

## **MINUTES OF GARRETT SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT SUPERVISORS' MEETING**

February 15, 2022

Due to COVID-19 concerns, the meeting was conducted via telephone.

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Chairman Smokey Stanton. Other supervisors present were Kris Enlow, Bill Buckel and Katharine Dubansky. Chad Bucklew, Butch Helbig, Josh Smith, Byron Petrauskas and Roger Kitzmiller were also present.

Josh Smith from Western Maryland RC&D discussed some Garrett County Projects that RC&D is involved with. Specifically mentioned were: Various tree plantings; The Hemp Alliance; Report related to the Verso Mill closing.

Minutes from the January 18, 2022, Board Meeting were approved as submitted, without objection.

Monthly reports are not yet available from Boal and Associates. Roger gave an approximate balance for the State and Local Checkbooks based on balances from the December Treasurer's Report and checks that have been written. The board authorized Smokey to sign a Letter of Engagement between the District and Boal and Associates as well as authorizing for the District's checkbooks to reside at Boal and Associates – Katharine/Kris (motion/second), vote: unanimous.

Information presented to the Board:

- Office Update: (COVID-19) Federal employees continue working a combination of teleworking and office visits. Visitors are not allowed in the office. Employees continue to wear masks and maintain social distancing. NRCS restricts the number of office staff present to 25% of the total employees (4). The stricter of the guidelines for each agency are followed by all staff. Schedules are arranged to include field work and other outdoor activities in an attempt to keep the number of in-office employees at 25% or lower.
- With the recent resignation of the Conservation Planner, discussion took place regarding the backlog for Conservation Plans: Approximately 25 to 30 Plans needed for Ag Preservation/Rural Legacy applicants; Approximately 15 Plans at the 10-year expiration date; on-going planning required for Macs and EQIP projects. Byron informed the Board that the advertising process to hire a new planner would probably take 4 to 6 weeks.
- Roger informed the Board that there have been no new submittals to be reviewed for the Backbone Solar Project.

Chad reported that Dr. Terron Hillsman has accepted a new position as Director of the Ecological Sciences Division at National Headquarters. Rob McAfee is the Acting State Conservationist, and Rachel Yeatman is Acting for Rob as ASTC Field Operations. Chad mentioned that earlier today, the panel of applicants for the Garrett NRCS Soil Conservationist position were provided from Human Resources. There is a meeting scheduled for tomorrow

morning to start the process. Chad mentioned that staff were still working on finalizing applications for Local Work Group. The timeline for Golden Winged Warbler application has been backed off until April, which is the same time that essentially all statewide funds are due for application ranking. Chad highlighted the Valley of Hope plan on the Activities Report as an example of the work that Jessica Klotz completed before she left.

- Roger and Chad presented the current (GSCD) Position Description as a time-tested option to be implemented for a new Administrative Assistant/Secretary employee; also include was the former newspaper ad that was previously used for advertising the position. No motion was made concerning acceptance of the current documents. After some discussion, the Board commissioned Roger to provide a Position Description that includes components from Position Descriptions from both Washington and Garrett Counties for same position. The Position Description is to be presented to the committee by Monday, 2/21/22.
- The schedule for supervisors to receive Sexual Harassment Prevention Training was discussed. A new venue has been added to accommodate supervisors in Garrett and Allegany Counties: March 22, 2022 at the South Cumberland Library, 12:00 to 2:00 PM
- The Board decided to review Carrie Colebank's timesheets for fiscal year 2021 before approving the final hours on which to base her last paycheck.
- Discussion took place regarding Roger's planned retirement beginning 04/01/2022. Byron informed the Board that the position would not likely be advertised, to be filled, until the position is vacant.
- Based upon documents presented to the Board: i.e. - correspondence between Byron Petrauskas and the District and a "Work For Contractual Hire Agreement", the Board approved hiring a contractor to provide Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, and other related Plan review, for the District (other Plans are defined in the Agreement) - Bill/Katharine (motion/second), vote: unanimous.
- The Board discussed the resignation of Cameron Crawford from the GSCD Board of Supervisors, as of January 31, 2022. Cameron was a representative for the University of Maryland Extension; the Extension Office will be responsible for providing a pool of three applicants, one of which will fill the position on the Board.
- A link to the Open Meeting Act Training for Supervisors was included on the agenda for supervisors who may be interested in completing that training.

Upon proper motion the meeting adjourned at 9:06 – Kris/Bill (motion/second), vote: unanimous.