

DRAFT
MONTGOMERY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
MINUTES
October 16, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) was held at the Ag History Farm Park, 18410 Muncaster Road, Derwood, MD Monday, October 16, 2017.

People Present:

Robert Butz, Chair
Wade Butler, Vice Chair
Pam Saul, Treasurer
Robert Butts, Board Member
Tim McGrath, Associate Supervisor
Tom Linthicum, Associate Supervisor
Jeremy Criss, Office of Agriculture (OAG)
John Zawitoski, District Manager
James Myers, District Conservationist
Karen Walker, Office Services Coordinator

The Board Meeting was called to order 8:37 am. This was an abbreviated meeting to allow the Board of Supervisors to participate in the MDA Legislative Tour that was scheduled to begin at 10:00 am. There were no agency reports scheduled to be presented.

SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT

The Minutes of the September 8th meeting were received and reviewed and there were no noted changes. A motion was made by Pam Saul and was seconded by Robert Butts and passed approving the September Minutes.

Next, Karen shared that financial reports were in the handout packet. The bank statement and checkbook matched. Karen also noted that the annual MDA audit was completed and that MSCD is good standing. Included in the handout packet was the financial breakdown on the 2017 and 2016 Cooperators Dinner. Although the 2017 sponsor donations increased, the expenditure for this year's dinner were higher. This year's dinner included expenditures for a tent rental and portable restroom facilities that the 2016 Cooperators Dinner did not require. In an effort to contain costs, the Board encouraged staff to consider locations for the 2018 Cooperators Dinner that could provide cover in the event of rain and restroom facilities.

Next Karen presented an invoice from the National Association Conservation District (NACD) and an invitation to attend the Maryland Agricultural Education Foundation, Inc. (MAEF) 29th Annual Banquet and Auction. Karen shared that in the past MSCD has signed up for NACD on the Silver Level (\$501-\$774) and it would cost only 1 dollar more to be at the Gold Level (\$775-

\$1,775). There was some discussion on the different support levels for NACD but everyone agreed on the Gold Level of support. In reference to MAEF event, the District has paid the cost for a Supervisor and spouse to attend the Banquet. The cost is \$70 per person. Karen shared that John lives close to where the event will be held and noted that it may be a nice event for the new District Manager to represent MSCD. After the discussion on both matters, an all-inclusive motion was made by Wade Butler and seconded by Pam Saul to pay NACD \$775 for the Gold Level, purchase two tickets for the MAEF Annual Banquet and Auction, approval of the September Financial Report and for the Treasurer, Pam Saul to sign off on the MDA Annual Audit.

APPROVALS, RATIFICATIONS AND REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE

The activities report was in the handout packet and Jim noted that there are several requests for assistance (RFA) and one conservation plan. The conservation plan was for CREP renewal. There are no issues with any of the RFA or the conservation plan and Jim recommended the Board's approval. A motion was made by Robert Butts and seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving all RFA's and the conservation plan.

Next, Jim shared details on items on the Activities Report. The MSCD staff is involved with the Close Encounters with Agriculture that is scheduled for 3 weeks and he noted that a grass waterway for an operator has been installed and work has begun on an Ag Chem building for another operator. Jim shared that on the Activities Report Mel is listed as not having any conservation plans completed; however his records indicate that Mel had completed 3 conservation plans for Montgomery County and 4-5 conservation plans for Howard County. Jim shared that the application deadline for all NRCS programs (EQIP, AMA etc.) is December 15th. Lastly, Jim shared that he plans on retiring at the end of the year. All the Board members congratulated Jim on his scheduled retirement. Jim noted that currently there is a hiring freeze so his position will more than likely not be filled and a person will be detailed as Acting District Conservationist.

After Jim's report John provided follow up for the situation with Asbury Methodist. John, Jim and Brandy met with staff representing the City of Gaithersburg and the Asbury Methodist. It was a very productive meeting and an agreement has been worked out that will provide the avenue for the Soil Conservation and Water Quality plan to be used in lieu of a formal sediment and erosion control plan. The project will still require a site plan but this plan will be provided by the Asbury Methodist engineer. The City of Gaithersburg will review the plan, before the plan is submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval.

NEW BUSINESS

MAEF 29th Banquet and Auction – This item was covered on the financial report and approval was granted to purchase two tickets.

Revised Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund-The Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund was revised to include the salary increase for the District Manager position. John provided the detail information on the change of the agreement. A motion was made by Wade Butler and seconded by Robert Butts and passed approving the MSCD Chair to sign off on the revised agreement.

November Board of Supervisors Meeting- The regular scheduled Board meeting falls on Veterans Day which is a holiday for MDA, NRCS and Montgomery County Government. The November Board meeting will be held on November 17th. John provided a reminder that the MASCD Board of Directors Meeting is scheduled for October 24th. Both John and Robert Butz shared information for the Focus Group Meeting. John also shared details of the MDA Legislative Tour that is scheduled to start after the Board Meeting. The tour is scheduled to go to Waters Orchard, Sunny Ridge and end up at Waredaca Farm. John discussed the current progress that has been made with regard to nutrient reductions in context with the WIP 2025 goals. While ahead on phosphorus and sediment reductions, nitrogen is lagging behind and represents the biggest issue for farmers and the other stakeholders in achieving nutrient reduction for nitrogen. Today's scheduled tour will provide the opportunity to share with the legislators the challenges the agriculture community faces especially with limited funding. In the meeting, there was a big discussion on the Maryland Agriculture Cost Share (MACS) Program and how it has impacted what operators can do. Jeremy acknowledged and wanted to thank both Karen and Jackie for their efforts in coordinating the MDA Legislative Tour.

CHAIR REPORT

Robert Butz said that he had nothing to share but Jeremy said that he had a couple of items that he wanted to share with the Board of Supervisors. Jeremy has been working with OHR on trying to fill John's former position. There is disagreement on how the position should be classified. Presently, OHR has recommended downgrading the position to be reclassified two grades lower than it is currently classified. Jeremy noted that this recommendation was made primarily because the position currently did not provide any direct supervisory responsibilities, although it has in the past and currently provides some supervisory oversight of OAG staff. He noted that one thing was for certain, the employee classification system is not made to be easy. MSCD still has two positions: J. Harne and Shelly Ingram that have to be reclassified. Next, Jeremy shared that the PHED Committee is scheduled to meet on November 27th on ZTA 17-06 (Agricultural Zone – TDRs requirements and felt that Wade should attend the meeting. Jeremy noted that a TDR doesn't have to be retained for a farm tenant dwelling. Next Jeremy followed up on the Circus Bill from the last meeting. Robert Butz said that the agriculture community has to make a firm statement when it involves animals. Jeremy shared that Todd Greenstone and Randy Stabler have reached out to him expressing their frustration about guard rails that are being installed on Zion Road. Jeremy asked if anyone is having problems with guard rails to let him know. Also, Jeremy requested that if anyone thinking about building an agriculture structure to please let him know before moving forward. Change to county code have created situations where certain agricultural structures would require building permits. He is hopeful that he can work with DPS to change the code that would allow greater flexibility for building ag structures without requiring a building permit. Lastly, Jeremy shared that there will be a tour in November in Loudon County with County DPS staff to show how ag structures are used for agritourism. Loudon County's code provides greater flexibility allowing ag structures and structures used for ag entertainment to be constructed without building permits.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 9:46 and the November Board of Supervisors Meeting will be on November 17th at the Agriculture History Farm Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Walker, Office Services Coordinator

<u>MEETINGS ATTENDED</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE</u>
Butz	100%
Butler	100%
Saul	75%
Stabler	83%
Butts	75%
*McGrath	100%
*Linthicum	100%
*Associate Members	