

DRAFT
MONTGOMERY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
MINUTES
June 23, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) was held at Ag History Farm Park, 18410 Muncaster Road, Derwood, MD Friday, June 23, 2017

People Present:

Robert Butz, Chair
Robert Stabler, Board Member
Wade Butler, Board Member
Pam Saul, Treasurer
Tim McGrath, Associate Supervisor
Missy Donnelly, Farm Services Agency (FSA)
Jeremy Criss, Office of Agriculture (OAG)
John Zawitoski, Office of Agriculture (OAG/MSCD)
Hans Schmidt, Maryland Department of Agriculture, Assistant Secretary
Mike Scheffel, Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA)
James Myers, District Conservationist
Karen Walker, Administrative Assistant

The Chair, Robert Butz called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

AGENCY REPORTS

MDA

Mike provided the report for MDA and noted that MSCD budget request came in on time and that the District will receive a new agreement soon. Both John and Karen noted that we have received our notice of the quarterly payment and this notice details the amount the District will be receiving as the FY18 1st quarter payment.

Next, Mike shared that signup for the 2017-18 cover crop program is underway and the new online application process may have a few bumps along the way but asked for patience. Mike indicated that Assistant Secretary Hans Schmidt will be joining the meeting shortly and will discuss the issues that are impacting MDA and the District.

Hans joined the meeting later and thanked the District for allowing him to attend. Hans reported on the following: MDA has 85% of the PMT soils data collected. The Cover Crop Program has rolled out and he noted that farmers and staff need to be patient, especially for the fall cover crop certification. Hans shared that there is \$25 million to pay out for the 2016-2017 Cover Crop Program but noted that program changes had to be made. In addition to the new online application process, MDA announced that they are no longer including the commodity cover crop acres for the program. He advised that MDA would still like farmers to sign up for the commodity acres and decide later if they would harvest or kill down. The department is implementing this change to stay within the Cover Crop program budget.

Healthy Soil Bill – This legislation allows the 3 way mixes for use in the cover crop program and qualify for certain program incentives.

Current Nutrient Management Plan documentation will be required from farmers applying for MACS capital projects beginning on July 1st. The NMP documentation provision will be required for the Cover Crop Program next year (2018-19). Hans explained that the intent is to ensure farmers are in compliance with the nutrient management law. The documentation needed consists of 4 required elements of the plan. They are: 1) the year of the plan, 2) Name listed on the plan 3) consultant 4) Certification number. MDA wants to prioritize funding to farmers with current nutrient management plans. Wade shared that his plan is always being updated do to certain crop rotations. Robert Butz raised a concern that there are more requirements but no additional resources. It was noted that Amanda Laudwein, Montgomery County Nutrient Management Advisor is on detail to Washington County two days a week and that she is the NM consultant for Butler. Hans responded by indicating that MDA would work with farmers with special circumstances involving their plans.

Hans reported that uncertainty with federal funds do raise concerns about how the state moves forward with reaching Bay Goals. Tim McGrath, raised a question considering sediment accumulation behind Conowingo dam. Hans provided detailed information about the dam being at capacity and the estimated costs to address the problem. As right now, the project is cost prohibitive and the State does not have a definitive answer.

Hans shared that the Ag Census is coming out and farmers need to take time to carefully complete the form because how they answer the census questions may have an impact on future WIP goals. Chuck asked if Turf Grass was included in the Ag Census. Hans thought that turf was covered under the urban sector. There was a big discuss on this matter. Missy asked about MACS and CRP contracts. Hans responded that the funding for CRP contracts will come from the Chesapeake Bay Trust and there should be resources to fund continuing and new CRP acres.

MDA is working closely with MDE on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's). MDA would like to be the lead agency on CAFO's. Hans shared that the MACS budget was approved for \$8 million and already almost \$7 million in projects approved by the BPW for FY 18 projects. For FY18, MACS would have about \$1 million in general fund dollars and approximately \$2 million from the trust fund to pay for nutrient management related capital projects. Hans noted that he is working with NRCS and Dr. Hillsman on alternative BMPS that maybe more cost effective. It appears that NRCS is open to hear other BMP options and encouraged farmers and districts to bring these ideas to MDA/NRCS.

EXTENSION

Chuck Schuster noted the UME will be making an offer for the Nutrient Management position in Frederick very soon. The position was on hold until July 1st because of budget reasons. Chuck noted that Amanda Laudwein, Nutrient Management Advisory for Montgomery will be on detail to Washington County two days per week.

Chuck shared that we are in the process of hiring for the second Ag Extension position in Frederick. Matt Morris started several months ago, handling agronomy, dairy and other livestock request. Extension is recruiting for a small farm, and general ag person (formerly Terri Poole). The position closes on June 30th and we are looking to hire as soon as possible.

UME is in the process of hiring a New Ag Program Leader. The preferred candidate, Dr. Jarboe (Iowa) will be starting in a few months. UME is the process of interviewing for a new Associate Dean and Associate Director for UME. MDA Pesticides Section has hired Veronica Johnson as head of Training and Certification. She replaced Ashley Jones. Veronica is a graduate of UMD and comes with a good background.

Our local pesticide inspector will not be in the county for several weeks due to an illness.

Chuck said to be cautious in using 24D and dicamba herbicides. There was a big discussion on this issue involving both an organic nursery and a non organic nursery being damaged by herbicide volatilization and drift and that careful use of these materials must be employed.

MDA is allowing commercial pesticide license to be renewed on line. Private Applicator's licenses still need to be done by mail.

Wade inquired about a label change on Gramoxone herbicide and Chuck responded that he wasn't aware of the change.

FSA

Missy provided the report for Farm Services Agency and updated the Board on recent FSA happenings and deadlines during the agency reports. COC elections are underway for FSA. Currently LAAs 3 & 4 are up for election and FSA is looking for nominations to fill their ballots. CED Donnelly reached out to the Board asking for potential nominees that might be interested in participating. Attendees were also reminded that July 15th is the deadline for producers to report corn, soybeans, and fruits and vegetables. This deadline is quickly approaching and scheduling appointments are encouraged. August 1st is the deadline for eligible producers to complete the annual enrollment in the Agricultural Risk Coverage/Price Loss Coverage programs (ARC/PLC). Producers need to sign contracts and provide written statements/leases if applicable. Lastly, the FSA Office along with the NRCS office are working on completing contracts for those producers interested in reenrolling their acreage back into the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CED Donnelly has contacted DC Myers and provided CRP-2Cs as applicable. The deadline for Conservation Plans and supporting documentation to be completed and returned to FSA is August 1st. There was limited discussion on controlling noxious weeds on CRP acreage and what information is being provided to the participants. CED Donnelly informed the Board that participants are to request permission to spot treat their CRP acreage during nesting season. This is reviewed by the CED on the County Committee's behalf. Permission is typically granted but status reviews are sent to Weed Control and/or NRCS for follow-up. Participants are reminded that the request is granted just to spot treat and not mow/spray the entire field.

OAG

Jeremy Criss, Director of Office of Agriculture thanked Karen for making copies of his report that is in the handout packet. Jeremy reported on the following items.

1. The MSCD District Manager Job announcement closed on June 10, 2017 and 11 people applied. The OHR determined that 9 of the applicants met the minimum qualification for the position. The OHR requests that MSCD Board of Supervisors interview 5 of the applicants. On Monday June 26, 2017 Doug Tregoning, JG Warfield and Jeremy Criss will review the 9 applicants that met the minimum qualifications and recommend 5 applicants for the MSCD to interview on July 14, 2017.
2. The OAG is monitoring the County Council agenda for ZTA 16-02 regarding AR Zone-TDR requirements for Dwellings accessory to farming like Farm Tenant Dwellings. We are still waiting to see if the ZTA will be assigned a new number and start the public process over.
3. The Montgomery County Farm Bureau conducted on Tuesday a meet your Farmer event with all four members of the 14th Legislative District at Waredaca Brewing Company. There were over 50 farmers/residents in attendance along with all four members of the 14th District-Senator Craig Zucker, Delegates Anne Kaiser, Eric Luedtke, and Pamela Queen.
4. Jeremy passed out the 2017 Farm Tour and Harvest Sale Brochures and he mentioned the Ag Leader Luncheon that is listed under Upcoming Meeting and Events and noted that Tyler Butler will be making a presentation at the luncheon.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Compost Stakeholders Forum- Bill 28-16 Food Waste etc June 26, 2017 7:00pm
 Montgomery County Farm Bureau Bd of Directors-July 11, 2017 @7:00pm-**rescheduled**
 Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-July 11, 2017 @ 7:00pm
 Montgomery Soil Conservation Bd of Supervisors-July 14, 2017 @ 9:00am
 Agricultural Advisory Committee-Tuesday July 18, 2017 @ 7:00pm
 Annual Farm Tour and Harvest Sale-July 22 & 23, 2017
 Agricultural Marketing Specialists-July 31, 2017-Southern Maryland
 10th Annual Buy Local Challenge & Celebration July 31, 2017
 Montgomery County Farm Bureau Bd of Directors-August 1, 2017 @7:00pm
 COG Regional Agricultural Work Group-August 10, 2017-Montgomery County
 Montgomery Soil Conservation Bd of Supervisors-August 11, 2017 @ 9:00am
 MC Agricultural Fair Begins-August 11, 2017
 Agricultural Leaders Luncheon-Monday August 14, 2017

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

The minutes of the May 19th meeting were received and reviewed and there were no noted changes. A motion was made by Wade Butler and was seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving the May Minutes.

Karen provided the financial report and noted that the Bank statement and the check book match. Karen shared that she and Pam where going to the Bank after the meeting to start the process of getting a Debit Card for the District. It was already noted that MSCD has received notification of the upcoming MDA FY18 1st Quarter Payment.

Next, Karen shared several financial matters with the Board. First she noted that the Supervisors have received their payment and the information for the upcoming MASCD Summer Meeting was in the hand out packet. Items for the MASCD Summer meeting need to be addressed before the next Board Meeting. The hotel registration is due by July 7th and the meeting registration

packet is due July 3rd. The Maryland Envirothon Competition was held before the board meeting and snacks were provided. John Zawitoski has made a purchase for the Education Endowment Action Item. Mike Weyand has completed another semester and received an "A" for the course. A payment to Montgomery County Office of Agriculture is due for Mike Weyand, District Manager and Secretary Positions. Karen noted that funds are available to address all the upcoming expenses and she recommended the Board's Approval. A motion was made by Robert Stabler and seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving the May Financial Report and to provide 80% tuition reimbursement for Mike Weyand; pay Montgomery County Office of Agriculture; reimburse John Zawitoski for Education Endowment Auction Item and pay for the 2017 MASCD Summer Meeting Hotel and Registration.

Karen noted there she needed to address another expense that was made on behalf of MSCD. In the passing of George Lechliden, Karen sent flowers/plants \$53.30 and gave a \$100 donation to Mt. Tabor UMC in honor of George Lechliden. After sharing the information, there was a conversation about George and it was noted that an article on George would be in the upcoming MSCD Conservation Matter Newsletter.

APPROVALS, RATIFICATIONS AND REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

The activities report was in the handout packet and Jim noted that there are 4 conservation plans. Jim shared the details of each plan and noted that there are no issues with any of the operators and recommended the Board's approval. A motion was made by Pam Saul and seconded by Wade Butler and passed approving the 4 conservation plans.

After the approval of the conservation plans, Jim shared items from the activities report and noted that there was a good turnout for the equine event. Jeremy noted that Shelly is doing a good job. Next, Jim presented two fill requests. Robert Butts has spoken with J. Harne to bring in fill for his equine operations. John provided more details about the related ag equestrian use and that the total amount needed would not exceed 20 truckloads. John also noted the Robert requested a waiver for the fill fee in light of the linkage of the fill use to his ag operation and the limited amount to fill required. John noted that the level of technical assistance required of the District would be minimal and the \$300 fee is recommended to be waived. A motion was made by Robert Stabler and seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving Robert Butts to receive District technical assistance and an exemption from the \$300 fee. The second fill request was for Kevin Stanley. The request is to bring fill to the property for establishing a new barn and indoor riding arena. Jim explained that based on the information provided by Kevin, the project would require over 2,000 truckloads to do the project. It was noted the Kevin was granted a previous fill request in 2013 for a new barn that never materialized. The Board raised several concerns and questions involving the scope, size and location of the project. Jeremy suggested that the Board give Kevin the opportunity to make a presentation to the Board of Supervisor at an upcoming Board meeting. The Board decided to invite Kevin to a future meeting and declined to act on this request for assistance at this time.

Next, Jim shared that he is not sure of the funding for CTA and noted that three more EQIP Contracts have come in for Montgomery County. The EQIP contracts are for Crosswind, Madison House and Joyce Siegel. Jim is working with Our House to cancel the EQIP contact so that they do not have to repay NRCS.

NEW BUSINESS

New supervisor appointment: Robert Butts appointment to the Soil Conservation District Board was approved by SSCC on June 15, 2017. Mr. Butts should receive a letter from MDA confirming this appointment and instructions to take an oath of office.

Associate Supervisor Invitation: John reached out to Tom Linthicum to extend the invitation offered by the Board of Supervisors for him to become an Associate Supervisor. John extended an invitation to Tom to join the Board for the July meeting.

Cover Crop Spring Certification: Staff reports total acres are at an all-time high and 15,362.1 acres reported for traditional cover crops and 5,492 acres reported for commodity cover crop acres. The total cover crop acres for 2016-17 program year was \$20,854.1

Cover Crop Sign-up for 2017-2018: Sign up began on Wednesday, June 21st, and will run through – July 17th. Cooperators should make appointments for sign up due to the implementation of the new online application process.

MSCD Local Commodity Cover Crop Program: The loss of MDA commodity cover crop program will have a significant impact on the MSCD cover crop program as well as our annual WIP goals. About 1/3 of the enrolled cover crop acreage is planted as a commodity crop. To address this program gap, staff have developed a local Commodity Cover Crop Program that would utilize funding from the Local WQPF Cost Share program. Currently, the MSCD is providing \$5 per acre to any cooperator that signs up for cover crop and has a current SCWQP. The program would redirect the funding for this use and apply for the implementation of the local Commodity Cover Crop Program. Staff believes that if the District were to offer a local cost share option that we could expect about 5,000 acres of enrollment. The staff proposed a cost share amount of \$15.00 per acre. For \$5,000 acres this would mean earmarking about \$75,000 for the commodity cover crop program. Cover crops provide one of the biggest nutrient reductions for a BMP. Endorsing the Local Commodity Cover Crop Program would help the County with the WIP goals by maintaining historical cover crop program acreage. This approach would also tie the WQPF directly to a BMP that will help to continue justifying the need for funding from this source. A draft application that was developed by staff for this program was in the handout packet. Staff recommends that as an eligibility requirement, applicants indicate that they have a current Nutrient Management Plan and Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan. For consistency, the draft application mirrors the same requirements for the State Cover Crop Program. A motion was made by Pam Saul and seconded by Robert Stabler and passed approving the MSCD Commodity Cover Crop Program. Mike said that MSCD needs to work with Jason Keppler and Alisha Mulkey to make sure the information is captured for the bay model.

Summer Intern – Shelly Ingram has requested the help of a summer intern to assist with her equestrian workload as well as to assist with other areas within the District office. A detail description was in the handout packet. The Internship would be for 20 hours per week 8 weeks between June 12 – June 29 July 10 – August 13 for a total of 160 hours. Compensation would be a stipend at the conclusion of the internship at \$11.50 x 160 hours for a total of \$1,840. The source of funds would be from Equine Activity where we currently have a fund balance of \$7,309.03. A motion was made by Pam Saul and seconded by Robert Stabler and passed approving the summer intern to be paid.

Award Nominations: John polled staff for recommendations for Cooperator of the Year for the annual Cooperator's Dinner and two names have risen to the top. Mrs. Leak and Dr. Mess. A profile detailing the cooperators accomplishments were provided in the handout packet. There was a discussion for both

and a motion was made by Pam Saul and seconded by Wade Butler and passed approving Mrs. Leak for the Cooperator of the Year and Dr. Mess for the Equine Conservation Award.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

Jeremy shared the Robert Butz's daughter Charlotte is working for the Office of Agriculture as a summer hire. She is going a great job and she is getting a history lesson on her family.

Pam shared that unfortunately she could not attend the last meeting due to a horse breaking its leg.

CHAIR REPORT

Robert Butz shared that he had attended a Barley and Hops event that was held in Keedysville. He explained that due to the emergence of local breweries there is an increase in barley production. He explained that there is some very interesting research being conducted that will lead to some exciting developments in beer production.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 11:15 and the next scheduled meeting will be held on July 14th at the Ag History Farm Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Walker, Secretary

<u>MEETINGS ATTENDED</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Butz	100%
Butler	100%
Saul	83%
Stabler	92%
*McGrath	100%
*Butts	83%

*Associate Members