

DRAFT  
MONTGOMERY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING  
MINUTES  
September 8, 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 Friday, September 8, 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)  
Mike Scheffel, Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA)  
Chuck Schuster, UMD Extension  
John Zawitoski, District Manager  
James Myers, District Conservationist  
Karen Walker, Office Services Coordinator

The regular Board Meeting was call to order 9:00 am.

**AGENCY REPORTS**

**MDA**

Mike provided the report for MDA and he noted that Cover Crop Training for Fall Certification is scheduled for September 12<sup>th</sup> at Prince George's Soil Conservation District. Mike noted that MSCD staff has signed up to attend the training. Pam shared that she has taken the Oath of Office to be a Montgomery Soil Conservation District Supervisor. Next Mike shared that MDA and NRCS will have 3 partnership meetings that will be held regionally. The purpose of the meeting is to provide information from conservation partner leadership/management to field office staff, get feedback on issues as well as concerns and collaborate with conservation partners. Attendance for this meeting is mandatory for State staff and grant funded positions while attendance of other District staff is strongly encouraged.

**UMD Extension**

Chuck Schuster provided the report for UMD Extension and shared that the University is in the hiring process to replace the second Frederick County Extension Educator. (The position was formerly held by Terry Poole.) This will be in addition to the new Tenure Track Educator, Matt Morris, who is focusing on agronomy, livestock and weed related issues. Both educators will have pesticide and nutrient management certificates. Chuck also mentioned that David Martin retired and the University will be hiring for the Nutrient Management position in Frederick County. In the meantime, Amanda is still on detail until the position is filled.

## FSA

Although Missy Donnelly was not available to attend the Board of Supervisors Meeting, the report listed below was in the Supervisors handout packet. This information is incorporated into the Minutes as detailed below:

*Montgomery/Howard Farm Service Agency (FSA) is currently working on nine re-enrolled Conservation Reserve Program Contracts. The deadline for approval of contracts is September 15<sup>th</sup> and the FSA and NRCS are working frantically to get paperwork submitted in a timely manner.*

*A Marketing Year Average (MYA) price for wheat, barley and oats was announced on June 29<sup>th</sup>, resulting in a Price Loss Coverage (PLC) payment rate of \$1.61 per bushel for 2016 wheat and \$0.34 per bushel for 2016 oats. There is no PLC payment for 2016 barley. To be eligible for these payments, producers had to elect the PLC program for their wheat and oat bases during the enrollment process in 2014. Prices for the Agricultural Risk Coverage – County (ARC-CO) for 2016 have yet to be announced.*

*With the sporadic weather that we've been experiencing, it's a nice time to remind producers about the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP). The program provides assistance to eligible producers for livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather. For 2017, losses must occur on or after Jan. 1, 2017 and no later than 60 calendar days from the applicable weather event. A notice of loss must be filed in the FSA Office within 30 days of apparent loss.*

## OAG

Jeremy Criss, Director of the Office of Agriculture was asked by Wade Butler to provide an update on ag tourism activities that are occurring on farms. Jeremy noted that MNCPPC has been tasked for conducting an agricultural tourism study. Jeremy conveyed that he has been working with the County's Department of Permitting Services to understand interpretations to the Zoning Ordinance that will help farmers to conduct agricultural tourism as an accessory use to farming. He explained that the guidelines for tented events are different than those events held in a building as well as the number of events and the number of people that can attend the events.

After Jeremy shared the information concerning Ag tourism, he thanked Karen for making copies of his report and noted that in the time since he sent his report, that there were some additional updates that he wanted to highlight as part of his discussion.

Jeremy reported on the following items:

1. The OAG is continuing to work with Office of Human Resources to complete the reclassifications of all OAG staff- The following reclassifications are complete-John Zawitoski, District Manager MIII, Karen Walker, OSC, Melissa Steed, PAA. The following reclassifications are still pending-Cathy Yingling, AA I, Jackie Arnold, AA, III, James Harne and Shelly Ingram Resource Conservationist I, II, III, and Jeremy Criss, Director MII. *(The goal for James and Shelly is to develop position series that can provide promotional opportunities within different grades that is commensurate with an employee's increasing levels of responsibility and job complexity)*

2. The ZTA 17-06 Formerly ZTA 16-02 public hearing is September 12, 2017 at 1:30 pm. There are some amendments that are being proposed. Please see the attached Draft ZTA 17-06 with amendments. *(Jeremy instructed the supervisors to review certain pages in the ZTA. Jeremy requested that the supervisors review page 5, page 6 and page 7. Jeremy noted the changes on each page. OAG is reaching out to all the stakeholders. Billy Willard (MAP), Doug Lechluder (AAC) and Michael Jamison (APAB) and they will provide testimony at the Council public hearing on the 12<sup>th</sup>.*
3. County Council Bill 23-17 Animal Control-Performance Animal-Violations. The MCFB, AAC, MAP and the Agricultural Center submitted a letter dated August 14, 2017 to the County Council requesting additional time. The Council staff from Public Safety Committee declined the request. Another letter dated September 5, 2017 was sent to the County Council requesting for more time again and postponing the September 11, 2017 Public Safety Committee Work Session. Stay Tuned. *Jeremy noted that given the majority of County Council members who signed on in support of this bill, it is very likely that it is going to pass.*
4. The OAG responded to the County Department of General Services to develop a plan to visit the Site 2 property in White Oak (Former WSSC Sludge Composting Facility). The OAG asked for pictures of the facility, buildings and equipment to assist the agricultural community on items to be salvaged. Stay Tuned. *(Jeremy said that a list of all materials that would be available is being developed.)*
5. County DOT installing guard rails on County Roads-Randy Stabler. The OAG is drafting a letter to the County DOT asking them to present the plan that will show all the roads they are proposing to install guard rails. *(Jeremy shared the guard rails are being install on Zion Road. Tom shared his concern with State Road installing guard rails near his area. Tim noted that the Monocacy Bridge is under construction and this will create detour issues for farmers using this route.)*
6. Request from One Acre Farm owner-Michael Protas leaving for Texas this Thursday to aid Texas farmers from Hurricane Harvey. Michael went to New Jersey to assist people after Hurricane Sandy. A motion was made by Pam Saul and seconded by Wade Butler and passed approving to provide Michael Protas donation to Aid Texas farmers. *(After the meeting, Karen contacted Michael and he shared that there was no longer a need for a donation and that he was on his way back to Maryland.)*

Jeremy shared that Blue Plans has a bio solid product that may be used as a soil amendment and that they would like to market to the he ag community. Robert Butz suggested that the board take a field trip to review how the product is made and can be used. Jeremy also shared the discussions he has been having with the County Police about providing escort services for farmers when they are moving Ag equipment on congested County roads. A meeting is scheduled on Wednesday with the Montgomery County Police Traffic Division to discuss this opportunity to help the farm community and he will report back on the meeting's outcome.

#### **Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Bd of Directors-September 5, 2017 @7:00pm  
MSCD Cooperators Dinner-September 7, 2017 Waredaca Brewing Company

Montgomery Soil Conservation Bd of Supervisors-September 8, 2017 @ 9:00am

Poolesville Day- September 16, 2017

Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-Monday September 18, 2017

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-September 19, 2017 @ 7:00pm

Montgomery County Farm Bureau-Farm to Table Dinner-September 23, 2017

MSCD Conservation Workshop-September 27, 2017 AHFP 8:30 am

### **SECRETARY/ TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Minutes of the July 14<sup>th</sup> meeting were received and reviewed and there were no noted changes. A motion was made by Robert Stabler and was seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving the July Minutes.

Next, Karen shared that June, July and August financial reports were in the handout packet. The bank statement and checkbook matched for each month. Karen noted that all the MDA accounts were expensed out in June and there is no FY17 carryover. Karen noted that she had received and posted the first MDA FY18 payment and that there were no MDA expenses for July or August. A motion was made by Robert Stabler and was seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving the June, July and August financial reports.

After the financial reports were approved, Karen presented two financial matters to the Board for approval. Prior to discussing the two items, she shared that MSCD has received an invoice from Guardian Fire for the annual fire extinguisher inspection. It has been brought to her attention that MNCPPC has been paying for their services and that it appears that the company may be over paid for the service. It was suggested that Karen work with Cathy Yingling to assess whether they are being over paid for this service. It was suggested that Lord Baltimore who certifies fire extinguishers be an alternative vendor to provide the service. Karen was asked not to pay the invoice until the appropriateness of paying this invoice is determined. Next, Karen discussed an invoice of \$2,050 from MASCD for annual association dues. There was discussion among Board Members about the cost of these annual dues. Pam shared some details about MASCD financial standings that came out of the summer meeting about raising the annual dues that was not supported by the Board of Directors. Concerns were raised about whether all Soil Conservation Districts paid the full amount of these annual association dues. The Board requested that Karen verify whether other districts are paying their MASCD association dues. A motion was made by Wade Butler and seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving to pay the MASCD annual association dues. Next, Karen explained the District had a request to support Close Encounters with Agriculture (CEWA). Doug Tregoning requested a financial donation of \$1,000 to support the program as well as an additional financial request of \$1,188.30 to purchase an animal ink stamper for the participant's goodie bags. John shared details that Shelly has been working with a vendor on the product item (animal stamper). He noted that given the CEWA is one of the District's main environmental outreach programs and considering the program never asking for a donation from the District in the past, he would recommend the District support both requests to address the need. A motion was made by Pam Saul and seconded by Wade Butler and passed approving to provide a \$1,000 donation and to purchase the animal stamper as detailed in the discussion.

### **APPROVALS, RATIFICATIONS AND REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE**

The activities report was in the handout packet and Jim noted that several projects have been completed. Jim also noted that he has been in attendance to various meetings and that he

attended the 2017 MASCD Summer Meeting. Jim presented two Request for Assistance (RFA) and several Conservation Plans. John shared information on one of the RFA and noted that the activity will be on the Asbury Methodist Village assisted living campus. The project would involve the cooperator growing vegetables on a small parcel Asbury owns for the benefit of Asbury Residents. Asbury Methodist Village is in the City of Gaithersburg limits, the City dictates what activities are permissible and what are the requirements under City zoning. John shared that the City of Gaithersburg would allow the project as an accessory use; however, they would require a sediment and erosion control plan and Stormwater Management Plans to be approved by City technical staff. The cooperator's RFA involving development of the Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan is not the same as an engineered sediment and erosion control plan and Stormwater Management Plan. If an engineered sediment and erosion control and Stormwater Management Plan are required, MSCD would not be able to provide this level of assistance. There was a lengthy discussion on this matter and the Board of Supervisors concurred that the requirements of the City of Gaithersburg would need to be further researched. The Board directed John to reach out the City of Gaithersburg to see how the District may be able to provide technical assistance through the Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan.

Following the RFA discussion, Jim presented some conservation plans for approval. One of the conservation plans presented for approval is the subject of an agriculture complaint. Because of the ag complaint, John wanted the Board to be aware of circumstances involving this property as this property is residentially zoned but agriculturally assessed. John explained that the District is working with Jim and NRCS on a revised approach to address the measures needed for the resource and manure management concerns. The goal is to try to have something more definitive to present to the Board by the November meeting. A motion was made by Pam Saul and seconded by Wade Butler and passed approving all conservation plans. The Board also voted to delay the approval of the RFA for Asbury Methodist Village until the District has received guidance from the City of Gaithersburg on the applicability of the Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plan in lieu of engineered sediment and erosion control and Stormwater Management Plans.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Close Encounters with Agriculture** - MSCD has supported the Close Encounters with Agriculture (CEWA) for the past 25 years. It is an excellent outreach education activity. The CEWA program has a need and is seeking the financial assistance of the District. Doug Tregoning leads the program and would like to purchase a rain simulator. The funding for CEWA was addressed under the financial report.

**MDA/MACS Focus Group Meeting**- Both John and Robert Butz attended the meeting. Robert Butz shared that there is not enough resources to help meet the WIP goals. MDA is expecting farmers to meet the goals with less available resources. Some of the options discussed at the meeting included: prioritizing MACS applications based upon applicants meeting certain eligibility requirements, eliminate MACS Cost Share for imminent startups for solid waste storage systems, consider cost sharing only on the waste storage component and not the covered area for HUA's, reduce cost share assistance to 75% when farmer applies only for State cost share and provide up to 87.5% cost share when farmer applies for co-cost share through Equip.

The Board of Directors will provide a summary from the Focus Group at the October Board of Directors Meeting. The FY17 shortfall impacted the FY18 budget.

**NRCS Local Work Group Meeting-** This meeting is set for September 27<sup>th</sup> and has been advertised in the Frederick Post and through social media. We have met the 14 day advertising public notice requirement and have asked participants to RSVP so that coffee and donuts can be provided at this meeting. Jim shared information on the upcoming meeting and noted that the goal of participation is to help NRCS prioritize federal funding through recommendations made at the local level. Tim asked if there was any way to speed up the cost share process. Jim concurred that the cost process is slow. Jim noted that Waste Storage and Ag Chem buildings require an engineer and as a result, take longer to get approved designed plans. Typically, NRCS standards are more restrictive than building industry design standards.

**OCTOBER Board Meeting-** The October Board meeting is scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup> and it will conflict with CEWA and there was discussion about rescheduling this meeting. In consideration of rescheduling, the District will be involved in MDA's fall legislative tour that will be held in Montgomery County. While the date of the tour is not yet been finalized, the Supervisors felt that holding a meeting the morning of the tour would provide an option to conduct business of the District requiring Board action. This meeting will be brief and only action items will be addressed. John indicated the requirements for public meeting notice where the District must post on the website the cancelation of the October 13<sup>th</sup> meeting and post the new date once the fall tour date is announced. The tour is tentatively scheduled to start from the AHFP at 10 am. The Board meeting would be scheduled from 8:30 to 9:30 to handle those items requiring Board action.

John also shared that he had reached out to Rick Brush regarding the District's letter regarding fill but as of this meeting there still has been no response. Jeremy and Robert Stabler noted that with the fill operations that are occurring there is a need to get input from Rick.

**MACS and Cover Crops** – Now that a District Manager position has been filled, MACS prefers the signature authorities be updated. A motion was made by Wade Butler and seconded by Pam Saul and passed approving John Zawitoski as the District Manager to have signature authority for MACS and Cover Crop.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Cooperators Dinner-**It was noted that it was a nice event and the food was good. Tim shared that some participants felt that wine should have been served. Robert Butts noted that there needed to be a better coordination with the Brewery Tour. John noted that he would discuss with staff some ideas he had that would help better coordinate the tours. John also noted that it is never too early to start planning for next year's dinner and was looking for suggestions from both supervisors and staff concerning proposed venues for the 2018 Cooperators Dinner. Normally this event is alternated between the eastern and western sections of the County. Next year's dinner would be a western venue and we will locate a Cooperator willing to be a host for this event. Karen will provide a breakdown of the event for the next Board Meeting.

**County Fair Feedback-**John shared that MSCD new banner was exhibited and our tent was frequently visited. Our giveaways continue to be well received and we also got many compliments for the conservation literature we had available that was in Spanish. We will be looking to provide additional materials of this type for next year's fair.

**MASCD Summer Meeting**-John provided a summary follow up on the 2017 meeting to the Supervisors and MSCD staff. John indicated that he submitted a formal report to Supervisors and staff for them to refer to and reference as needed. John felt the report was a good summary of the meeting and would help staff to understand programmatic updates and changes that are coming down the pike that they will be involved with.

#### **CHAIR REPORT**

Robert Butz shared that the NRCS State Conservationist, Dr. Hillsman, shared that some of NRCS and FSA responsibilities may merge. This is something the District will need to pay close attention to as we are already operating under shared office situation with federal resources.

#### **ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING**

The meeting adjourned at 11:00. Due to other activities scheduled for October, the date for the Board of Supervisors to meet has not been determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Walker, Office Services Coordinator

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