a workbook, please call me at 301-590-2807.

2023 Annual Central Maryland Agronomy Update Meeting: The Annual Agronomy Update Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, at the Urbana Fire Hall. Stay tuned for more information.

Pesticide License Renewal Please note that after you have attended a meeting or completed the online course or the workbook, you will need to log into MDA's online pesticide and licensing website to renew your license and pay the \$7 renewal fee. For instructions, visit go.umd.edu/pestsafetytraining and view the videos under the "Licensing" towards the bottom of the page. If you are unable to complete this step online, please call MDA at 410-841-5710.

Nutrient Management Plans for 2023 If you will need an updated nutrient management plan for spring nutrient applications or for the cover crop sign up in July 2023, please contact your plan writer this fall/winter. Kelly explained that she knows this is early, but she wants to ensure that everyone has an updated plan in time. For the cover crop sign up, MDA wants the Current Nutrient Management Plan Certification form (the one-page form signed by your plan writer) when you walk into the Conservation District's office to sign up. Note that this is different than it may have been in the past.

Upcoming Events

- Pasture Walks will be offered across the state this fall at the following dates and locations: October 12, 4:00pm, in Edgewater (Anne Arundel County). Topic: Equine Pasture Renovation. www.go.umd.edu/octoberpasturewalk
- November 17, 4:00pm, in Ellicott City (Howard County). Topic: Grazing Stalks/Cover Crops. www.go.umd.edu/novemberpasturewalk
- Agriculture Law Education Initiative Conference on October 28, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Annapolis. Sessions planned for the 2022 conference include the upcoming debate on the Farm Bill, agricultural and environmental law developments, food waste, environmental justice, heirs' property, and the hemp industry in

Maryland. Registration is \$50 to attend in person or \$40 to attend virtually. For more information, visit the [conference website](#).

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

John explained that the approval of the September Board Minutes was next on the agenda. The Vice Chairman, Robert Butts remarked all have received a copy of the minutes and asked if there were any questions or corrections. Having no questions or corrections, a motion was made by Doug Tregoning and second by Linda Lewis and passed approving the September 9, 2022, Board of Supervisors Minutes.

Karen then presented the financial report and confirmed that the checkbook and bank statement have been reconciled. She has prepared and sent everything for the Annual MDA Audit that is due on October 19th. She has not heard from the auditor, but the bank statement and checkbook match each month and she does not anticipate any problems. She noted the MDA expenditures for the month of September were for Ibraheem and Kathleen to attend the Maryland Grazing School and the cost to mail the documents for the audit. She shared the district has received 3 invoices and two donation requests. The invoices for MASCD and NACD are for the annual dues, and she noted MDA provides funding for both associations. She shared the \$50 Teachers Award is a part of the total dues for MASCD which is \$2,750. She remarked for 2022 Montgomery SCD provided a Teachers Award for Lissa Vincent for working with the Envirothon Team. John shared this is the first time that Montgomery will have a teacher to nominate for the MASCD Teachers Award and shared generally local award winners are submitted for MASCD Summer event. The district normally supports NACD at the gold level and the minimum cost is \$775. The third invoice is for the D&O Travelers Insurance (\$1,639). Karen shared that the chairman at times request a motion to cover everything and then there are times when the request is a high dollar amount, he wants separate motions. John shared MASCD has requested a \$625 donation to support MPTV Farm and Harvest programing in addition the district has received a donation request for the state FFA organization. Karen shared there is funding to address all invoices and donation request. Doug wanted to table the FFA donation request and have FFA provide information on how the funding will be used. The Vice Chair said it was appropriate to have one motion to address the invoices and donation request. A motion was made by Doug Tregoning and second by Linda Lewis and passed approving to pay the invoices for MASCD \$2750, NACD \$775, D&O Travelers Insurance \$1639 and to only pay the donation request for MPTV \$625. After the invoices and donations were addressed, Karen recommended the filing of the September MDA Financial Report, and a motion was made by Linda Lewis and seconded by Doug Tregoning and passed approving to file the September MDA financials.

Karen informed the Board that she will be working to complete Supervisor's pay-out by the next board meeting. Jeremy then followed up on the MPTV discussion by mentioning Terry Carpenter with MPTV contacted OAG and shared information on the Farm and Harvest Program and she originally wanted to do a show to promote what OAG does. Jeremy shared if there is a show, the Ag Reserve must be a major component of the show and noted so many residents do not know that the Ag Reserve exists. Mike shared statistically Montgomery County residences are the highest viewership of folks that watch the Farm and Harvest show. Jeremy said she provided an estimate cost for the show, and OAG has limited funds. OAG is looking to partner with Visit Montgomery and Montgomery County Economic Development Corporation to see if there is a possibility they can partner with OAG on this initiative. Jeremy noted the Visit Montgomery partnered with OAG on the Farm Tour. Doug mentioned when MPTV came out and interviewed him on Close Encounters with Agriculture there was no charge. Doug and others did not understand why there was a charge to be on the show and all agreed the cost is a valid question. Mike shared the top tier pricing is \$20,000 and Jeremy said they are a non-profit and it's a part of the Marketing Division. Doug noted that Montgomery County is a national leader in farmland preservation, and we should not be charged to do a story on this. Jeremy wanted the Board to know about the viewership and the idea to partner with other organizations.

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES REPORT AND PROGRAM UPDATE

Sam Engler, District Conservationist presented the September Activities Report. Sam shared MSCD has received 1 new request for assistance from Emily Love and mentioned it's a small equine operation on 4 acres with a couple of horses. Sam noted there are 3 conservation plans for approval in the Executive Session and shared some details on each plan. Sam mentioned there are several conservation plans in progress and noted none of the conservation plans for approval have any issues. Sam commented on several activities listed on the report and asked if there were any questions. John shared MSCD staff has been working diligently and noted the 64 conservation plans have been approved for the year is a record number. In addition, MSCD staff has provided continue support for the CEWA Program. Having no questions, a motion was made by Doug Tregoning and seconded by Linda Lewis and passed approving the September Activities Report.

After the approval for the Activities Report, Sam shared NRCS still needs to hire a state conservationist and shared Rob McAfee from the field office will be leaving and going to headquarters. Sam shared that the NRCS State Office has several positions needing to be filled and not having a state conservationist, or the assistant state conservationist position filled will likely impact NRCS programs. For right now, Sam thinks NRCS programs will go the same as last year but shared there could be changes. Sam mentioned the previous state conservationist, Terron Hillsman, was big in the Local Workgroup which is about \$100,000 conservation funding for each county. John commented that we normally would have had a Local Workgroup meeting by now and Sam responded correct and noted he has not been told to hold a Local Workgroup. Sam also mentioned that NRCS is at end of the fiscal year and Brandy has been helpful with CSP and other items. John shared that MSCD has received the updated unfunded cooperators agreement from NRCS based on our concerns and comments that were submitted 4 years ago in 2018. Unfortunately, John has not had the opportunity to review the agreement and he provided background information on the matter. John plans to present information on the agreement for the next Board Meeting.

Doug asked Sam if NRCS directs the hours he spends between Howard and Montgomery and Sam replied that it is at his discretion. Sam noted that he tries to have 2 days for Howard and 2 days for Montgomery. Doug said he was just wondering if it was 60% Howard and 40% for Montgomery and said he is okay with the hours. John commented on the proposed reorganization and leadership of our local FSA office that came up during the last board meeting. He explained that he had an opportunity to discuss the proposal with Missy Donnelly and she noted that the proposed plan has been taken off the table.

DISTRICT MANAGERS REPORT: John noted he sent out the report and he wanted to highlight a couple of items and noted the entire report would be incorporated into the minutes.

New Business Items:

MASCD Board of Directors Meeting 10/25 -The next meeting of the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts, Board of Directors will be held both in person (at MDA Headquarters) as well as virtually on Tuesday, October 25, 2021, 9:30 AM. Normally Robert Butz attends these meetings. If Robert is unable to attend, can another Supervisor attend? The good news is that there is a virtual meeting option, and you would not have to drive to Annapolis to participate. Doug said he would be available if the Chairman was not able to attend.

MASCD Request – Farm & Harvest Support - This was discussed under the Secretary/Treasurer Report and a motion was made and passed providing approval \$625 to support the program.

MDA/SCD Regional Flat Rate Working Groups - During the MASCD meeting in August, MDA informed the Districts about changes to the MACs flat rate for the conservation grants program. MDA is trying to develop a regional flat rate system over having individual flat rates approved for Districts. MDA has formed regional flat rate working groups that Paul and John have been attending. Paul has been working with

contractors and material suppliers to help get a handle on current prices for materials. Most contractors and suppliers will not guarantee material prices for more than 1 week. While some material costs have stabilized a bit, supply side issues continue to cause inflated material costs. The damage from Hurricane Ian in the Gulf is likely to once again drive-up material costs and the demand for materials will increase as South and Central Florida tries to recover from the storm. While we are putting the effort in to get these flat rates revised, there is no guarantee that whatever we develop will be accepted by the Department or if the flat rates developed will be meaningful as supply side and material cost uncertainties continue. Some Districts have expressed concern about this approach, particularly with how some of the regional flat rates may apply to their District. PG for example shares more in common with contractors and suppliers in Montgomery and Frederick, than with the other Southern MD Counties, yet their District would be aligned with the flat rates developed for the Southern MD Counties. PG feels that this puts their District at a financial reimbursement disadvantage and would like MDA to have some flexibility with the regionality of the flat rates and how they are applied to Districts. Right now, MDA appears unwilling to do so. There is a late October Deadline imposed by MDA for the regional working groups to submit their recommendations for the new regional flat rates for MDA to consider.

Mont. County School Program/Soil & Water Conservation - The District has been approached by a grandparent of 2 elementary school girls in Montgomery County. She is very interested in involving the students, staff and parents in actions supporting soil reclamation and regenerative agriculture. She is asking for the District's help in providing a general education presentation to their school. I have had several discussions with this grandparent and PTA representatives and shared some of the information we could pull together for an assembly and presentation to 3rd, 4th and 5th grade classes. I provided a sample PowerPoint that I have done in the past that involves the topics they would like to cover, and the school is very interested in the District doing this assembly for their school. We are tentatively looking to do this early this winter. Public information outreach is a significant part of the District's mission, and this will help us promote the work of the District as well as inform and help educate our younger audiences on what farmers are doing to help protect the bay as well as demonstrating careers that are available to students looking to pursue environmental education opportunities in soil and water conservation.

FY22 WQPC Report – Draft ready by Dec. Mtg. - Just wanted to give Supervisors a heads up that my goal will be to have a draft of our WQPC Annual report prepared for the December meeting. Once completed, this report will provide the impetus for the District to Invoice DEP for our annual allocation of WQPC funding for our Conservation Cost Share Assistance Program. This program helps fund our commodity cover crop program as well as certain Best Management Practices. Our annual report always summarizes how we have utilized the funding provided and the projects where these funds have been targeted.

Gov. Ag Hall of Fame - I am pleased to report that Montgomery County's nominee for the Governors Ag Hall of Fame was submitted to the MDA on October 5th. Many thanks to Doug and Kelly that pulled the nomination form together with all the required information. As part of the nomination process, endorsement for the nominees by the County Farm Bureau and District Manager is required. I reviewed the nomination coordinated by extension. This year's nominee from Montgomery County is the Willard Family. The long-standing tradition of this family farming operation is well documented, they are leaders in innovative agricultural practices, sound conservationist and land stewards and leaders in the agricultural community. This application is a very strong application, and it was my honor to recommend the Willard Family for this distinguished recognition. Together we were able to meet the deadline for submission in advance of the required timeline.

Annual Audit – Due October 19th - We are working with our auditor to get our annual audit report completed. We have sent all documentation to our auditor, and we are awaiting his final report.

Regenerative Agriculture at Linden Farm, Oct 22- We have been asked by the Sugarloaf Citizens Association to help promote their workshop on regenerative agriculture being held at Linden Farm on Oct. 22nd (Saturday) from 8:30 am through 11 am. This event will be held rain or shine. In your packets is the flyer for

this event. We have used our social media outlets to help promote this event for SCA. Anyone interested in learning about how SCA is planning to adopt regenerative agricultural practices on Linden Farm is encouraged to attend. Presenters include Greg Glenn of Rockland's Livestock and Amanda Cather from American Farmland Trust. Tim asked what is regenerative farming? Doug responded its growing weeds, and this led to a lengthy discussion and Jeremy noted that Lan Heimer has been contacted and he saw Johnson grass in the area. John said conservation tillage, cover crops and on farm composting are all considered regenerative farming practices. John noted that it really depends on who you are speaking with and how they define it.

Renewal – D&O Insurance – John has been working with our D&O insurance carrier (Travelers) to update our policy information. This must be done annually, so that the carrier can decide whether they wish to continue our coverage. We have received notification and the revised policy statement that we are covered by Travelers for another year. The invoice will be arriving. Given this invoice will arrive in between Board meetings, I would like Board's approval to pay the invoice for our policy when it arrives. Annual cost of the Insurance is \$1,639. We have sufficient local funds to cover this annual expense. The Board approved this expenditure under the financial reporting part of the meeting.

November Board Meeting (Veterans Day) – The next Board meeting falls on Veterans Day holiday, which County, State and Federal Offices are closed. If we do not hold the meeting on November 11th, the options would be to move the meeting a week earlier or a week later, or to not hold a November meeting. Doug suggested to cancel the November meeting and if something comes up John can use his best judgement. Therefore, there will be no meeting in November and the next scheduled meeting will be December 9th.

MDA- GF and CBT Fund Budget Update - The District has executed and received our FY23 GF and CBT agreements from MDA. This secures our funding sources from the State for this fiscal year. We are still awaiting information from the Department about the looming shortfall with the FY24 CBT fund and how this may impact District Operations, particularly with support for non-state managers and support staff. Adam Lyon was not available to provide any additional information to share about the FY24 funding deficit.

Old Business:

2022 Cooperators Dinner Update – John expressed his appreciation to everyone that helped make our Cooperators Dinner the success it was this year. This was the largest attended event in his tenure as District Manager. We had well over 170 attendees, mostly from our farming community. John received many compliments about the quality of the event and venue.

John explained that pulling off events like these is a lot of work and has been particularly challenging given the new world we are living in post COVID. The cost of doing events like these, especially when you have to provide infrastructure like tents to protect our guests from adverse conditions have just skyrocketed. Cost of providing catered food has also increased. We normally have about 120-130 attendees and of course that is what we budgeted for food cost. We still had people RSVPing up to the day before the event. We had to revise our head count several times to accommodate these changes.

Between the cost of the food and tent, we committed almost \$10,000 to this event. Between sponsorships and registrations, we recovered almost \$4,000, leaving better than \$6,000 in subsidized costs. One challenge we had was finding vendors to provide tenting services, many went out of business during the pandemic. Given the need and timing, we were at the mercy of the vendor that was able to provide us with the tent. Right now, we charge \$20.00 per person. Looking at other District's across the state, most charge between \$25 and \$30 for their dinner. There are a few that charge \$40 to \$50.00. While I am not advocating such a large increase as other Districts, maybe an increase of what we charge is warranted given rising costs of putting this event on. Maybe something in the \$25 to \$30 price range as most other District's charge? What do you think? Jeremy said that it was a good event and it's the most expensive invoice that he has approved. There was a lengthy

discussion and suggestions for the Cooperators Dinner and Doug suggested to increase the cost to \$25 and Linda Lewis said that \$30 is more realistic. John explained that WQPC funding was used and MSCD has approximately \$2,700 in our account for next years event. John said we should wait until May to review potential costs to be incurred before the Board decides to formally increase the cost to attend.

FY23 Cover Crop Program Update - October 10th was the last date for the early planting incentives and aerial seeding. Participants may plant until November 5th as part of the traditional program. They may also plant until the 13th but must not suppress those acres until after May 1st of next year to be eligible for payment. The rye cover crop incentive applies throughout all the planting dates. October 1st was the last planting date for radish, oats, and legumes. October 15th is the last planting date for barley. October 15th is also the last date for broadcast cultipacker and broadcast stalk chop methods. Bean ground is not eligible for broadcast cultipacker and broadcast stalk chop. 20% of the fields and acres must be spot checked in the three planting tiers in the fall. If 10 fields are reported, at least 2 must be checked as long as the acreage totals 20% of the total or more. If not, more fields need to be checked. Incorporated seeding rates are 25% less than the standard rate. Aerial and non-incorporated seeding rates are 25% higher than the standard rate. John shared that Karen has provided reminder calls to all cooperators.

Update on Izaak Walton League Lead Project - Currently this project is on hold and the league is not ready to present their project to the Board for formal technical assistance. MNCPPC has determined that the project would not be exempt from Forest Conservation; however, given the size of the property, relative to the disturbance, may not require formal FCE measures. There are additional inventories they will need to provide to MNCPPC. They will have to file an NOI with MDE, and they may require additional measures above customary E & S. John explained that he has had discussions with DPS about E&S oversight and they are willing to allow the District to provide the E&S oversight for this project, if the District approves the League's technical assistance request once its submitted and discussed by the Board.

Update Engineering position – This was addressed under OAG Report and the position application period will be open for three weeks then it will close.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The meeting officially adjourned at 10:54 a.m. and the next scheduled Board of Supervisors Meeting will be in person with the option to attend virtually on December 9, 2022, at 9:00 am.

Regards

Karen Walker, Administrative Assistant

<u>MEETINGS ATTENDED</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Butz	90%
Butts	80%
McGrath	100%
Linda Lewis	100%
Doug Tregoning	100%
*Linthicum	60%
*Joe Lehman	60%
*Chris Miller	80%

*Associate Member