

Garrett Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors Meeting

March 17, 2026

Garrett Soil Conservation District Board Room

Participants

- Kristen Enlow, Acting Chair, Via phone
- Butch Helbig, Board Treasurer
- Nevin Sines, Board Member
- Patrick Sines, Board Member
- Kevin Corbin, Associate Board Member
- Seth Metheny, District Manager (DM)
- Chad Bucklew, District Conservationist (DC)
- Jeannie Frazee, Administrative Specialist
- Chris Schlette, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist, Management & Strategy

Certification of Quorum and Call to Order

Kristen Enlow, acting Board President, certified a quorum and called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. All Board members were present except Dorsey Guard. It was noted that Dorsey was unable to attend due to snow plowing commitments because of the sudden snowstorm.

Introduction of Guests

Chris Schlette, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist for Management and Strategy attended the meeting. He has been in his position with NRCS since February of 2023. Management & Strategy is the former Administrative Office for NRCS.

Chris gave an overview of the lease. The lease is out on the market again. They are working toward an extension for another year. There has been some interest coming in regarding leasing.

Butch asked what notice to relocate the County would need to give to the District if the building is sold. Chris said that finding a new location for Garrett has become a priority in Maryland because of this fact.

Approval/Correction of February 17, 2026, Minutes

Butch Helbig made a motion to approve the February 17, 2026, minutes. Patrick Sines seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer's Report

Dorsey Guard and Butch Helbig meet with Seth and Jeannie on March 11 to go over the financials. Tree Sale income is down from projection over the course of the sale, but it has picked up significantly in the last two months. Otherwise, everything looks good.

Grant Expenditure Report

In February, the District purchased the Rainfall Simulator Accessories and Trees and Tree Guards for the 4-H Orchard. There is \$81,002.88 left of the grant.

Patrick Sines made a motion to accept the financial reports, including FY26 MDA General Fund February Statement, First United Holdings Statement, Grant Expenditure Report, Monthly Income Statement, and Financial Report. Nevin Sines seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report

None

District Manager's Report

No-Till Drill

The District has received the final invoice for the new No-Till Drill. Both the original and the final are in the Supervisor packet. The original quote was \$29,703.18. The final cost is \$29,542.18. Butch Helbig made a motion to pay the invoice for the new No-Till Drill in the amount of \$29,542.18 from the Enterprise account. Patrick Sines seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Grant Expenses

The Board was presented with a list of the requests from 4-H last month. Seth sent the list to the grant foundation. It was approved. There are some long-term educational installations at the 4-H Camp requested. For this Seth would like to go out to the 4-H camp to determine a more accurate level of funding for each of the projects.

The remaining educational items in the 4-H request would be \$4152.38 plus shipping and handling. Butch Helbig made a motion that the District use grant funding to purchase all the educational items for 4-H. Nevin Sines seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Seth requested that the Board approve the purchase of 2 canopy tents, 4 outdoor folding chairs, and 2 folding tables with the grant funding for the District's use for outdoor educational events and field days. The total cost will be \$650.48. Patrick Sine made a motion that the District use Sustain Our Future grant funds to purchase 2 canopy tents, 4 outdoor folding chairs, and 2 folding tents at a cost of \$650.48. Butch Helbig seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

E&S Review

Seth presented the Board with a list of MDE approved E&S Reviewers. He asked the Board for permission to contact 3 to 5 of them to get a quote on their pricing to review E&S plans for the District, with the objective being that the District could begin to construct a list of firms that could be used in the future to assist with E&S review particularly of large commercial projects. The Board agreed that it would be a good idea to reach out to several of the reviewers and get a quote.

District Conservationist's Report

Some pre-approvals are starting to come this week. There are seven applications with pre-approvals now, most of which are Forestry. There are 18 more ranked which may get pre-approval soon. The last two weeks, the State received additional allocations, which bring the total to \$18 to \$26 million between EQIP and CSP for the year. Chad is not sure how much is being approved for the first round. There will be another round later.

Garrett does not have any CSP so far but there are several EQIP applications that could be re-ranked in CSP. 25 out of 40 applications are ranked. Some of the bigger projects still need engineering, so they will need to be ranked later. We need to be more aggressive in engineering.

There may or may not be another sign-up period. Applications need to be in by January 19 for the first round. The total for all the Maryland applications is \$42 million but a lot of them are the same project in more than one application to try to get them allocated. More applications should be approved next week.

Chris said that he asked for an additional \$8 million for EQIP and an additional \$2 million for CSP. He was surprised at how fast it was received.

CSP is more flexible than in the past, so it is open to more clients.

New Business

Activity Report

The District is working with many producers for Conservation plans and Designs. There are 70 NRCS applications. For E&S there were 6 plans under review at the end of February, 4 plans that were reviewed and need revisions, and 14 plans that were approved. Some District staff attended NRCS Soil Health Training.

FY27 Budget

Seth presented the Board with a proposed FY27 Budget. The new budget does not need to be approved today. Board members are to send any changes to Seth or bring them to the next Board meeting.

Old Business

Annual Work Plan

The Annual Work Plan needs to be paired with the FY27 Budget. Seth provided the Board with a proposed plan and supplemental information regarding the state's MOU's. The Board was asked to give Seth guidance regarding the Annual Work Plan.

District By-Laws

This is not time sensitive. The FY27 Budget and Work Plan should be completed first. The Board agreed that short and concise would be better.

Kristen asked if it is state law to hold elections yearly for the Board. It is in the supervisor's handbook. They are developing a new handbook which may be ready next year.

Patrick Sines made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Nevin Sines seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.