

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

**May 22, 2025**

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

#### **Participants**

- Smokey Stanton, Board Chair
- Kristen Enlow, Board Vice Chair
- Butch Helbig, Board Treasurer
- Nevin Sines, Board Member, arrived late
- Dorsey Guard, Board Member
- Seth Metheny, District Manager (DM)
- Chad Bucklew, District Conservationist (DC)
- Jeannie Frazee, Administrative Assistant

#### **Call to Order**

Board Chairman, Smokey Stanton certified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. All Board members except Nevin Sines were present at the beginning of the meeting. Nevin Sines arrived later.

#### **Approval/Correction of April 17, 2025 Minutes**

Butch noted that Dorsey Guard was also instrumental in establishing the No-Till Drill Cleaning and Maintenance fee. Dorsey made a motion to accept the minutes as written. There were no objections. The minutes were approved.

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Butch gave an overview of the finances. He met with Seth and Jeannie last week to go over the financial statements. He said that it is gratifying to see clearly what the investment fund is doing. The expenses are on course with the goals that were set or below. Income is on course except E&S which is slightly below due to the weather. One thing of concern is the Money Market account which is making very little interest.

#### **FY25 MDA General Fund April Statement**

The fourth quarter General Fund payment has been received so all State funding on the General Account is now realized for FY25.

## **April First United Holdings**

The First United investment account has grown by 3.19% since the account was opened three months ago.

## **Garrett SCD Monthly & YTD Financial Report**

Smokey asked how much money is left for the FY on the State account. The State gave the District \$16,900 in unrestricted funds for the FY. \$9,551.92 has been spent. All the money provided for the CBTF will be spent by the end of the FY.

Smokey asked how much money the District plans to spend by the end of the FY from the General Account. Seth suggested that if any of the Board members would like to attend MASCD Summer meeting, the money could be paid from this FY instead of FY26, but reservations will need to be made before the end of June. Seth asked Board members to contact him or Jeannie if they plan to attend. Summer MASCD is August 4-6, so it is the week after the fair.

Kristen Enlow made a motion to accept the financial statements. Nevin Sines seconded the motion. There were no exceptions. The financial statements were approved.

## **Chairman's Report**

None

## **District Manager's Report**

Seth sent out a notice to MDE Dam Safety and NRCS that the District will no longer provide maintenance for the 3 PL-566 flood control dams. MDE states that each land owner must file an emergency plan and do maintenance. NRCS set up the agreement originally, which has now expired. It was noted that the District does not own the property around the dams.

## **District Conservationist's Report**

There was a court hearing earlier in the day which suspended action regarding terminations. The court says that employee termination power falls under Congress. NRCS was to get a re-organization plan. This ruling may affect it. Chad has been told that firing is a last resort. Numbers are down due to voluntary retirements and deferred resignations. However, numbers are still not down to the planned figure. Statewide, that figure would be 89. It is now at 100. It will be mostly shuffling employees to different offices though. Chad is not sure how Garrett will be affected.

Nothing has been heard about the new Farm Bill. It has been five years since the 2018 Farm Bill. It is unusual for it to go that long. Employees do not know what to tell people regarding what to expect for next year.

\$14 million of the \$15 million state funds for NRCS have been obligated. In Garrett County there are 23 of 24 contracts obligated, with 1 under review. The total contracted is \$445,000, with \$18,000 as the average.

## **New Business**

### Activity Report

There are 17 Conservation Plans in progress. 4 Conservation Plans have been finished and signed. For the month, 19 E&S Single Family, 3 Timber Harvest, and 3 Commercial plans were reviewed and approved. 3 Concept plans were also reviewed. There was 1 Timber Harvest and 2 Commercial plans that were reviewed and need to do revisions to the plans. 9 more plans are under review at the close of the month. Technicians and staff are working with 64 producers to provide advanced education, planning, design work, and construction assistance.

## **Old Business**

### Annual Work Plan

Seth had presented the Board with a proposed Annual Work Plan at the last Board meeting. It

Smokey asked if the goals are a true reflection of what is to get done or to show senior staff that vacancies need filled. Seth responded that it is both. Dorsey asked about vacancies. Current vacancies are 2 NRCS, and 1 MDA.

Chad suggested adding forest acres, as the acres in the plan are all farm acres. Forestry is addressed in BMPs and E&S but not included in the chart specifically.

The Annual Work Plan is just for the District. There are no disciplinary actions if the goals are not all reached.

Smokey asked how the Board could know if there is enough manpower to do specific outreach projects. He said that it would be helpful to the Board to have more detail, so that it can be seen if there are enough employees and work is distributed adequately. Chad reminded the Board that it is not clear-cut because regional people assist.

### Scholarship

There were five applications for this year's scholarship. Copies have been sent to each Board member to score using the rubric. Board members are to bring their rubrics to next month's Board meeting so that two applicants can be selected for \$1000 scholarships. There are 3 points potential for each category, with a maximum of 12 points possible. Butch suggested that in the future applicants should be given a number so that Board members cannot see the names. Only the staff will know the names. The Board approved that in future years, Board members will not see the names of the applicants until after the winners are selected.

### Drill Trade In

Two businesses were contacted for bids on a trade in of the Drill. West Central was the only one who showed interest. They came out and looked at it and presented a bid package. Suggested list price of the new Drill is \$70,834.00. They are reducing the price to \$54,703.18 because it is for a Conservation District. They are willing to give \$25,000.00 for the old Drill. That leaves the cost of the new Drill at \$29,703.18. The first Drill was traded in after 5 years, but this one has 10 years on it. The Board felt that due to the time of year, West Central may have a buyer for the old Drill and the offer may decrease if the District waits.

Kristen reminded the group that a couple years ago it was decided not to replace the Drill due to the rental acreage drop. But she indicated that she is not opposed to replacing it now. Dorsey felt that five years from now the District would be glad it did the replacement due to the much lower value of a 15-year-old Drill. There is money in carryover to cover most of the purchase.

Dorsey Guard made a motion to trade the current Drill to West Central Equipment for the amount stated in their quote without taking the service plan. Kristen Enlow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The funds are to be taken \$25,000.00 from carryover from the Enterprise account and \$4,700.00 from the Money Market account.

#### Envirothon Dues

The State is requesting \$750.00 from the District for Envirothon Dues for FY26. The District still has funds available to cover the cost in FY25. They will also ask for \$1,500.00 to pay toward the National Envirothon to be held in Maryland in 2027. Dorsey Guard made a motion to go ahead and pay the \$750.00 Envirothon FY26 dues now. The decision passed unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.