

Garrett Soil Conservation District Supervisor's Meeting

November 21, 2023

Garrett Soil Conservation District Board Room

Participants

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

Meeting Topics

- Certification of Quorum
- Call to Order
- Approval/Correction of October 25, 2023, Minutes
- Treasurer's Report
- Chairman's Report
- District Manager's Report
- District Conservationist's Report
- New Business
- Old Business
- Public Comment

Call to Order

Smokey Stanton, Board Chairman, certified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

Approval/Correction of October 25, 2023, Minutes

Kristen Enlow made a motion to accept the October 25, 2023, minutes. William Buckel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Financial Report Monthly & YTD

Seth Metheny gave an overview of the Financial Report Monthly and YTD Condensed Report. Seth pointed out that there was an expenditure of \$1708.13 for equipment for one of the State-owned trucks and survey equipment from Caron East. Both were paid with carryover funds from the Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund.

District Operations October Spending Report

Seth Metheny explained that the District Operations Spending Report is a listing of charges made with the debit cards. One of the items purchased was mouse traps. Seth explained that once the weather turned cold, the District experienced a problem with mice.

FY24 MDA General Fund October Statement

Seth Metheny went over the October FY24 MDA General Fund statement.

Butch Helbig made a motion to accept the Financial Report Monthly & YTD, the District Operations October Spending Report and the October FY24 MDA General Fund statement. William Buckel seconded the motion. There were no objections. The motion passed unanimously. Budget Deficit Strategy

Seth Metheny presented the Board with a report to suggest modifications to the budget to reduce the deficit.

William stated that the District needs to have everything in place to begin collecting fees by March 1. Seth stated that to begin collecting fees by March 1, the proposal needs to be made to the Commissioners by December 1, because it takes up to 90 days to go into effect.

William Buckel stated that he thinks the rates need to be raised from the proposed rate table because as they are, they will not pay for the District to hire an employee.

Seth Metheny reminded the Board that the District can re-evaluate fees annually. Kristen Enlow stated that getting the E&S fees enacted needs to be the District's top priority.

William Buckel stated that he would participate in a conference call with Seth and Randy to get things started.

William Buckel made a motion that the District make every attempt to schedule a meeting with Jay Moyer, Chad Fike, Kevin Null and the County Commissioners to present a fee schedule by December 1 and the District can have an (E&S) committee meeting to discuss. Kristen Enlow seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Additionally, William Buckel made a motion that the E&S Committee have the authority to present to the Commissioners. Butch Helbig seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Audit

Seth Metheny explained that the MOU for the State said that the District needs to complete a yearly audit. An annual compilation is what is needed and the wording in the MOU will be changed to reflect that.

Brinker

Smokey Stanton stated that he had talked with Brinker about moving the account. Daniel Norris said that he was following the guidance of Shawn Sanders and George Bishoff, which was extremely conservative. Seth Metheny explained that those recommendations were likely based on the statute regarding how public funds can be invested. Seth presented the statute to the Board. It was suggested that the Board get a speaker in to tell them the boundaries of the statute.

Tree Sale Update

Jeannie Frazee discussed the Tree Sale. Smokey Stanton asked that she explain the Tree Sale (due to this being Nevin Sines' first meeting). Jeannie explained how the tree sale started and the intent behind the sale.

Chairman's Report

Smokey Stanton again welcomed Nevin Sines.

District Manager's Report

MASCD Winter Meeting

Seth Metheny told the Board that the MASCD Winter Meeting will be held on January 22 and 23. An agenda is in the Board packet. Hotel reservations must be made by December 22.

Envirothon Dues

Maryland will host the National Envirothon in 2027. To pay for it, they are requesting that all Districts contribute \$1500.00 a year for the next 4 years. The fee for this year is expected to be paid by December 31, 2023.

Annual Work Plan Development Update

Seth Metheny advised the Board that there has been a small update to the Annual Work Plan.

Erosion & Sediment Plan Fees

Smokey Stanton commented that the E&S fees had already been addressed earlier in the meeting.

District Conservationist's Report

Continuing Resolution

Chad Bucklew stated that the Continuing Resolution has been resolved and the NRCS will be funded through January 12.

SQAR Update

Chad Bucklew has received the SQAR summary. It has a lot of production notes which Chad stated that he does not want to share at a public meeting due to confidential producer information.

Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners

Chad Bucklew presented the Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners report to the Board. Chad stated that each member of the Board needs to sign and date the form confirming that it has been discussed in the Board meeting. Smokey Stanton asked the Board if there was any objection to the Board signing the Civil Rights Responsibilities for Partners Checklist. There were no objections. All Board members signed.

Office Lease

Chad Bucklew explained that, currently, the District office lease is month to month.

Chad Bucklew presented the Board with three options. Option 1 – USDA provides the lease for all of the District. Option 2 – NRCS and MDA will have separate leases. MDA would have to readvertise for a space. There is no guarantee that the NRCS and MDA could be together. MDA would not be able to use NRCS software. NRCS could not share any information about where they are going until the lease is signed, making it difficult for MDA to be certain they could have a lease in the same location. Option 3 – The District would have one part of the space and the NRCS the other. The District could do its own lease later.

William Buckel made a motion to approve Option 1 with the District managing having input.” Nevin Sines asked if the motion could be amended to center it in the County, Rt 219 from Oakland to Accident area. Kristen Enlow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously with the amendment added.

New Business

District Activity Report

Seth Metheny went over the first half of the Activity Report with the Board, and Chad Bucklew went over the second half, explaining the Practice Applications.

Old Business

Backbone Solar Update

Seth Metheny stated that he, Randy Storey, and Smokey Stanton had participated in a site visit to the Backbone Solar site. They are planning to add arrays on a second nearby site.

Dam Visits and Maintenance Update

Seth gave a report on the dams and explained them for Nevin. The site visits took place before the mowing was finished.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:07 pm.