

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Baltimore County Soil Conservation District
June 25, 2025

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Baltimore County Soil Conservation District was called to order by Chairman McGinnis at 8:00 am with the following present:

Supervisors

Mark Duvall
Eric Hadaway
Toby Mays
Mike McGinnis
Steve Smith

Staff

Jim Ensor, BCSCD
Sam Cox, NRCS
Dave Bachman, BCSCD
Essy Frey, BCSCD
Addie McCaul, MDA

Associates

Jesse Albright

Others

Jessica Armacost, OOA
Erika Crawl, UME
Darren Alles, MDA

Motion - Mays moved to approve the minutes of the June Board meeting. The motion was seconded and passed.

Baltimore County Office of Agriculture – Tracey Brooks and Hunter Martin started their new positions with OOA. Armacost hopes to begin producing weekly newsletters again as time permits. Hereford Junior Farm Fair will be held at the Ag. Center on Saturday, July 5, 2025. The next Ag. Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for July 2, 2025. The Ag. Center conference rooms are not going on public booking at this time. Between Board meetings, Ensor provided Armacost with a history of the District and the importance of having its own conference room available on short notice.

Hadaway asked Armacost what support is being asked for from the District for the creation of a Department of Agriculture within Baltimore County government. Armacost was asked by her Director to justify or not justify the creation of this department by September 2025. The purpose of creating a department would be so a future politician could not wipe it from the County budget. After much discussion, Hadaway asked the Board if they were in support of the creation of the Department of Agriculture. The consensus was that the Board is in full support of the creation of a Department of Agriculture within Baltimore County. Councilman David Marks will be invited to attend the July 15, 2025 Board meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Hadaway stated the May 2025 Treasurer's report was in the packet. Sediment control fees received in May were not great, and June does not look good either. The 2nd \$40,000.00 in supplemental County grant funds was received June 2, 2025. Our \$240,427.00 FY'26 County grant request was approved. Hadaway will contact Horacio Tablada and find out if grant funds will be received as one lump sum or quarterly payments as usual. Hadaway asked Frey to send the FY'25 year end Statement of Receipts and Disbursements to all Supervisors as soon as it's completed.

Motion - Hadaway moved to accept the May Treasurer's reports and pay the bills. The motion was seconded and passed.

District Conservationist 's Report – Cox gave the following report:

- \$601,754.70 in Farm Bill programs for FY2025 for 16 contracts
- 2 additional preapprovals for forestry and wildlife related practices
- 32 Active Contracts being managed
- FSA is accepting new CREP offers for a 2nd round until end of July
- CREP re-enrollment offers and new offers that met the June 6th deadline should be released soon

Local Updates:

- CREP training for field staff June 25th on 3 farms in Carroll
- Pollinator training for field staff likely in Carroll- would like to see the Warm Season Grass (WSG) drill and get equipment info
- Brook Trout STAC meeting June 2nd- how to increase brook trout habitat and strong holds, provide resiliency, protect the populations, increase economic growth- every \$1.00 spent on conservation of brook trout results in \$10.00 economic growth to the community. Need cool streams, cool water from reservoirs and ponds, trees and shaded banks, how to target those areas? How to decrease sediments and nutrients in those watersheds
- Chesapeake Bay Program released model estimates between 2023 and 2024 which showed a decrease of N by 15.3%, P by 21.8% and sediment by 7.6% from entering the Bay. The ag sector was responsible for 76% of N reductions, and 46% P and 77% sediment came from natural sector (trees, shorelines, forests and wetlands). The Bay Program assesses water quality by the amount of dissolved oxygen in the Bay, chlorophyll a (algae growth) and water clarity
- Staff working on designs for irrigation, waterways, ag pres plans, plan updates and preparing for cover crop program sign ups
- CAFO MDE updates- mortality and silage leachate-100 times as strong as raw sewage. 1 gallon of silage leachate can lower the oxygen content of 10,000 gallons of fresh water to a critical level for fish survival. pH of 3.6-5.5. MDE is requiring silage leachate to be treated and contained to the 25 year storm capture, this would require a large type of tank structure

Future Planning

- Reorganization plans paused with pending Supreme Court ruling
- Programs – planning for FY2026

District Manager's Report – Ensor stated his report was in the packet and asked if there were any questions. He and Alles will work on MDA evaluations after this meeting. Ensor emailed the District's MOU with the County to Supervisors for their review and comment, but received no response. Jason Yates, our Weed Control Coordinator resigned. The 2025-2026 MDA Cover Crop Program sign up will run June 23, 2025 to July 17, 2025. The District donated \$200.00 toward the purchase of goody bags for the upcoming 2025 MASCD Summer meeting. In addition, we may be asked

to purchase snacks to fill these bags. Ensor will get pricing information for sweatshirts similar to those purchased by Harford County SCD. Farm Bureau's annual banquet is scheduled for November 11, 2025. Farm Bureau asked if the District would be willing to sponsor the cost of lunch for their councilmanic tour to be held sometime in the fall. Ensor reminded the Board that we will begin advertising for the at-large Supervisor position in August.

Motion - Duvall moved to accept the District Manager's and District Conservationist's reports. The motion was seconded and passed.

Staff – McCaul introduced herself to the Board. She reported that staff are busy working on designs which include several grassed waterways and HUAs. In addition, we're finishing up Claim For Payments for spring projects and new applications for fall projects. Ag. staff assisted UME with Sparrows Point High School career day.

Extension – Crowl reported that the Maryland Ag. Agent Group tour of Baltimore County farms (Old Line, Roseda, Richardson and Starbright) on June 11, 2025 went well. She will be in Billings, Montana June 29th – July 3rd for the National Association of County Ag. Agents annual conference. The Maryland State Fair will be held three weekends again this year, August 21st - 24th, August 28th - September 1st, and September 4th - 7th. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits may be cut by 25%. The UME office had 7% budget cut and furloughs may be coming.

MDA Area Coordinator – Alles distributed copies of his report. The 2025 Healthy Soils Competitive Fund recipients have been selected. Ensor will forward this list to Supervisors once it becomes available. Alles noted that he and Frey had attended the Management Excellence for Conservation Partners training held on Kent Island June 10 – 12, 2025. Approximately 30 people (mostly District Managers) attended this training course and found it very beneficial.

Committee Reports

Urban – Bachman reported that the average time until review for May was 22 working days with one priority request. The Dulaney High School project took over 100 hours to review and contributed to an increased turn around time for May.

Personnel – No report.

Agriculture – No report.

Finance – No report.

Old Business

Salary Adjustment - This will be discussed in an Executive Session immediately following the regular meeting.

Fee Increase Notifications – These went out June 1, 2025. The announcement was also made at the Maryland Building Industry Association meeting on June 4, 2025.

MOU With Baltimore County – Covered previously during this meeting.

New Business

MASCD Committees – “Questions for the SCD Boards” sent out to Supervisors prior to the May meeting is due back to Jen Nelson by June 30, 2025.

Baltimore County Department of Agriculture – Discussed previously during this meeting.

Being no further business, the regular meeting adjourned at 9:56 am. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, July 15, 2025 at 8:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Esther L. Frey
Administrative Assistant