

Minutes – Regular Meeting
Baltimore County Soil Conservation District
December 16, 2025
18336 Brick Store Road
Hampstead, MD 21074

The regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the Baltimore County Soil Conservation District was called to order by Chairman McGinnis at 10:33 am with the following present:

Supervisors

Mark Duvall
Eric Hadaway
Toby Mays
Mike McGinnis
Steve Smith

Staff

Jim Ensor, BCSCD
Essy Frey, BCSCD
Sally Barnes, NRCS
Stu Darley, BCSCD
Tamara Todd, MDA

Associate Supervisors

Jesse Albright

Others

Jess Armacost, BCDOA
Erika Crawl, UME

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

Treasurer's Report – Hadaway stated the Treasurer's report for November was in the Board packet and asked if there were any questions. Fees received in November were right where we need to be, on average we're receiving \$23,000.00 per month. The interest income on the BOA cd was not reflected on the Treas. Report included in the Board Packet. The report has since been revised to reflect this. Hadaway and Ensor converted the BOA cd to a 10-month flexible cd with 3.15% APY, which is just slightly down from what we were receiving before. Hadaway spoke with Brady Locher who requested a mid-year report to show how we're doing financially. As of November, we're slightly above where we needed to be on fee income. Locher indicated that Horacio Tablada wanted to know if we needed a mid-year bump; however, Hadaway didn't remember this in discussions since the County approved the new fee schedule. Hadaway relayed to Locher that we're looking good at the end of November, but we'll let him know if anything changes. We're continuing to work on the FY'27 budget, if anyone has anything they want included in this budget, please let us know. Hadaway noted that he is phasing himself out of Daft McCune Walker, but he plans to stay on the District Board in the position of Treasurer at least until his term is over. Hadaway invited Duvall and Smith to sit in on the FY'27 budget discussions. We will schedule a meeting with Brady Locher in January 2026 to submit a draft budget

Ensor informed the Board that he's been instructed by Byron Petrauskas to pay for MDA employee training from MDA general funds.

Motion - Hadaway moved to roll the BOA CD in to a new 10-month flexible CD with BOA. The motion was seconded and passed.

Motion – Hadaway moved to approve the November Treasurer’s report as revised and pay the bills. The motion was seconded and passed.

District Conservationist’s Report – In Cox’ absence, Barnes informed the Board that both Cox and Kemp are in Carroll County today to certify and make payments on CSP contracts. Those producers with CSP contracts that want to be paid in this calendar year must submit bills by Friday, December 19, 2025. NRCS staff was at Field Crops Day and did not know many of the farmers in attendance. Staff has been brainstorming how to make connections to farmers in the county to promote services and get conservation on the ground. Annual Contract Reminder Letters will be coming out after the New Year to remind all active contract holders of their obligations to install practices in 2026. The CSP program has had an overhaul, details will be forthcoming. IRA contract modifications cannot be processed at this time, we’re waiting for further guidance. We’re taking applications for FY2026 programs for first round deadline of January 15, 2026. Applications for federal programs that didn’t receive funding in FY2025 will be getting a deferral letter from the office stating that they should contact the office within 30 days if they wish to be reconsidered for funding in FY2026. There’s a new Regenerative Agriculture funding pool of money that will focus on healthy soil practices and whole farm conservation planning across the operation. This will be a good chance to try new things and continue to build on previous soil health practices. Things to consider include planting green, adding lime or gypsum, if soil tests show the need, healthy soils assessments, etc. More details to come, but having an up to date basic soils test will be key. Eric Hines is on medical leave until after the new year. His triple bypass heart surgery went well and he is home recovering. The Mountains to Bay Grazing Alliance Conference scheduled for December 9, 2025 has been rescheduled. The Precision Ag Technology Conference is scheduled for February 26, 2026 in Annapolis.

District Manager’s Report – Ensor stated his written report was in the Board packet and asked if there were any questions. Chuck Kauffman has done an excellent job with the Weed Control Spray Program this year. Twenty one (21) state roads for 154 miles were sprayed. No additional information on the SWM for ag buildings legislative sub-committee. Kritty Uhdin doesn’t have much to say about this. DEPS is now getting involved with farms that request an ag. building permit to build ag. buildings to make sure wetlands and streams are not being disturbed. Ensor will meet with Libby Errickson, Natural Resources Supervisor with Environmental Protection and Sustainability to discuss this. Ensor sent out two emails from the State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC). Van Funk’s term as Chairman of the Central Area is up, any supervisor interested in applying for this position should contact Ensor. The position has a 4 year term and individuals can serve up to two successive terms for a total of 8 years. SSCC meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of each month at MDA with in-person and virtual options. Participants must attend at least ½ of the SSCC meetings in person. A Work Plan will be discussed at the SSCC December meeting. Anyone having topics they want included in the Work Plan should submit those to Ensor ASAP. SSCC is looking for Districts to host Committee meetings.

Motion - Smith moved to accept the District Manager's report. The motion was seconded and passed.

Staff – Todd informed the Board that the 2025 – 2026 Cover Crop is just about over with 8500 acres submitted. Planners are busy with the EQIP deadline coming up on January 15th. Staff are trying to get plans approved for farmers that want to apply for EQIP. They are also having discussions with producers to see what projects they want to do this spring. Technicians are busy with horse farm projects including roof runoff, waste storage, HUAs, etc. Todd noted that we've had very few grassed waterways being constructed this spring, which is very unusual for us. She asked if any of the Board farmers needed their grassed waterways redone or new ones constructed, that they please contact the office.

Extension Agent – Crowl informed the Board that 95 people attended Northern Maryland Field Crops Day held Wednesday, December 3, 2025. UME held a Legislative Breakfast on December 12, 2025 to inform legislators of the services Extension provides. Crowl has received a grant to do Ag. Ventures. This program will be targeted at 4th graders who will visit the Ag. Center to learn about agriculture on April 29, 2025. Crowl asked the Board if they would sponsor the 2026 Vegetable Growers Meeting scheduled for January 21, 2026.

Motion - Smith moved to sponsor the 2026 Vegetable Growers Meeting with a donation of \$110.00. The motion was seconded and passed.

An eight week Beginning Farmers Program will begin February 10, 2026.

MDA Area Coordinator – In Alles' absence, Ensor distributed copies of Alles' report.

Baltimore County Dept. of Ag. – Armacost provided copies of the DOA newsletter. She informed the Board of sponsorships opportunities available through Discover Baltimore County's website. The new buyer/grower directory is being finalized. Armacost's office is creating a Baltimore County farm map. The next Ag. Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for January 7, 2026. The County is still working with DNR to review Ag. Center management and Program Open Space rules and guidelines. Hadaway said he was frustrated that his request for the weeds at the Ag. Center to be sprayed has gone unanswered. Ensor will bring this matter to Susi Ponce and Jim Calao's attention.

Committee Reports

Urban – Darley reported the time until review for November was 10 days with 6 private priorities currently in the office for review. The urban department met with Baltimore County Sediment Control Inspection Staff on November 19, 2025. This meeting was very productive. Darley handed the 20,000 sq. ft. and 30,000 sq. ft. standard plans for 2026 to Chairman McGinnis for his signature. Urban staff will be accompanying Baltimore County's Sediment Control inspection staff on December 17, 2025 to visit the Dulaney High School construction site.

The urban department also met with Kritty Udhin and his storm water management staff on December 11, 2025. One topic of discussion at this meeting was a large agri-voltaic project on Freeland Road.

Personnel – No report.

Agriculture - No report.

Finance – No report.

Old Business

MOU With Baltimore County - No new information.

State Funded District Manager Position – Ensor asked Alles for an update on this and was told MDA is planning to fill this position in the Spring of 2027, with interviews being held in November and December of 2026.

Employee Handbook – Still making updates to this.

Election of Officers –

Motion - Duvall moved to accept the same slate of officers. The motion was seconded and passed.

Proposed Organizational Structure for the BC Dept. of Ag. (DOA)- Ensor still has not rec'd any answer to two emails sent to Armacost regarding the flow chart included in the Proposed Organization Structure. Armacost stated that the Ag. report is only a recommendation, and she has not received any additional direction on this.

SWM of Ag Buildings – Covered previously during this meeting.

New Business

Employee Bonuses –

Motion – Hadaway moved to award a \$300.00 employee bonus to each District employee. The motion was seconded and passed.

Envirothon – Ensor received an email from Barry Burch of the Maryland Envirothon Committee indicating that Katy Dell and Tiffany Wendland from BCPS Office of Science would like to attend the January 2026 Board meeting to discuss their interest in forming a Baltimore County Envirothon team.

Being no further business, the regular meeting adjourned at 12:35 pm. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 20, 2026 at 8:00am.

Respectfully submitted,

Esther L. Frey
Administrative Assistant