

MONTGOMERY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
December 9, 2022

Approved
4/13/23

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) was held Friday, December 9, 2022, in person and virtually on the GoToMeeting platform.

People Present:

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

The Chairman Robert Butz, called the meeting to order at 8:52 am. and John placed the Meeting Agenda on the screen and noted that Agency Reports was the first item to be addressed. Adam Lyon presented the report for the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

Agency Reports:

MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (MDA) – Adam Lyon, the MDA Patuxent Area Coordinator noted that MDA is addressing another outbreak of bird flu avian influenza in Washington County. Adam was happy to report that it was a smaller one house layer operation, much smaller than the ones they dealt with last year. He noted everything is under control and shared the birds are being composted and the virus has been contained.

Adam shared MDA is on its last round of recruitment and noted this recruitment will not impact Montgomery SCD. There were four new employees that came on board for the state and the planner position for St. Mary's is under Adam's jurisdiction. Adam shared there are several positions that need to be filled and noted some regional positions will be included in the next round. Adam mentioned there was a presentation and training on the Soil Health Competitive Fund. There has been updates on the program on the website that includes all associated documentation and a flyer to promote the program. Adam shared once he receives the formal program announcement, he would forward the information and indicated that MDA is asking for the districts support to promote the program. Adam noted the Nutrient Management Training meeting was delayed a month and he did not have any updates other than it would be a virtual meeting and held sometime in January. Adam will provide updates to the board when this information becomes available.

Adam then explained that MDA is working on MS22's and Technician Workbooks and both items will be available when employee evaluations are conducted. Adam requested John to check his calendar to

coordinate a date that works for the employees and him. John will follow up with Adam on scheduling these evaluations.

After Adam presented his report, Jeremy Criss commented he recently learned the names of three candidates being proposed for the next Secretary of Agriculture. Jeremy shared information concerning Kevin Addicks, Buddy Bowling and Chip Bowling that are under consideration, and he mentioned the Taste of Maryland is scheduled for February 2nd and there is an initiative to have Governor Wes Moore attend the event. Tom commented there are others under consideration for the Secretary of Agriculture position Les Richardson and there was some discussion on the other potential candidates.

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).** During the October 24, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee work session several questions were raised that DEP staff did not have all the information. Another T&E Committee work session will be scheduled, and we do not expect this legislation to be scheduled until the new County Council begins after the holidays.
- **Update Bill 13-22 Buildings-Comprehensive Building Decarbonation scheduled for a second Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee on November 3, 2022.** During the November 3, 2022, PHED Committee Work Session, the Committee agreed to exempt all farming uses as defined in Chapter 59 Zoning including Farm Alcohol Production. The Bill was adopted by the County Council on November 29, 2022.
- **Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments.** Bill 18-22 Noise Control- Leaf Removal Equipment was introduced on June 21, 2022, and the Public Hearing was on September 20, 2022. Some of the agricultural groups remitted letters to the County Council opposing the Bill 18-22. A County Council work session will be scheduled after the holidays. We are hearing that some of the County Council members have concerns surrounding the prohibition of gasoline leaf blowers. 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.** During the October 17, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee work session the Bill 24-22 Streets and Roads was discussed. Some of the agricultural groups remitted letters to the County Council opposing the RRAC amendments to Bill 24-22. The Committee agreed to delay the RRAC recommended amendments to Bill 24-22 that would increase the number of RRAC committee members from 7 to 9 and remove the income requirements for farmers. The Committee agreed to assign the RRAC recommended amendments for Bill 24-22 to the Rustic Roads Master Plan Update process that is currently underway including the Planning Board public hearing on November 17, 2022, at 6:00 pm.
- **Rustic Roads Master Plan Update.** A sample press release for the November 17, 2022, Planning Board Public Hearing was provided: [Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Working Draft to be presented to the Planning Board on October 6 - Montgomery Planning](#). Lori Larson presented the power point presentation titled **The Rustic Roads Through the Eyes of the Farmer** that features pictures of Rustic Roads along with testimonials from farmers regarding their views of the Rustic Roads program and MCDOT maintenance and improvements. Unfortunately, the OAG received instructions from Dale Tibbitts, Special Assistant to the County Executive (CE) prohibiting the OAG and by extension, the County Boards and Committees from testifying at the Planning Board Public Hearing. Jeremy remarked it appears the CE is more concerned with Rural and Rustic Roads than the services and needs of the farmer. He also noted the public hearing record has been extended until today, December 9th and

encouraged comments to be submitted if you have them. He mentioned Bob Cissel worked with Eric Spates in providing additional testimony on behalf of the Farm Bureau Board of Directors. He also mentioned the Ag Preservation Board is a state regulated committee and that the comments that were submitted by the APAB were not subject to the instructions issued by the CE's office.

- **Office of Legislative Oversight on the Status of TDRs and BLTs.** The Draft Office of Legislative Oversight-OLO report has been remitted to the County Administrative Officer and comments are due back to OLO staff on January 5, 2023. 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 findings will also show that the imbalance of TDRs in the sending area -4,565 TDRs is more than three times higher than the total TDR capacity in receiving areas-966 TDRs.

The OAG is hopeful that the new Planning Board and new County Council will help to address the imbalance of TDRs that has existed since the program began. Jeremy noted the preliminary draft is a good assessment and report. Tim suggested setting up a meeting with the top developers and explain the dynamics of the program to get their buy-ins. There was an extensive discussion on this matter. The chairman provided a very detailed assessment that TDR's and BLTs face and the District Manager John shared his concerns about a proposed program sunset date for creating new TDRs.

- **UME Staff updates-** Chuck Schuster has been selected to serve at the Acting/Interim Area Extension Director previously held by Rick Walter. The Master Gardeners administrative position to replace Linda Walters was posted a second time and it closed on October 28, 2022, and the applicants are under review. The 4H Agent Associate position that Santana Mays held was posted on September 29, 2022, and it closed on October 28, 2022, and the applicants are under review. Doug provided an update on the position formerly held by Santana Mays and shared the application window never closed and we received more applications. There are 3 applicants scheduled to be interviewed on December 16th. Two of the applicants have Montgomery County 4-H background. The University of Maryland Extension is seeking to fill **ten (10) Tech Extension Educator/Navigator** positions, with one position in the Central Maryland cluster for stationed in either Montgomery or Howard County.
- **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, and the interviews for six candidates are being conducted on December 13 and 16, 2022. The MSCD Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds was posted September 29, 2022, by OHR and only one candidate applied. The OHR posted the position again and it closed on November 11, 2022. Jeremy shared that he recently learned that Missy Donnelly may have an interested candidate for the position.
- **Update on the FY22 Farm to Food Bank-F2FB Program- (An announcement attachment was provided.)** There are 25 applications from participating farmers to the capacity building grants program (up to \$10,000) for the third year of the program. Grant announcements are pending between now and the beginning of the new year 2023. Jeremy explained that last year the funds from the Capacity Building Grants was suspended and the funds was transferred to Direct Purchasing Grant that allowed the program to continue operating. OAG, MCFC, and Manna Food Center went to the county council to get a supplemental appropriation for Direct Purchasing. Jeremy noted the program is going well.
- **Proposal on Corn Stover/Fodder used as an alternative clean energy.** During the summer, the Office of Agriculture-OAG started to hear about an initiative promoted by Johnny Jamison. This initiative would consist of commodity farmers redirecting corn residue/stover/fodder as an alternative clean source of energy potentially limiting the use of these materials for residue management/soil amendments. Jeremy informed the Board that the OAG is not promoting this initiative; and the OAG has agreed to make sure the agricultural community and agricultural groups are aware of this initiative and to conduct a survey for farmer interest etc. An attachment was provided for this item.

- **Update on the New County Council for 2023.** Evan Glass, President; Andrew Friedson, Vice President; The Planning Housing and Economic Development Committee is being split up and there are two new committees: Planning, Housing and Parks Committee (PHPC) and Economic Development Committee (EDC). Jeremy noted that the OAG will be involved in both Committees. *The OAG has since learned it will be assigned to the PHPC, however, when there are items impacting the economic and planning components of agriculture, there will be a joint committee meeting.*
- **Upcoming Meetings and Events:** Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors-**December 8, 2022**; Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-**December 9, 2022**; Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-**December 12, 2022**- Agricultural Advisory Committee-**January 17, 2023.**

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT -The Chairman, Robert Butz 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 Tim McGrath and passed approving the October 14, 2022, Board of Supervisors Minutes.

The Chairman then invited Karen to present the financial reports. Karen responded and noted because there was no meeting in November, there are 2 reports for approval. She shared that both the checkbook and bank statements for October and November have been reconciled. The October MDA report reflects the two payments under Association Dues. MDA provides cost share for both MASCD (\$1,100) and NACD (\$700) towards Annual Association Dues. The actual amounts for Association Dues are \$2,750 for MASCD and \$775 for NACD. Funds from other district accounts were used to address the difference. MSCD normally supports NACD on the Gold level which is \$775-1,775. FY23 will be the first year MSCD in several years where we will have a candidate to nominate for MASCD Teacher of the Year Award, Karen wanted to make sure the dues reflected a contribution towards the Teacher of the Year Award. She further detailed that in November she paid the invoice for the audit and noted that it is reflected on the MDA November report. She mentioned that all Supervisors have received their payment. In acknowledging that Linda's attendance was virtual, Karen shared that her payment would be mailed. Next, Karen shared the Envirothon has submitted its annual invoice for the Envirothon dues and noted funds are available. She mentioned there is plenty of funding in the Envirothon account and shared a higher level of support can be provided. She recommended approval to file the reports for both October and November and invited John to share any additional information on the Envirothon donation request.

John shared information concerning the FY23 Envirothon Dues. Karen Miller, MASCD Envirothon Coordinator indicated that expenses for this year (FY24) will increase drastically because the National Envirothon competition will be held in Canada in July of 2023. Karen Miller, the program director has requested if Districts are able to give more, to please consider increasing the amount they normally give for dues.

This request led to a lengthy discussion on how the funds are administered and the reflection on the Edward Byrd Foundation who is the biggest contributor to the Envirothon program. Doug shared the Envirothon program is a good program and believes that agriculture should be a program component. John explained that the program's curriculum is mandated at the National level and was established as an environmental awareness/education program, and not specifically for agriculture. The discussion evolved into the development of a letter, either to the State or National Envirothon program leads to consider modifying the program to include an annual specific agricultural component and suggested providing a more substantial contribution to the program if an ag component could be added to the program.

John shared that he would do his best to address the agriculture component being added to the Envirothon Program. Both Jeremy and Doug agreed to work with John on composing a letter to the National Envirothon for them to consider this as an opportunity to add agriculture as a program component/discipline.

All Supervisors are in favor to support the program as a platinum sponsor \$1,500 but would like to see a regular agricultural component. The Chairman commented that the recent winning Envirothon team warrants a platinum sponsorship. John shared the details of the effort MSCD goes into each year to make the program a success. Montgomery Envirothon Teams regularly scored high ranking in the state Envirothon Competition. The Chairman requested one motion to file the MDA Financial Report and provide a \$1,500 sponsorship for FY23 Envirothon. The Chairman noted that John is in the best position to address a more substantial donation to the program. The letter to the National Envirothon did not require a motion. However, for the official record, Karen requested clarity on the chairman's requested one motion approval to file the MDA Financial Reports and provide a \$1,500 sponsorship for FY23 Envirothon. For the record, a motion was made by Doug Tregoning and seconded by Linda Lewis and passed approving to file the MDA Financial Reports for October and November and to provide Platinum support \$1,500 for the Envirothon program.

DISTRICT ACTIVITIES REPORT AND PROGRAM UPDATE – The Activities Report for this meeting includes an expanded timeframe reflecting activity for both October & November. Sam shared the district has received 2 Requests for Assistance, several conservation plans are in progress for approval and noted there are several conservation plans for approval for the Executive Session. Sam shared that two of the conservation plans for approval are EQIP contracts. Sam explained that none of the conservation plans submitted for approval have any issues and he is recommending approval for all plans. Sam shared that FSA has a new employee in the Montgomery office and shared some other federal program items as a part of his report. Doug shared information on the FSA new employee and noted his credentials and stated he would be short term. John brought to the Supervisors attention the outstanding year the District had with completing new and updated conservation plans. John noted that the current Activities Report reflects 67 approved plans and with the approval of this month's plans the year-end will be over 70. John shared the Karen said in past year's year-end conservation plans completed were about 40 something plans. This year was an outstanding year. John commented on the MSCD Staff planner performance and the outstanding achievements the two new MDA planners have made. In addition, he noted there have been strives in the engineering area resulting in an increased number of installed BMPs. All noted that MSCD has a good team. A motion was made by Robert Butts and second by Tim McGrath and passed approving the October and November Activities Report.

Sam then covered important federal program information and noted that January 13th is the application deadline for EQIP/AMA and R&CD programs. NRCS is doing a pilot ranking project for EQIP application and are having Howard and Montgomery compete. He provided details outlined in the pilot project and noted it will be more like an Extended Local Workgroup. He shared that it may replace the Local Workgroup, but the proposed changes would include elements of the Local Workgroup but be better and easier. He then provided the status on NRCS open positions and shared the employment openings do not directly impact Montgomery SCD. The current acting state conservationist is Eric McTaggart from Headquarters, and he shared the replacement job status for Ramon Ortiz and Assistant State Conservationist, Robert McAfee. The NRCS employee reassignment was noted, and next the Chairman had John present the District Manager's report.

DISTRICT MANAGERS REPORT: John indicated he would cover some of the more important items in his report but noted the entire report would be incorporated into the minutes.

NRCS Unfunded Cooperative Agreement. Nearly 3 years after providing comments on the NRCS UCA, NRCS provided a response in the form of a new UCA for the District to consider. John explained that one of our comments from 3 years ago involved a reference in the UCA to an MOU between MDA and MASCD, that

contained elements committing the District to, despite Districts not being either MDA or MASCD. We explained that each District is a separate political subdivision of the State, and not under MDA or MASCD officially. Our comment was either remove the reference to the MOU in the UCA or have NRCS execute a separate MOU with the Districts. Attorneys for NRCS agreed, which led to NRCS drafting and the District approved an MOU between NRCS and MSCD earlier this year. The District Board however as a part of the action taken to approve the MOU, also indicated that until such a time our comments on the UCA were adequately addressed, the UCA would remain unsigned.

On November 11th, John met with NRCS State Office personnel and went over the new UCA drafted that incorporated our comments into the document. We went through each item and discussed it thoroughly. NRCS followed up this meeting with a cleaned-up copy of the UCA and now John feels very comfortable with recommending the Board approve the UCA. This document is much improved, and it reflects a more cooperative environment between the District and NRCS. It is John's recommendation that the Board approve the UCA. Before making the motion on the UCA, the Chairman noted John's effort in getting things right and he wanted to acknowledge John's hard work and dedication. John's efforts resulted in NRCS providing scheduled training for MSCD staff on applicable federal laws. The UCA situation was a reminder for Jeremy Criss about an experience he had with a federal NRCS representative to negotiate to continue receiving office space at no charge. Jeremy shared details of a directive he recently learned that there is a federal mandate for FSA and NRCS staff to be co-located in the same office, and he provided details on the requirements for IT and storage space. John follow up with details he learned on the FSA leasing situation and noted at this current moment nothing has changed. The open area concept is a future projection. The Chairman requested a motion for to sign the updated UCA. A motion was made by Robert Butts and second by Doug Tregoning and passed approving to sign the UCA agreement with District and NRCS.

MASCD Survey - Supervisors should have received via email, a MASCD membership survey. Through the survey, Jen Nelson is asking Districts what are MASCD's key priorities when looking for sponsorships and grants. Ms. Nelson is looking for feedback on supervisory orientation trainings and the supervisor's handbook. She is also looking for methods and frequency of communication to the supervisors, how do you want to engage with potential sponsors, what type of grants or funding should MASCD seek out, some suggestions, operations funding for districts, employee training and development, implementation funding, promoting agriculture and conservation to the general public. Ms. Nelson encouraged discussion at the board meetings for the supervisors. She would like this completed by the end of the year. A copy of the survey was provided in your supervisor packet and John wanted to ensure that he had covered all bases. The Supervisor responded that they were good and would complete the survey before the end of the year.

Draft WQPC Annual Report - This is a comprehensive report detailing the work of the District last year, highlighting our successes as well as challenges, progress with our WIP goals, accomplishments with conservation planning, cover crop program and BMP implementation along with both the operating and capital program financial summaries for FY22. John provided a copy of his draft report in the supervisor's packets. It is John's hope to finalize this annual report and transmit to DEP before the end of this calendar year. This report normally is the trigger for our \$70,000 allocation that funds our commodity cover crop program as well as our local cost share assistance program. The \$70,000 dollar payment is associated with the FY23 program year.

One thing John is particularly proud of, is that with each reporting year, we continue to show a diminishing fund balance carryover from the previous year. When John started as DM, this fund balance exceeded \$60,000. Within this report, our fund balance sits at about \$18,000, but we have pending projects that these funds are targeted for. John asked Supervisors to take some time to look over the report, as he would love to wrap this up before the end of the calendar year. The Chairman inquired about the WQPC Incentive funding for cover crop and John mentioned the payout for the program increased from \$55K to \$65K from last year's program. We believe the shift from MDA's traditional program to the District's commodity program is an outcome from the current situation in Ukraine. Acreage shifting from MDA's program to the District program forced the

District to reevaluate the MSCD commodity program. As you know, this year's District program places a restriction on eligible acres enrolled. John always looks for avenue to use the funding that will best address our WIP Goals. The report doesn't require a motion, but John wanted to make the Supervisors aware of the draft and address any questions they may have. Doug asked if there is a mechanism to get additional funding and John responded yes and that mechanism was used to get the additional funding for the engineering position. Additional funding might be difficult as so many other entities compete for these funds. It may require an increase in fees to get additional funding, which may be a tough ask of DEP and the CE.

Pax Partnership Ann. Meeting (12/13, 14, 16, 19, 20) WSSC is still trying to find a window of opportunity to hold the annual Patuxent Partnership annual meeting. A doodle poll has been sent the Executive Board members and supporting staff. The proposed dates are 12/13, 14, 16, 19, 20). Currently, John is the standing Vice Chair for the TAC and next year, John will be the Chair of the TAC. If Robert can't attend any of these days, please let me know and will see if we can get another Supervisor to sit in. Not really any big ag issues on the agenda, most involve updates on projects and initiatives the TAC has been involved with. John and Robert will address this item offline.

MASCD Winter Meeting (Annapolis/In Person TBD) - The MASCD Winter Meeting will be held in January/beginning of February 2023 and Jen is working on setting the meeting location. Jen suggested a happy hour for the winter meeting. Mike Mason shared that there are 44 new legislators coming in. The happy hour can be held at the local restaurant. A discussion was held regarding what type of event should be held. There was support for a happy hour, but it should be reserved for elected officials. A lunch an learn could be held for aids and staff. The choice will be determined by the Executive Committee. John shared with Doug that the event is similar to the Farm Bureau event.

Legislation Tracker/Visits 2023 Session – John is beginning to get organized for the upcoming legislative session. There are nearly 44 new senators and delegates in this year's session, and John fears it may be a very active year. Last year he reviewed and tracked over 70 House Bills and 40 Senate Bills during the session. He is getting his legislation tracker ready for this year and will begin to add bills to it as they drop. As with past sessions, John's plan is to provide weekly updates on legislation and try to point out bills that are either good or create issues for ag or conservation. This tracker helps John to prepare for legislative visits. It appears right now; we will be returning to Annapolis for the first time in two years and he will be scheduling visits. Not having dates for the meeting creates its own set of challenges. I know it's hard for you to plan if you can attend if you don't know the dates but will get this information to you as soon as I have it. With having two fairly new supervisors, I think it would be good to pair them up with our more experienced supervisors for these visits. John is expecting a lot of bills to match the campaign promises. Tom shared that it could be a quiet session this year with new elected officials getting up to speed but next it's expected to explode.

Cultivating Conservation Workshop -12/15, 5-9 pm. On December 15th U of MD extension is holding a Cultivating Conservation Workshop for members of underserved communities. Extension has asked all the ag support agencies to participate in the workshop and present to the group what each agencies does and how it helps to support the Ag Community. John will be presenting on behalf of the District on 12/15. We have helped promote this event by utilizing our social media outlets as well as in our December newsletter.

Old Business

Izzak Walton League Lead Reclamation Update - Over the past few months, the District has been working closely with the Izzak Walton League concerning a lead reclamation project that is needed in and around their shooting range area. The impact of the project will result in a large land disturbance activity and will require the removal of a significant part of a forested area, that will be reclaimed back to an agricultural use as hay land. Given this land disturbance is over 40,000 sq feet, the League had to submit an NOI to MDE. MDE has provided them specific guidance for the Erosion and Sediment Control Plan. The League is also working on obtaining the final approvals from MNCPPC for forest conservation. John has been in contact and met with DPS about this project and

discussed with them, the prospect of the District providing the erosion and sediment control and oversight for this project. DPS indicated that they preferred the District provide the technical assistance for this project.

Following up on that meeting, John requested the League and their consultants to provide to the District a draft Erosion and Sediment Control Plan. They submitted the plan to the District in October and our staff reviewed and provided comments as well amendments to the plan. On 11/17/2022, the District, League and their consultants met on site, walked the project area, discussed amendments and reached agreement on the final erosion and sediment control requirements.

At this point, John would like to recommend to the Board, that the District formally approves the technical assistance request by the League for the District to oversee this project. I believe given the environmental issues and the nature of the property, that we are the most appropriate organization to assist the League. Given we are far outside the growing season, this project will likely not start up until late spring or summer 2023. John recommends we approve their request for assistance. After John shared the details associated with the project, a motion was made by Doug Tregoning and second by Robert Butts and passed approving the District to provide assistance for the Izzak Walton League in the lead reclamation project.

Follow up Nut. Man. Cert Req. MASCD to MDA - In your packets is a letter that David Plummer, Steve Darcey and John helped to draft on behalf of MASCD. During the General Business meeting at MASCD this past summer, the association voted in support of sending this letter to MDA asking for greater flexibility with the timing of when the form needs to be submitted for program eligibility. Just providing a copy for your FYI.

Summary of 10/25 MASCD BOD Meeting - In your packets is a summary of the October 25th Board of Directors meeting. John did not go over each item but if there was an item needing additional information, he offered to provide additional comments. Having no additional questions, the old business item as addressed.

4th Grade Class Presentation – Darnestown Elementary 12/20 - Just a reminder that Kat and I will be presenting to 4th grade students at Darnestown Elementary on Dec 20th. There will be a follow up in the Spring with a field trip with these students for a more hands on activity.

Cover Crop Fall Certification Update - John had J. to provide some observations and information concerning this year's cover crop program and fall certifications. Listed below are J.'s observations.

- Regarding program payments from MDA, he said please understand that fall partial payments and spring payments can take weeks if not months to appear in the bank if using direct deposit or the mailbox if requesting a check. Generally, the sooner we get the reporting, the sooner we can process the paperwork and get it sent to MDA.
- J indicated that this fall he found more errors in reporting by our farmers than usual. Some of his observations are that farmers have reported acres that aren't planted, or the planting method is incorrect.
- He has found some fields that were seeded but incorporation was not completed. Aerial seeding (seeding without incorporation) is allowed but it must occur before crop harvest and by October 10th for most cover crop varieties.
- Manure is allowed on cover crop fields if provided for in the nutrient management plan. Manure use must also be reported when submitting fall certifications for cover crop. Fields have been found with manure that was not reported.
- Most cover crop fields had good germination this fall, especially those planted by October 15th. Aerial applications of seed into soybeans do not look so good. This is fairly typical from what has been observed over the past several years.
- J indicates that total acres are significantly lower. Less than 12,000 total acres of commodity and traditional planted this year. We had 15,000 acres combined last winter. We were at 20,000 acres back

in the 2016-2017 cover crop season. We warned MDA this summer at MASCD that acres this year would be down, they didn't seem to be concerned. I am sure this trend is happening statewide.

There was an open dialogue about cover crop planting methods and results. The Chairman shared some history on the cover crop program and noted changes have happened. He noted the multispecies did not use to be an eligible crop to plant. There was a lengthy discussion on this matter and noted that next spring we can address more changes and different methods that still provide a stand and benefit to meet the WIP Goals. John noted the acres enrolled this year were considerably lower.

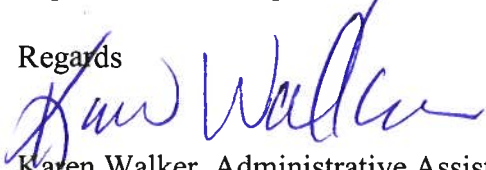
Next Round of BMP Verification starts 12/5 -Just as a matter of information, our next round of BMP verification started this week. We expect Jillian Pyle to be with us over the next 6 weeks to conduct this round of verification. Our staff will be assisting her in pulling the files, arranging for site visits, and accompanying her on the visits whenever possible.

Chairman Correspondence: The Chairman, Robert Butz did not have any correspondence to share, and he thanked John for the District Manager's Report. Before the meeting adjourned, Tim met Pam Hosimer who attended the Farm Bureaus and she needed to know if there is a Latino interpreter for Agriculture. Tim asked if the University or the County could provide her with some assistants. Because Natalia Salazar is bilingual and works for Extension, everyone was surprised by the request as Pam works under the Extension.

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 January 13, 2023, 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

