

## **Garrett Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting**

**August 19, 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
- Dorsey Guard, Board Member
- Seth Metheny, District Manager (DM)
- Chad Bucklew, District Conservationist (DC)
- Jeannie Frazee, Administrative Specialist
- Connie Stemple, Farm Service Agency Executive Director (Guest)

### **Call to Order**

Board Chairman, Smokey Stanton certified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m. All Board members were present.

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

There were no corrections. Dorsey Guard made a motion to approve the July 17, 2025, GSCD Board of Supervisors Meeting Minutes. Kristen Enlow seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Butch Helbig let the Board know that he and Smokey had met with Seth on August 12, to go over the financials. Everything is falling in line with expectations.

#### **July FY26 First United Holdings**

First United Holdings did get the information they needed regarding the costs of stocks purchased by Brinker from Seth, and they have entered it into their system. This month's report had already been completed prior to, but that information will show up on next month's report.

#### **July FY26 Financial Report**

The District has been operating off the Proposed Budget because the actual budget has not yet been set. Therefore, the percentages are not accurate.

Kristen Enlow made a motion to accept the FY26 Financial Report. Dorsey Guard seconded the motion. There were no objections. The motion passed.

## **Chairman's Report**

Smokey asked those who attended the MASCD summer meeting to give feedback. Dorsey Guard signed up to go but did not attend. He offered to pay the costs. He does not have to pay.

The Garrett SCD won the Communications Award for 2024. Considered in the decision for the award were the websites, newsletters, email newsletters, press releases, and other communications. The Board expressed their thanks to Jeannie Frazee for her work with the District's communications.

## **District Manager's Report**

### MASCD Annual Meeting Update

During the MASCD meeting it was discussed that if the State's budget is not in good shape for next year after the cuts there could be some staff layoffs or employees being required to take days off without pay. Garrett lost another employee last week. Layoffs will not likely affect us as our staff is down 40%.

## **District Conservationist's Report**

The Annual Workgroup meeting for Garrett County was held prior to the Supervisors meeting. There were 11 people in attendance, and one comment was received via email prior to the meeting. The Survey was completed during the meeting and submitted down state. There is no funding attached to this year's Workgroup. It was used to provide information useful in building the next Farm Bill. The group listed land use priorities as: livestock, grazing, forestry, wildlife, and cropland.

The latest guidance on staffing is that for every four people who leave, one position will be filled. They have been shuffling some staff around. Some workers have come from other states to fill Maryland vacancies, but some Maryland staff members are going to other states. Overall, the State is down one person. NRCS nationwide is down 25% of employees. If the goal is to mimic staffing from 2019, we are still 6-7 staff too many for the State.

Logan Mongold has been in the District office for a couple weeks now. He does not report to the District. It looks like he will be here for a while.

## **New Business**

### Activity Report

There are 13 Conservation Plans currently in progress. Two were finished and signed since last month.

For E&S there were 14 Single Family, 1 Timber Harvest, and 6 Commercial plans reviewed and approved. 4 Commercial plans were reviewed and require revisions. 5 Single Family, 1 Timber Harvest, and 6 Commercial plans were under review at the close of the month. Two Concept Plans were also reviewed.

There are 65 projects for producers in various stages of completion here in Garrett.

The District had a booth at the Garrett County Agricultural Fair July 25 – August 2.

## Board of Supervisors At-Large Position

Seth was contacted by SSCC. They said that they had sent information to Willie asking him to advertise Smokey's position, which will expire at the end of October. They also asked that the District advertise the position. They sent an ad to be used. The District contacted Willie but did not receive a response. The District will need to advertise the position itself. Smokey indicated that he is concerned that there is no deadline listed on the advertisement. Smokey said that Supervisors need to continue to serve until the replacement is appointed.

## Cooperator's Dinner

Last year's Cooperator's Dinner was very successful at the Bittinger Mennonite Gym. They have only 3 dates available at around the same time in November as last year. The cost will be .50 more per plate this year.

Dorsey Guard made a motion that the 2025 Cooperator's Dinner be held at the Bittinger Mennonite Gym on Thursday, November 20, starting at 6:00 pm, with the same meal structure and payment structure as 2024. There will be two kinds of meat - chicken and roast beef. The District will cover a third of the cost of each meal. The District will cover the full cost of meals for some individuals to include Board members, staff, dignitaries, and speakers. The motion passed unanimously.

## **Old Business**

### FY26 Budget

Seth provided the Board with copies of the FY26 Proposed Budget.

The MDA General Fund budget is satisfied by the MDA General Fund MOU.

For the Administrative Assistant Budget Seth has recommended that the Administrative Assistant's salary be increased to match what is being paid to other workers in the same position. Jeannie has not had any increase since January 2023. Other workers receive step increases periodically, which Jeannie has not received. This will also create an increase in taxes and fringe.

For the E&S Budget, Seth has also proposed an increase to Randy's pay. He is paid per plan. His pay is not in line with what is typically paid for the work he does. Similar positions with the State pay \$70,000 per year, which equates to \$34 hour. Randy has 30 years of experience and is fast and efficient. His contract was set up in 2021. He has not had a raise since that time. Seth provided a history of Randy's employment and his contract specifics. Seth also went over the E&S process and the process between the County and the District for Stormwater Management and E&S.

Butch Helbig commented that Randy has gone above and beyond. The District should continue to employ him as long as he wishes to continue in the position. He expressed that the District should accommodate a raise.

## Annual Work Plan

The Annual Work Plan was not discussed.

## **Executive Session**

Smokey Stanton read the Closing Statement form for the Board to go into Closed Session.

Kristen Enlow made a motion to close the meeting subject to Article 3-305 B 1, "To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals." The purpose for closing the meeting is to discuss the Administrative Assistant's salary. Nevin Sines seconded the motion. There were no objections, rendering the vote unanimous to close the meeting. The reason for closing the session is so that the Administrative Assistant's salary is not discussed in front of either Jeannie or Seth, as he made the request for the raise.

The Board immediately went into Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. Seth and Jeannie left the meeting.