



WASHINGTON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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MINUTES

WASHINGTON COUNTY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT REGULAR MEETING

October 23, 2024 - 10:30 a.m.

WCSCD Conference Room Live and with the ZOOM Platform

ATTENDEES:

Supervisors Present: Harry Strite (Chair), J.D. Rinehart (Supervisor), J. Scott Shank, III (Treasurer), Edward Wurmb (Supervisor), and Ariel Herrod (Supervisor)

Associate Supervisors Present: Boyd Michael (via ZOOM)

Others Present: Denise "Dee" Price, Mark Kendle, Lori Flook Bishop, and Brent Cammauf (USDA, NRCS)

CALL TO ORDER:

The October Regular Board Meeting was called to order by Harry Strite, Chair, at 10:47 a.m.

Before proceeding with the Board Meeting Agenda, Harry Strite, (Chair) and Dee Price (District Manager), presented Mark Kendle (Programs Technician/Office Coordinator) with a plaque, acknowledging "In Appreciation of Five Years of Dedicated Service." Congratulations Mark!

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES:

The September Regular Board Meeting Minutes were submitted for review and approval.

J. Scott Shank, III made a motion to approve the September Regular Board Meeting Minutes as submitted. Edward Wurmb seconded the motion. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

The September Treasurer's Report was submitted for review and approval.

Dee noted all accounts are in order.

J. Scott Shank, III made a motion to approve the September Treasurer's Report as submitted. Edward Wurmb seconded the motion. Motion carried.

District Board of Supervisors

Harry E. Strite
Chair

J.D. Rinehart
Vice Chair

J. Scott Shank, III
Treasurer

Edward C. Wurmb, D.V.M.
Supervisor

Ariel Herrod
Supervisor

Boyd Michael
Associate

Kirk E. Winders
Associate

New Bank Account (MVB) - Update: Dee provided an update for the new MVB Checking and Money Market Accounts and advised the Money Market account has earned \$7,764.20 in interest to date.

The District Accountant, from Albright, Crumbacker, Moul, & Itell, LLC, continues to go back and forth with Intuit (Quick Books Software) to change the Primary Contact person on the account to the current District Manager. Completely out of our control, this is an ongoing process that does not seem to be an easy fix.

There was a \$99 yearly user fee on the new MVB Credit Cards. Dee questioned the bank regarding this fee. They were able to waive the fee for this year, however, likely will not be able to in the future.

Release of Excess Collateral Pledged (Truist): During the September Board Meeting, Dee shared information regarding a Release Form from T. Jacobs, AVP, Corporate Treasury Operations Analyst II/Truist, who advised the form needed updated for Truist Bank. Dee asked for direction and was advised to inquire further prior to completing any documents. As a follow up, Dee noted this Release of Excess Collateral Pledged was legitimate, the form was completed, and the matter is now resolved.

Employee Bonding: The District has for many years paid for bonding for any employee doing financial work. Currently, the District pays \$100 per person/per year for Dee Price, J. Scott Shank, III, Lori Flook Bishop, and Mark Kendle, just added. An email from the SSCC regarding employee bonding was provided for review. After review and discussion, the Board recommended not renewing the bonds next year.

MONTHLY BILL APPROVAL:

The September Monthly Bill Approval Report was submitted for review and approval.

Edward Wurmb made a motion to approve the September Monthly Bill Approval Report as submitted. J. Scott Shank, III seconded the motion. Motion carried.

MACS MONTHLY COST-SHARE SUMMARY REPORT:

The MACS Monthly Cost-Share Summary Report was submitted for review and approval.

J. Scott Shank, III made a motion to approve the MACS Monthly Cost-Share Summary Report as submitted. Edward Wurmb seconded the motion. Motion carried.

REPORTS FROM OTHERS: None

URBAN PROGRAM REPORT:

Sediment Control Review Report: The September Sediment Control Review Report was submitted for review and approval by Mark Kendle (Programs Technician/Office Coordinator).

Edward Wurmb made a motion to approve the September Sediment Control Review Report as submitted. J. Scott Shank, III seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Pond Approval(s): None

OLD BUSINESS:

The Board discussed the following old business:

Board of Supervisor - Update: Ariel Herrod was officially welcomed to the WCSCD Board today as Supervisor. The State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) appointed Ariel as Supervisor, September 19, 2024, and she has completed her Oath of Office as required. This is a Farm Bureau appointed position.

Youth Supervisor - Update: During the September Meeting, the Board reviewed the possibility of a Student Associate Board Member as discussed, some time ago. Associate Boyd Michael suggested speaking with WCBOE's, Erin Anderson, with Public Information, regarding contact to Washington County Public Schools to obtain interest for the position. The Board concurred. Dee again reached out to Erin by email, however, has heard no reply. Boyd asked Dee to forward him the emails, and he will reach out to Erin Anderson.

Western Area Representative - Update: During the 2024 MASCD Annual Meeting in Cambridge, MD, Supervisor Edward Wurmb advised he would like to step down from the Western Area Representative position. Loretta Collins, Secretary, SSCC, emailed to advise Secretary Atticks, Maryland Secretary of Agriculture, has appointed Diane Flickinger (Frederick County) to represent the Western Region. Loretta noted Ed's service to the SSCC has been greatly appreciated.

Health Insurance (Retirement) - Update: A follow-up to previous discussion regarding no available Health Insurance for District employees following retirement. The Board had advised Dee to research further and provide additional information for the Board to review. Boyd Michael noted the Board of Education has a system they follow, and suggested Dee reach out for information. Stephanie Blubaugh with the Board of Education shared information in an email and breakdowns of Medical and Prescription they use. The Board reviewed. Harry Strite, Chair, and Ariel Herrod, Supervisor, gave contact suggestions for further inquiry and potential presentations. Dee will make contact and report back to the Board.

Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Bonding - Update: Dee has done research on Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Bonding and has found nothing prohibiting the District from doing this. The Board agreed to pursue and have Dee continue research for direction. Dee will contact the County for a potential meeting.

Christmas (Board Meeting & Luncheon) - Update: The December Board meeting will be held Thursday, December 5, 2024, at Fountain Head Country Club (FHCC), beginning at 10:00 a.m. with Christmas Luncheon beginning at 11:45 a.m. There will be no November Board Meeting due to the late October and early December Meetings. The November and December Treasurer's Reports, Monthly Bill Approval, Soils Report, etc., will be brought forth for approval during the January 2025 Board Meeting.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS:

- Sign (Geographical Area of Coverage): Dee advised she has not received any answers yet to her inquiries with the State Highway Administration and County Roads Department regarding road signs noting to the similarity of, "Now entering ... Soil Conservation Area" following discussion during last month's Board Meeting.
- Grants (RFP): Attorney Brian Kane continues to work on a more formal, Request for Proposal (RFP) package for use with contractors in future projects, such as stream restoration. Dee, Mark, and Scott are currently reviewing the latest draft for edits.

NEW BUSINESS:

The Board discussed the following new business:

SSCC Guidance Surety Bond/Insurance Coverage: Reviewed earlier during the Treasurer's Report and associated items discussion.

Whole Watershed Act - RFP and Press Release: A memo from MDA, Hans Schmidt, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, regarding Whole Watershed Act - RFP and Press Release was included in the Board packet for review. This was sent for informational purposes, and references for meeting WIP Goals.

Maryland FFA Foundation Fundraising Campaign: The District has received a donation request letter from the Maryland FFA Foundation for continued support for their annual fundraising campaign. The District has budgeted, and previously supported, the Maryland FFA Foundation fundraising campaign at a \$100 donation. The Board discussed.

J.D. Rinehart made a motion to support the Maryland FFA Foundation fundraising campaign with a \$100 donation. Edward Wurmb seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Washington County Dept. of Business & Economic Development - Groundhog Day Event:
The District has received a donation request/letter from the Washington County Department of Business and Economic Development for their 6th annual Groundhog Day event, Friday, January 31, 2025. Their sponsor request is for a donation of \$250. The Groundhog Day annual event was developed to bring Washington County and surrounding area residents to one centralized location to experience all the best that agricultural producers have and provide. The Board discussed and reviewed our Mission Statement, deciding to not participate and/or contribute at this time.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS:

- Dee noted the Herald Mail no longer posts meeting information in print, nor do they publish events in the newspaper.
- The MASCD Summer Meeting will be held in Allegany County at Rocky Gap Casino and Resort, August 4-6, 2025, hosted by the Central region. Supervisors are asked to let us know if they are interested in attending so registrations and reservations can be made.
- The MASCD Winter Meeting will be held at the Westin in Annapolis, February 3-4, 2025. The first day is meetings, and the second day is breakfast and meeting with legislators, to be held in the office space of Lobbyist Mike Mason of Providence Strategies. Supervisors are asked to let us know if they are interested in attending so registrations and reservations can be made.
- The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) 79th Annual Meeting will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah, February 8-12, 2025. Early registration is on or before December 20, 2024.
- The District has received an invoice from the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) for continued support and FY25 Membership. The District has previously supported NACD at a membership contribution level of \$775.

J.D. Rinehart made a motion to support the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) FY25 Membership at the previous membership contribution level of \$775.

J. Scott Shank, III seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- Dee and Chris Burch participated in the Master Gardener's Pollinator Palooza, September 28, 2024, at the University of Maryland Extension - Washington County office. Dee noted they sold several soil test kits, and it was a successful day of information/education outreach.

- During the District Managers Roundtable Meeting, several items were discussed including security in offices and Federal phones. Soon, Federal phones and their land line numbers will be taken away, and they will be issuing cell phones for NRCS employees. Secondly, security in offices across the State of Maryland was discussed. Two SCD offices have contacted Dee to inquire what WCSCD has done for phones and security measures. Fortunately, WCSCD is ahead of the process by being proactive in purchasing a phone and secure entry system.
- During the SSCC meeting, Darren Jarboe, (UMD) advised Taylor Wright, who joined the University of Maryland Extension - Washington County office as their new Nutrient Management Advisor is no longer with the UMD Extension.
- Dee commented, during the recent District Managers Roundtable Meeting, they asked how many Districts have AED Defibrillators in their offices. Most Districts across the State do have them. Dee asked if this would be something the Board would like to explore and possibly purchase. The District does have a First Aid Kit in the office. After some discussion, the Board decided to table for now, and J. Scott Shank, III will check with his contacts at Emergency Services to see if they can provide AED Defibrillators for our office.
- Dee remarked on the recent pre-construction meeting for the Eastern Panhandle Expansion Project (Columbia Gas Line) going under the Potomac River near Hancock. This is an exceptionally large project that has been ongoing and controversial. She noted the drilling for the gas line will be at 148 feet below the riverbed. Dee stated she learned a lot about this project during the meeting. Following, Dee asked the Owners/Developers if they would be willing to partner with the District to develop and purchase a kiosk, which would be installed near the water, explaining the gas line project, and for conservation education purposes. After discussion, the Board advised we cannot financially assist, however, to work with Columbia Gas in development of the kiosk.
- Dee informed the Board, her Office 365 account and emails had been hacked. This was a complex interception, requesting bank information, etc. An IT technician with Glessner Technologies was able to help Dee retrieve email, change passwords, etc. and noted this occurrence is fairly common.
- Dee brought forth for discussion, the District's 85th Anniversary Open House Event planned for August 2025. Dee saw an example of a mug with the quote 'Powered by Soil Conservation and Coffee.' She thought mugs, including this quote and the District logo/85 Years, might be a great giveaway for the event and wanted to get the Board's thoughts. The Farming and Urban community will be invited to the event. We would use a local advertising company to purchase mugs, labels, etc. The Board discussed several possibilities and how many should be ordered. Dee will get a quote for the mugs and update the Board in a future meeting.

- Dee noted, one of the new office phones “fried” and is not covered under warranty. Dee inquired with Glessner Technologies regarding the cost to replace the phone. The purchase cost of a new phone is \$229 - \$266.

J. Scott Shank, III motioned to approve the cost estimate of \$229 - \$266 to replace the office phone. J.D. Rinehart seconded the motion. Motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

J.D. Rinehart made a motion to adjourn the October Regular Board Meeting.
J. Scott Shank, III seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Harry Strite, Chair, adjourned the October Regular Board Meeting at 12:13 p.m.

The next Regular Board Meeting is scheduled in-person, Thursday, December 5, 2024, 10:00 a.m., at Fountain Head Country Club, 13316 Fountain Head Road, Hagerstown, MD 21742.
Christmas Luncheon with staff to follow.