

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Baltimore County Soil Conservation District
September 16, 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
Toby Mays
Mike McGinnis
Steve Smith

Staff

Sam Cox, NRCS
Jim Ensor, BCSCD
Jeff West, BCSCD
Essy Frey, BCSCD

Associate Supervisors

Jesse Albright
Bryan Alexander

Others

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

Extension – Crawl reported Farm Bureau nominated Wayne and Harriet McGinnis for the 2026 Governor's Agriculture Hall of Fame award. She asked if the Board wanted to endorse this nomination.

Motion - Duvall moved to endorse the nomination of Wayne and Harriett McGinnis for the Governor's Agriculture Hall of Fame Award. The motion was seconded and passed.

Beers and Steers will be held at Inverness Brewing on Thursday, October 9, 2025 from 5pm – 7pm. Tickets can be purchased at Eventbrite for \$17.85 each. This event is designed to teach participants about different meat cuts, reading meat labels, and the differences in the way beef is finished. Field Crops Day will be held Wednesday, December 3, 2025 at Summit Manor in Hereford.

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

Treasurer's Report – In Hadaway's absence, Frey stated that the August Treasurer's report was in the Board packet and asked if there were any questions. We rec'd and deposited \$240,427.00 which is our entire FY'26 County grant. Fees received in August were \$46,844.51. The approval of the August Treasurer's report will be tabled until the October 21, 2025 Board meeting.

Motion - Smith moved to pay the bills. The motion was seconded and passed.

District Conservationist's Report – Cox reported the following:

Financial:

- IRA contract modifications are still on hold pending clarification from the One Big Beautiful Bill.
- FY2026 program planning is underway. Substantial changes are planned for various programs but nothing has been announced yet.

Local Updates:

- CSP annual certifications and payments are being done.
- Local Work Group Meeting was held Thursday, September 4, 2025. This meeting is designed to gather public input on the education and outreach of the District and formulate a targeted approach to farmers and landowners.
- CREP training for staff & FSA will be held in Carroll County.

Future Planning:

- Construction- livestock pipeline and troughs.
- As harvest is getting underway- be on the look out for erosion and potential locations for grassed waterways.

State Office Updates:

- Moved to new office location down the street from MDA – 2629 Riva Rd, Suite 102, Annapolis, MD 21401

USDA Appointments

- FSA State Executive Director – George Turner
- Rural Development State Director- Paul D. Ellington

District Manager's Report – Ensor had no written report due to being on vacation most of the month. Ensor informed the Board that thus far only one application has been received for the expiring supervisor position. We have eleven (11) annual MACS status reviews to do. The Harford County Annual Cooperators Dinner is scheduled for Thursday, October 23, 2025 at the Level Volunteer Fire Department.

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

Staff – No report.

MDA Area Coordinator – Alles distributed copies of his written report. Ag. 101 is scheduled for October 22 – 23, 2025 at a Central MD location. MDA Boot Camp is scheduled for Central & Western Maryland Areas at the New Midway Volunteer Fire Company. This is a three (3) day overnight event at which Addie, Morgan, Tamara and Jeremy Carnucci are scheduled to attend. In an effort to grant equal access to Non-State District Managers, MDA is converting Employee Reporting to Microsoft 365 Copilot. The MACS program is reviewing and updating policies and procedures in response to recent District concerns regarding the eligibility of animal operation expansions, repair of expired practices, and direct communication with applicants. Thirty one applications were approved for the 2025-2026 Cover Crop Program for Baltimore County. These applications totaled 11,936 acres and \$626,340.00. Conservation Tracker will now move to the Sales Force application.

Alles introduced Eddie Franceschi to the Board. Mr. Franceschi is the new Agricultural Assessment Planner for Harford, Baltimore, Howard, and Montgomery counties. He can be reached at eddie.franceschi@maryland.gov or 410-638-4828, ext. 5234.

Baltimore County Office Of Ag. – Armacost informed the Board that the Baltimore County Council approved Bill 49-25 which will create a Department of Agriculture by amending the County Charter. The Bill passed the Council and will be sent to voters on the ballot in next fall's election. A Cultivating Visibility webinar is scheduled for Tuesday, September 23rd from 10-11am. Participants will learn how to promote their ag business through county and state tourism opportunities. A Farmers Fair is scheduled for November 4, 2025 from 10am – 2pm at the Ag. Center. The next Ag. Advisory Board Meeting is October 1, 2025 at 7:30am. A Buyer/Grower Meeting is scheduled for December 5, 2025.

Committee Reports

Urban – West reported the time until review for August was 14 days. There are currently 9 priorities in the office for review, and one of these is Brandon Shores.

Personnel – Immediately following the regular meeting, the Board will be discussing, revising and approving the District Employee handbook. Immediately following the handbook meeting, at 11:00am, the Board will host the first “Get To Know The Staff” luncheon.

Agriculture – Duvall noted that Hereford FFA students have completed the required 50 hours of ag. related volunteer work associated with the joint Farm Bureau/District educational grant. Frey will write a check to the Hereford FFA Alumni for \$500.00 for our 2025 contribution. Ensor asked if the Board wanted to continue supporting the FFA Agriculture related work hours.

Finance –

Motion - Duvall moved to continue with the District's contribution of \$500.00 to Hereford FFA for 50 hours of ag. related volunteer work. The motion was seconded and passed.

Old Business

MOU With Baltimore County - No new information.

Baltimore County Department of Agriculture – Previously covered during this meeting.

State Funded District Manager Position – At the August Board meeting, the Board agreed to accept MDA's offer to make the District Manager a state position. Chairman McGinnis signed a letter (composed by Hadaway and Smith) to Secretary Kevin Atticks advising him of this decision.

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BCSCD & County IT Coordination – A meeting will be held on October 15, 2025 at 9am in Towson to discuss this issue.

Cooperator of the Year – Duvall asked staff to submit recommendations for the District's 2025 Cooperator of the Year. These recommendations will be discussed at the October 2025 Board meeting. There was then a brief discussion on the possibility of the District having an Annual Cooperators dinner or partnering with other ag. agencies to have an "Agriculture Dinner" here at the Ag. Center in the spring of 2026.

Being no further business, the regular meeting adjourned at 9:35 am. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 21, 2025 at 8:00 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Esther L. Frey
Administrative Assistant