

## **Garrett Soil Conservation District Supervisor's Meeting**

**August 15, 7:00 p.m.**

### **Garrett Soil Conservation District Board Room**

#### **Participants**

- Smokey Stanton, Board Chair
- Kristen Enlow, Board Vice Chair, Acting Treasurer
- William Buckel, Board Member
- Butch Helbig, Board Member
- Seth Metheny, District Manager (DM)
- Chad Bucklew, District Conservationist (DC)
- Jeannie Frazee, Administrative Assistant

#### **Meeting Topics**

- Certification of Quorum
- Call to Order
- Approval/Correction of July 18, 2023 Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Chairman's Report
- New Business
- Old Business
- Public Comment

#### **Call to Order**

Smokey Stanton, Board Chair, certified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm. All current Board members were in attendance.

#### **Approval/Correction of July 18, 2023 Minutes**

William Buckel gave Jeannie Frazee a correction to be made to the spelling of "starting date", which was written as "stating date", on page 4. Kristen Enlow also requested a correction to the information about those attending the Nutrient Management meetings under the Chairman's Report. It should be Kristen Enlow that attended the meetings, not Chris Herbert. Seth Metheny stated that the name of the group providing funds on page 3 should be MASCD not NASCD. Additionally, the total for the cost of the in-kind contribution from the County for the Administrative Assistance's space is incorrect.

Kristen Enlow asked how the in-kind Administrative Assistant space will affect the District if the office were moved to another location. If the District moves to a non-County building it may no longer be an in-kind contribution.

The Minutes were approved as corrected.

## **Treasurer's Report**

### *Financial Report Monthly & YTD*

Seth Metheny presented the Financial Report to the Board. He explained that he had added, denoted by astericks, the amount allowable from the various funds for each expense, as the budget for the District itself is encompassing of a variety of funding, even within line items. This will allow the Board to see how much of the budgeted amount is paid by State funding and how much must be covered by the District itself. Seth noted that he had made a mistake in the Drill and Lime Spreader lines, as they did not incur those expenses this month.

Smokey Stanton asked if the District has a balanced budget. Seth Metheny replied that the District does not have a balanced budget. Smokey asked why it is not balanced. Seth replied that the District itself does not have any income to cover the expenses not paid by state funding. However, if the District uses carryover funds it will pay for some of the shortage. Seth explained that the line items on the report without any asterisks, or a small, noted amount that is less than the budgeted amount, are expenses that must be paid by the District. William Buckel stated concerns about the budget not balancing. Seth explained that the money will have to come from the assets. William expressed that this is not the way to run the organization because the District will eventually reach the end of those assets. He said that it should be balanced each year.

Smokey Stanton noted that he thought it was agreed that carryover would be listed with income. Seth Metheny answered that this was the way he was originally doing the report, but that in the last meeting, he was asked to move carryover to assets. Smokey asked why the categories going down the left side of the report are rearranged from last month's report. Seth answered that it is a new fiscal year, so the numbers represent the new fiscal year totals. Last month's were FY23. Smokey again reiterated that the categories are in a different order. Smokey stated that the report is not acceptable and that he recommends that the board not approve it. William Buckel said that the Treasurer's Report needs to be better reviewed before presenting it. The mistakes on the rental equipment line should have been caught. Seth Metheny answered that he would like to meet with the Board Treasurer the Tuesday before each meeting to go over the report with the Treasurer. Smokey Stanton asked why Seth had not been meeting with him before the Board Meeting the past two months. Seth stated that Smokey had not contacted him about meeting.

It was noted that there are expenses listed in the budget that there is no income to pay for and that some things may need to be cut to balance the budget. William Buckel said that the District may need to look at areas to lower some of the expenditures, in addition, so that those funds can be used for other line items. He reiterated that the budget needs to be balanced.

Seth Metheny explained that use of the CBTF and State General Fund carryover needs approval from down state. The Board would need to make a request to use those funds. Seth

noted that the line items with two asterisks would likely get approval quicker because they are items that the State already approves for some funding. Seth cautioned the Board that CBTF carryover should be earmarked to be used for the future salary for the Administrative Assistant, as the County is not paying half of the salary any more, therefore the District needs to make up the shortfall.

Butch Helbig stated that if we have a total for carryover and can see on the report the things the District has a shortfall on, it would help the Board see more clearly where the budget does not balance. Seth Metheny stated that if the District uses the approximately \$20,000 from the State Fund carryover, if it is approved by the State, it would cover approximately \$20,000 of the approximately \$40,000 shortage.

Smokey Stanton asked the Board how they wish to proceed, as there are many things on the agenda. William Buckel stated that the Board should move on.

### *FY24 General Fund July Statement*

Seth Metheny presented the Statement to the Board. He also explained that if the District uses any carryover funds those need to be noted on the back with an explanation. For example, Randy Storey's contractual expense is being paid with carryover funds from FY23 that were designated for that purpose, but because it was from FY23, it has to be noted as a carryover fund. Smokey Stanton asked what happens if the District goes over the General State fund amount. Seth stated that he obtained approval in FY23 to use carryover for Brian Boal's expense, which was also listed on the bottom of the report because carryover was being used.

Smokey Stanton asked what the State does with the information on the report. Seth Metheny replied that he believes it is a paper trail as to how the money was used.

Smokey Stanton stated that he was reluctant to give Board approval for the FY24 General Fund July statement. He asked what would happen if the District does not submit the report. Seth Metheny replied that he was not sure what would happen. Smokey asked Seth which individuals are able to sign the report. Seth stated that it could be signed by Kristen, Jeannie or Seth. Smokey stated that authorities need to be segregated, which is something the Board has not been addressing. Seth told the Board that Jeannie Frazee had prepared it, and she will need to sign as the preparer, which means that it also needs signed by either Kristen or Seth.

Butch Helbig said that looking down through the report, it is pretty explicit, and looks like it is in order as to where each of the funds went. William Buckel said that he agrees that since this is a reporting of what was spent in July, he doesn't see a problem with approving it. William Buckel made a motion to approve the FY24 General Fund July Statement. Butch Helbig seconded the motion. Kristen Enlow stated that she would not sign it as the acting Treasurer. Smokey Stanton reminded the Board that the Chairman only votes if there is a tie, and there is no tie, so he will not be voting. Motion was approved.

## **Chairman's Report**

### *MASCD*

Smokey Stanton said that he is not sure if he can attend MASCD. If he does, he will go down Sunday and attend Monday and come back. William Buckel said he plans to do the same.

### *District Credit Card*

Smokey Stanton said that the District credit cards were cancelled by the company for lack of payment. He cautioned William Buckel that he would not be able to use his either. Smokey suggested that William Buckel check his credit report, as he has concerns about his credit rating being affected. Seth Metheny commented that the bill was paid in November and again in July once the credit card company provided information about the charges. The card was cancelled at that time because of issues with bad customer service from the company. Smokey said that he cancelled the card, and thereafter, the company stated that they were cancelling the account for lack of payment, which occurred after the account had been paid in full. Smokey expressed concern about his credit rating being affected.

Smokey Stanton asked about the status of the letter to the Commissioners regarding an E&S tax discussed in last month's meeting. Seth Metheny stated that he has not yet talked to Kevin but that he did obtain information from Allegany County about how they approached their Commissioners.

Smokey Stanton asked how things are coming with the District obtaining information about other organizations that have the same interests as the District. Seth Metheny replied that he is on the board of the Land Reclamation Committee, the Youghiogheny Advisory Committee, and the RSC&D. He asked if any of the Board members are aware of any other boards that would be of interest to the District, and if the Board knows how he can find out what other Boards the District has sat on in the past.

Smokey Stanton asked about the updating of the minutes that was requested by Alisha Mulkey last month. Jeannie Frazee stated that she has those updates and a copy of the actual Executive Session. Jeannie explained that Seth Metheny did not see those minutes because it was a closed session. Jeannie was instructed to provide a copy to the Board.

## **New Business**

### *District Activity Report*

Seth Metheny and Chad Bucklew went over the Activity Report for the Board.

## **District Conservationist's Report**

Chad Bucklew told the Board that Dillan Kesner, the NRCS Forester, has taken a similar position in Hampshire County, WV. His last day was last week. There is no information yet about a replacement. Other Forestry staff will need to pick up the slack.

Chad Bucklew stated that the lease proposal is due August 31. Chad relayed that he does not have any information at this time. He plans to seek council as to what information he will be able to share in the future.

Jillian Mason, Miranda Rounds, and Jeannie Frazee took the Nutrient Management Certification test. Jillian and Miranda will be counseling clients in their positions, but there are no plans for any of the employees to write Nutrient Management Plans.

There were 24 applications for 3,000 acres in cover crops signed up this year. Smokey Stanton asked if this is up from last year. Chad Bucklew replied that he believes it is up at least in acreage.

Chad Bucklew told the Board that there were 17 approved contracts when the Board packets went out. There are now 21, with 3 to 4 more planned to be added by next month. There should be 25 Farm Bill projects approved by next month.

## **Old Business**

### *MASCD Summer Meeting*

Seth Metheny asked if anyone from the Board needs Jeannie to make arrangements for them for the MASCD Summer meeting. William Buckel replied that he had made his own arrangements and would bring in receipts. From the staff, Seth; Chad; and Jeannie will be attending. Seth reminded the Board that the Western region will be hosting even though the meeting will continue to be in Cambridge, so there will be some work for Seth and Jeannie to do with hosting.

Smokey Stanton asked if the western region met to discuss topics for MASCD. Seth Metheny answered that there were a couple different western region meetings, resulting in some of the District Manager sessions addressing things of interest to the western region. William Buckel asked if Seth would send the Board a list of the District Manager meeting topics and a copy of the email from MASCE.

### *QAR*

Chad Bucklew told the Board that there will be a Quality Review for the Federal Farm Bill on September 11. It will likely last about four days.

### *Garrett County Fair*

No one from the District has been going to judge the Conservation Displays for the 4H/FFA competition, so the 4H judges have been selecting the winners. They would prefer that the Conservation District send judges. Seth Metheny asked the Board to think about it. There was a first and second place awarded this year.

The District had a fair booth this year. It was designed so that it included information about the District, information about Conservation, and a children's craft area where children could sit and color. Employees helping with the booth were Chuck Hayes, Miranda Rounds, Craig

Zimmerman, Jarrod Sisler, Seth Metheny, and Jeannie Frazee. Pleasant Valley Greenhouse donated two trees for the display at no cost to the District. It went well. Some individuals asked about the District and there seemed to be a particular interest in the Golden-winged Warbler program. Many people are looking for freebees from the businesses and organizations rather than looking at displays, so in this environment it is hard to determine impact because people are only interacting with various displays sporadically. The Board asked if it was over or under budget. Jeannie Frazee replied that it was under the budget that the Board had set. The costs were for the booth fee with insurance and \$53.26 for supplies. The District had a random drawing for a free tree from next year's tree sale, which will be of minimal cost to the District.

### *Backbone Solar*

Backbone Solar has stated that the site is too high in elevation and has too much bedrock to continue with the project. They have been talking to the County about submitting a new proposal to move to a new location. This is not official at this time. Seth Metheny is to let the Board know if he hears anything official about it.

### *Dam Inspections Postponed*

Seth Metheny said that the Little Youghiogheny Dams inspections have been cancelled, and he has not heard if they will be rescheduled. Seth went to Dam 2 himself and found a PVC pipe that was clogged, which he cleared. Seth stated that he would like to take Matt and Jarrod to the other Dams. Smokey Stanton asked Seth to let the Board know when they will be visiting the dams so that the Board members could have the option to attend as well.

Seth Metheny let the Board know that the new MDA Soil Conservation Technician has started. His name is Matt Jones. He is an FSU graduate who grew up in Garrett County and attended Southern High School. He has done contractual work with the State in the past.

There being no public comments and no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.