

Garrett Soil Conservation District Supervisor's Meeting

April 16, 2024

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, Assistant Treasurer
- Nevin Sines, Board Member
- Seth Metheny, District Manager (DM)
- Chad Bucklew, District Conservationist (DC)
- Jeannie Frazee, Administrative Assistant
- Daniel Norris, Representative for Brinker Account

Meeting Topics

- Certification of Quorum
- Call to Order
- Introduction of Guests: Daniel Norris – Presentation on Brinker
- Approval/Correction of March 19, 2024, 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 7:05 pm. All board members were present.

Introduction of Guests

Daniel Norris, the District representative for the Brinker account was present to give a presentation on Brinker.

Daniel said that in 2007 he was given guidance from the District that the Brinker account needed to be in Government Securities and be very conservative.

Butch Helbig said that what the Board sees is an account that is stagnant or losing money. Daniel said that once the bills mature, they sell them and buy new bonds with a higher rate. That's how, over time, the account comes up. That strategy is a proven strategy. Daniel added that as long as nothing has changed, and he doesn't get guidance from the customer, he doesn't do anything.

William Buckel asked what the sales value is of the \$349,497.00. Daniel replied that the Face Value is \$350,000.00.

The Board excused Daniel Norris, letting him know that they have the information that is needed.

Approval/Correction of March 19, 2024, Minutes

Some of the heading information needs corrected. Kristen Enlow made a motion to approve the minutes with those corrections. Nevin Sines seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Kristen Enlow stated that she has never seen an investment report with the bonds listed like they are in the Brinker report. Seth Metheny said that he can include the bank statement and the Brinker report in the Board packet moving forward but it is about 8 pages. Smokey said to put it in the packet.

Treasurer's Report

Butch Helbig told the Board that he had gone over the Treasurer's Report last week. Everything looked on task. He asked if anything has changed.

Financial Report Quarterly & YTD

Seth went over the Financial Report Quarterly and YTD. E&S fees started in March. The District received over \$9000 for March which is 60% of the target amount for the FY. He is expecting over \$15,000 by the end of April.

Seth pointed out that this is the end of the third quarter. All line items are at 75% or below, except those that are paid out in a lump sum at specific times. Smokey asked if anyone has any questions about any of the lines.

District's Operational Spending Report

Seth went over the report. Smokey asked if anyone has any questions. Seth outlined that the expenses were for a hammer to pound stakes when surveying, a planner, some post-it notes, and a laptop briefcase for one of the employees to telework.

March Income Statement

Seth went over the March Income Statement. E&S fees started in March. The Tree Sale income is up. Brinker did make \$1661.00. Postage was high but \$35 was spent to ship a computer to get it reimaged. Publications was high because of additions to the website for E&S fees. The charge is for a three-year subscription, though. Smokey asked what the amount budgeted was for Publications. Seth answered that it was \$300.

FY24 MDA General Fund March Statement

Seth went over the statement. There were March per diems and mileage, postage, phone and the website which is under outreach in the MDA General Fund. The total for the month was \$467.87.

FY24 3rd Quarter CBTF Report

Seth went over the report. This report is sent to the State at the end of each quarter. Seth said that he put in half of Jeannie's hours because she was here for the full quarter.

Kristen Enlow made a motion to accept all the financial reports. Nevin Sines seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Chairman's Report

Smokey Stanton referred to an email that went out to all the Board members about the 2023 WIP Progress report. It is virtual. Seth let everyone know that it is on April 24 at 9:00 am and Board members can watch it at the District office Board room if they so choose.

District Manager's Report

Caron East Invoice

Seth Metheny explained that last year the State purchased a Robotics Total Station for the District, which came with a one-year subscription to GPS. This year, Caron East sent the District a bill for \$2176.32. A discussion took place about who should be responsible for the bill MDA or the District. It was decided to not pay the bill now and to ask Caron East if we could partner with another state agency since it was not a service that is used everyday.

Boal and Associates

Seth presented the Board with a timeline of emails to Brain Boal and what was said. Seth said that he had met with him mid-September to go over payroll, taxes, and the annual compilations for both FY22 and FY23.

Nevin said that the District needs to put in writing that Brian has 30 days or the District moves on to someone else. Butch said that he agrees. Nevin said that that is not asking too much. There were no objections from the Board. Smokey asked Seth to keep the Board informed.

District Conservationist's Report

Chad Bucklew said that so far 40% of EQIP and 25% of IRA funding has been spent throughout the State. Locally there are 12 EQIP contracts and 5 pending. They are trying to shift away from High Tunnels to get other things approved. There has been one large-scale plan sent to Warren for his approval.

Envirothon training was today. There were 7 to 8 kids from each high school. Carl Robinette led the training. April 30 is the County Competition Day.

There is no news on the lease. There have been a couple of proposals.

New Business

Activity Report

The Activity Report was presented to the Board in the packet. There were no questions.

Pre-Construction Site Visits MOU with MDE

Seth explained that he would like to approach MDE about an MOU that would allow the District to do pre-construction site visits on plans that the District has done E&S reviews on to earn extra money for the District. He asked the Board to look over the information and be ready to discuss it at the next Board meeting.

Old Business

MASCD Annual Meeting Registration Deadline, May 17

Seth asked Board members to let Seth or Jeannie know if they plan to attend by May 17. Members do not have to go to the full event. Kristen will be getting her 20-year pin and Bill his 5-year pin in the awards ceremony.

E&S Contract – Randy

Seth suggested that the Board talk about making a contract with Randy. Because he is so knowledgeable, his time involved in E&S is less than anyone else by 2 to 3 times.

E&S Fee Schedule Policy & Procedure

Seth presented the email from Kevin Null. William Buckel asked how the District is collecting fees. Seth let the Board know that he had produced a PowerPoint to explain the E&S system mechanics. Smokey stated that he had asked staff to develop a policy.

William noted that the Timber Harvest's are not policed. They make a big miss and do not fix it according to the plan. Seth said that the District could look at getting a bond fee. William said he is on the Forestry Board, and he does not like what is going on. Nevin asked if the State is bonded. William replied that the State is bonded.

Smokey asked if the E&S policy is on the website. Seth said that the policy isn't but the fee is. Smokey said that maybe they District should put the policy on the website. The District has set the rules, and it would be good for everyone to see the rules. Seth said that the policy would be added to the website.

Scholarship Update

There are 3 completed applications as of today. May 1 is the deadline. Smokey asked if an announcement can be put on Facebook.

Tree Sale Update

Jeannie Frazee gave an update on the Tree Sale. It is going well. Staff will pick up the trees on April 15, and Distribution will be on April 17 and 18.

District Work Plan

Seth went over the District Work Plan paperwork. Seth reminded the Board that they will need to work on the FY25 District Operating Budget in the next month or two.

Seth let the Board know that Matt Jones has accepted a position with MDE working in wetlands. He will be a loss. Kristen Enlow asked when Matt will be leaving. Seth said May 1. Matt wants to work outside, and this job is in the field of his degree.

Policy and Procedure for Expenditures and Financial Controls

Seth presented the Board with District Operations Payment Procedure and a breakdown of each bank account, its purpose, and items that would be deposits or expenditures of each account. Smokey commented that the Board can come back to this later.

Board of Supervisors Contact Information

Seth let the Board members know that he is updating contact information for all the Board members. It will be kept at the District and also passed to each Board member.

Seth suggested that the FY25 District Budget should be split into four separate budgets. Local, Administrative Assistant, E&S, and MDA General Fund. He sent a proposal for the four budgets with the Board and asked that the members look over it before next month.

A discussion about the District's investment strategy took place. Nevin said that he brings to the table to invite 3 – 4 representatives to do a presentation. Smokey said that that is the path the Board is on. They saw Brinker. The next step is to pull in others. The Board made a suggestion to invite the investment group of First United.

Smokey said that they want to break bonds with Brinker when they mature. William said that now is the time to make the change. "It is a no-brainer if we break now", he said. There is very little difference if we sell now or when they mature. Nevin said that what he likes about the CD is that it is FDIC insured, there are guaranteed no fees coming off, and the District will not get a bill for management. Seth said that he does not expect to get guidance from the Attorney General's office until next FY. He suggested that the Board set a committee to go out and talk to local financial advisors. Smokey said that he wants to keep the Board as a whole for this. He does not want to form a sub-committee. Nevin suggested that they get two people per meeting and set a 20-minute time limit.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 10:05 p.m.