

DRAFT
MONTGOMERY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
MINUTES
July 14, 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, July 14, 2017

People Present:

Robert Butz, Chair
Wade Butler, Vice Chair
Pam Saul, Treasurer
Robert Stabler, Board Member
Robert Butts, Board Member
Tim McGrath, Associate Supervisor
Tom Linthicum, Associate Supervisor
Jeremy Criss, Office of Agriculture (OAG)
John Zawitoski, Office of Agriculture (OAG/MSCD)
Mike Scheffel, Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA)
James Myers, District Conservationist
Karen Walker, Administrative Assistant

Prior to the Board of Supervisors officially convening, the board members interviewed 5 candidates for the District Manager position in a closed door executive session. The regular Board Meeting was call to order 11:15 am.

AGENCY REPORTS

MDA

Mike provided the report for MDA and noted that the employee evaluation for Paul Meyer has been completed. Mike shared that MDA is very happy with the work that Paul provides and knows that Paul is a valued staff member.

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 Position and any follow up from the interviews.
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. *Jeremy doesn't understand why the council is not acting on the ZTA. Jeremy noted that this ZTA has an impact on Wade Butler and several other farmers with pending projects. Wade noted a concern that the longer this ZTA drags out, the greater the concern for modifications*

that might be harmful to ag. Both MAP and Agriculture Advisory agree with the Office of Agriculture on the need to move this ZTA along and Jeremy will be reaching out to the Council to find out when this ZTA will be moved to the front burner.

3. Please see the 2017 Farm Tour and Harvest Sale Brochures for July 22 & 23, 2017. Jeremy indicated that following the meeting that Robert Butts can pick up his farm tour signs and brochures at the Office of Ag.
4. Council Bill 23-17 Animal Control-Performance Animal-Violations- This Bill was introduced on June 27, 2017 to address complaints and concerns of animal cruelty during circus events in the County and the public hearing is July 18, 2017 at 1:30 pm. The Bill currently provides an exemption for domestic cats, dogs, cattle, swine sheep, goats, horses, donkeys and mules. A Press Release for the Bill 23-17 suggested the Bill 23-17 would not impact the City of Gaithersburg where the County Agricultural Center is located. The OAG asked Extension Educator-David Gordon to review the bill and recommend if additional domestic animals need to be added to the exemption. David recommended all the animals that are listed in the 2017 County Agricultural Fair catalog. *Robert Stabler indicated that the bill is unnecessary as Animal Control is responsible for handling these matters.*
5. The County Department of General Services (DGS) has asked the OAG for a list of materials that farmers frequently salvage from miscellaneous sites that could be used to help with their farming operations. The DGS will cross reference the list and schedule an on-site visit for the Site 2 property in White Oak (Former WSSC Sludge Composting Facility). There are several large steel buildings that could be disassembled and reassembled into smaller agricultural buildings on farms. *Jeremy will reach out to see if he can get a listing of the kinds of materials that are available. Tom shared information regarding his knowledge of the types of buildings on this site. This information could help farmers understand what is there on site before they go and participate in an auction. Jeremy responded that it was his understanding there would be no auction.*
6. There is a growing concern from the Montgomery Countryside Alliance (MCA) and Sugarloaf Citizens Association (SCA) questioning how the County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) has approved applications for Agricultural Tourism events (Farm Weddings) on certain farms in the Agricultural Reserve. The question surrounds how these land uses have been approved based who owns the properties and whether the owners are the farmers engaged in farming. In determining whether a property and the use is allowed as part of Farming, the DPS evaluates the property regardless of who owns it. A property that is agriculturally assessed and agriculturally zoned is legally considered a farm by the DPS. There is a meeting scheduled with Executive staff on July 21, 2017 to discuss this growing concern of the MCA and SCA. A response letter is pending and it will reference the MNCPPC study on Agritourism that the County Council approved as part of the FY18 Operating Budget in the amount of \$50,000. Executive staff will participate in the working group assigned as part of the Agritourism study. Stay Tuned!
7. The Council President Roger Berliner introduced a resolution on Tuesday asking the County Council to formally take a stand opposing a new Potomac River bridge crossing. The proposed project would include extending Route 28 in Virginia to the portion of the Intercounty Connector (ICC) that is in Montgomery County. Council President Berliner's memo went on to state: "Montgomery County has long opposed another Potomac River

bridge crossing from Northern Virginia to Montgomery County because of the severe negative impacts such a project would have on our environment, our Agricultural Reserve, established residential neighborhoods and for promoting sprawl.” Stay Tuned!

8. The MCFB sponsored a Meet your farmer event for the 14th Legislative District at Waredaca on June 20, 2017. Senator Craig Zucker and Delegates Luedtke, Kaiser, and Queen all attended along with 35 farmers/residents. Everyone that attended felt it was a good meeting and information sharing opportunity. The MCFB is working to schedule a similar event for the 15 Legislative District. Stay tuned!

Jeremy noted that OAG has an intern, Charlotte Butz and she has provided a great service to the organization. Jeremy wants to compensate her, but he no longer has the mechanism to process a payment for her as an intern. There was a big discussion on this matter and Robert Butz noted that Charlotte was not looking to be compensated and a monetary payment was not required. To avoid any conflict Robert Butz abstained from voting on this matter. After the discussion, a motion was made by Robert Stabler and seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving to provide Charlotte Butz \$599 as a token of appreciation for the work she has provided to OAG.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

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

Council Proclamation-Nat. Farmers Market wk-July 25, 2017 @ 9:30 pm

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

MC Agricultural Fair Begins-August 11, 2017

Agricultural Leaders Luncheon-Monday August 14, 2017

SECRETARY/ TREASURER’S REPORT

The minutes of the June 23rd meeting were received and reviewed and there were no noted changes. A motion was made by Pam Saul and was seconded by Robert Stabler and passed approving the June Minutes.

Next, Karen shared that she has not received the bank statement and therefore the financial report was not available for the Supervisors to review. This report will be provided for Supervisors to review at the September 8th meeting. Karen noted that the MDA accounts had been zeroed out and that the District has received the 1st quarter FY18 MDA payment. Because the Board of Supervisors will not convene until September 8th after the 2017 Cooperators Dinner, Karen requested the Board’s approval to make the necessary arrangements for the Cooperators Dinner. Karen shared that she spoke with Robert Butts and John Z and together they are coordinating the necessary items for the event. Simply Fresh the caterer from last year’s dinner continues to provide excellent food and service and therefore will again be working on the menu for this year’s event. The caterer cost last year was approximately \$3,300 and Karen will research the cost of the tent, table and chair rentals. A motion was made by Pam Saul and second by Robert Stabler and passed approving an initial \$5,000 budget and spending authority to make the necessary arrangements in advance of the 2017 Cooperators Dinner.

APPROVALS, RATIFICATIONS AND REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

The activities report was in the handout packet and Jim noted that there is 1 conservation plan for the Boards approval. Jim noted that there are no issues associated with the conservation plan and he recommended the Board's approval. A motion was made by Pam Saul, seconded by Wade Butler and passed approving the conservation plan.

Jim provided information from the report and noted that activity involving the removal of trees had been completed and inspected. Jim went into details on a High Tunnel that was listed on the report. Jim also shared that he will be volunteering for the International Envirothon event.

NEW BUSINESS

FY18 MDA MOU between MSCD and the Maryland Department of Agriculture. Specific attention was paid to Attachment A which lists the Scope of Work identifying goals, priorities, and resources. John shared that he is concerned because there are several areas where goals for certain structural BMPs have increased significantly. The question was raised on how does the District meet these goals in an environment where cost sharable assistance is not sufficient? Especially on the costlier items like, Roof Run off, Waste Storage Structures and Greenhouse Runoff and Recapture. There was a lengthy discussion on the MOU and Mike Scheffel shared that MDA understands the District's concerns over goals and that the District could not be held accountable for not meeting the goals because of insufficient resources to assist farmers. In light of this discussion, a motion was made by Pam Saul and seconded by Wade Butler and passed approving the chair, Robert Butz to sign off on the FY18 MOU between Montgomery Soil Conservation District and the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

FY18 Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund - Agreement between the District and Maryland Department of Agriculture. This funding is being provided for technical assistance, cost-shared administrative assistance, and operating costs to assist in meeting their Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) as part of the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process and John recommended signing the agreement. A motion was made by Robert Stabler and seconded by Robert Butts and passed approving the chair, Robert Butz to sign off on the FY18 Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Trust Fund.

MASCD – Committee Chair- One committee term is expiring and John wanted to bring this to the Board's attention to see if anyone might have interest in serving. If anyone is interested John would like to include their name in nomination at the MASCD summer meeting. Hearing no volunteers, no recommendation for serving in this capacity for MASCD would be forwarded to the central area nomination committee

BMP Verification (July 25th – Aug 4th) - We have been provided an opportunity to begin the BMP verification process. Zawitoski noted that on July 20th there would be a conference call with Watershed Implementation and MSCD staff. The purpose of the conference call is to go over what assistance the District would need to provide to MDA reviewing staff. The Board asked that District Manager assign staff to assist the MDA verifier in locating the installed BMPs on farms.

OLD BUSINESS

Oath of Office – John indicated that he had made the arrangements for Robert Stabler and Robert Butts for take their oath of office at the Court house later today at 1:30. He indicated that he had reached out to Louise Lawrence and informed her of this for her files and information.

Cover Crop –The last day to sign up for this program is July 17th. Because MDA is not providing cost share for Commodity Cover Crop, MSCD is working with MDA on a process that we will need to employ for capturing information for receiving WIP goal credit for MSCD Commodity Cover Crop Program. This will ensure that the acreage covered under the local program is properly credited.

MASCD Endowment Action Item Update - Karen provided a list of items received for our Basket of Pride. She indicated that the basket is looking great and that it will be ready ahead of the deadline established by MASCD.

Kevin Stanley – Update/Meeting with the Board- As a follow up from the June meeting, John proposed inviting Mr. Stanley to the September Board meeting. John felt that Mr. Stanley should have the opportunity to present the agricultural need for an earth fill project, to explain his past requests involving fill and to make a request for technical assistance. Jeremy made a suggestion that since Rich Brush had not responded to the District’s letter, this might provide an opportunity for Rick to meet with the Board. John indicated he would reach out and invite Rick to this meeting.

CHAIR REPORT

Robert Butz had nothing to share with the Board.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 and the next scheduled meeting will be held on September 8th 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%
Butts	83%
*McGrath	100%
*Linthicum	100%

*Associate Members