

Garrett Soil Conservation District Supervisor's Meeting

August 20, 2024

Garrett Soil Conservation District Board Room

Participants

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

Call to Order

Smokey Stanton certified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All Board members are present.

Approval/Correction of July 16, 2024, Minutes

Smokey commented that under the Chairman's Report, Kristen Enlow's name is spelled incorrectly. Also, under the Chairman's Report, he requested a change of wording to include the information that there were personnel changes at Turnbull. Kristen Enlow made a motion to accept the minutes as modified. William Buckel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Butch Helbig stated that much of the information from the Financial Reports had been covered during the Budget Meeting on the 12th. He asked if anything needs to be added. Seth Metheny said that he could go over the documents in the packet briefly. Smokey stated that he should.

FY22 and FY23 Compilations

The Compilations were presented to the Board members.

Butch asked if the charge for the FY24 Compilation will be \$750. Seth responded that that is correct if the Board decides to engage with Boal & Associates for that.

Smokey asked if the Compilations need to be submitted to MDA by the District. Seth replied that they do.

The Board decided that since Butch Helbig is to become the Treasurer it would be best to hold the Treasurer Election prior to approving the Compilations.

William Buckel made a motion to elect Butch Helbig to take over the position of Treasurer from Kristen Enlow. Nevin Sines seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Butch Helbig is now the GSCD Board of Supervisors Treasurer.

William Buckel made a motion to approve the FY22 and FY23 Annual Compilations that Boal & Associates prepared. Butch Helbig seconded the motion. There were no objections. The Board voted unanimously to pass the motion.

William Buckel made a motion to approve the FY25 MDA July General Fund Statement, the District's Operational Spending Report, and the July Income Statement. Kristen Enlow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

District Manager's Report

The 2027 National Envirothon will be hosted by Maryland, to help cover the costs MASCD is requesting for each District to contribute \$1500 each year. The Endowment Grant could go toward this expense.

William Buckel made a motion to pay \$1500 from the MASCD Endowment grant to MASCD for the 2027 National Envirothon dues and use the remaining \$500 for the local Envirothon. Nevin Sines seconded the motion.

Seth asked the Board if they would like to pay Maryland Public Television \$625. It was in the proposed budget. William Buckel said he is in favor of paying it. The District has paid it every year except for last year. Kristen Enlow made a motion to pay Maryland Public Television \$625. William Buckel seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

District Conservationist's Report

The local NRCS got a new fleet vehicle. It is an F150 Pickup, hybrid. It is the first hybrid vehicle for the District. It gets 22 miles to the gallon and 25% of those were electric miles.

On July 31, FSA had a State Committee meeting in Garrett County. They did a couple tours including Sleepy Hollow Farm, Scenic Vista's Farm, and the Farmer's Market in Oakland. Afterward, they went to the fair. State Conservationist, Suzy Daubert, came up for the meeting and sat down with the staff for several hours.

Last month there were a few more pre-approvals. There was a \$450,000 project approved. The contract for that has been signed. Last Friday, two more were approved. There was a \$50,000 grazing contract and an energy assessment for maple syrup.

There are two more pending for an irrigation system and a larger grazing plan. That brings the total for Garrett County to close to a million dollars this year if everything is funded. The new funds were slippage from other producers down state that did not take their funding. The funds slipped down to Garrett County. We were told that the State was not going to pursue more funding this year, but they changed their minds and funded some now instead of at the end of the year.

October 25 is the application sign up deadline. We want to get as much obligated in November and December as possible. We have a few in the County ready. Chad said that he feels there will be additional sign-up periods later in the year that can capture some more projects.

New Business

Seth went over the Activity Report for the Board. There are a couple of producers starting construction this week.

Seth asked the Board for approval to start the Tree Sale. The Board gave approval.

Old Business

Seth went over the FY25 GSCD Proposed Budget.

Smokey reminded the Board that there needs to be a decision regarding raising the scholarship to \$2000. It can be discussed in the next couple months. Nevin Sines stated that he thought the Board had decided to approve two \$1000 scholarships for 2025.

Nevin Sines made a motion to approve two \$1000 scholarships to be awarded to Garrett County students in 2025. Kristen Enlow seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Smokey said that in looking down through the Proposed Budget except for Reserves, it is pretty much in line with last year's budget. So, the Board really needs to just focus on Reserves.

Nevin Sines made a motion to raise the GSCD Board of Supervisor per diems to \$75 per day, effective July 1 forward, for all meetings. Mileage is in addition. It is by the day, so if there are two meetings in a day, the per diem is only \$75 for that day. But if the meeting extends over more than one day, it will be \$75 for each day. Kristen Enlow seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve the motion.

William suggested that the Board approve the Proposed Budget and discuss the reserve later. That would give the Board an approved budget. Nevin stated that the Board does not know what to put in the Proposed Budget for Boal's until the District hears back from him about his charges. Butch asked if there could be modifications later. Seth said that there can be modifications later.

A discussion arose about whether the State can take back funding once the MOU is signed and finalized. Smokey said that they can. He said that two years ago, they changed the rules. The Board of Public works can reduce grants and contracts by certain percentage amounts. They will tell MDA they have to make cuts.

Nevin asked about Brinker. Smokey asked Seth to provide the Board with the current investments next meeting.

William Buckel said that he would like the Board to give a thank you to Miranda Rounds for the work she did on the Fair Booth. She put a lot of effort into it. She did a good job.

The meeting adjourned at 9:27 pm.