

**MINUTES OF GARRETT SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
SUPERVISORS' MEETING**

April 20, 2021

Teleconference Meeting

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Smokey Stanton. The Meeting was conducted via phone-in conference call. Other supervisors present on the call were Kris Enlow, Bill Buckel and Katharine Dubansky. Chad Bucklew, Carrie Colebank, Heather Hutchinson, Butch Helbig and Roger Kitzmiller were also present via telephone.

Minutes for the January 19, 2021 Board Meeting were approved as submitted, without objection.

The following report of state funds was presented and approved:

Balance – March 1, 2020 .....	\$ 15,372.448
Receipts – March 1, 2020 – March 31, 2020 .....	<u>0.00</u>
	\$ 15,372.44
Expenditures – March 1, 2020 – March 31, 2020 .....	<u>223.56</u>
Balance – March 31, 2020 .....	<b>\$15,148.88</b>

A detailed Treasurers Report of balances and expenditures for all accounts, for the period of March 17, 2021 through April 20, 2021, was distributed. The Treasurers Report was accepted and approved as submitted, without objection.

Information presented to the Board:

- Office Update: COVID-19. Office procedures and work schedules are basically unchanged. MDA Employees continue to telework with weekly office visits; Chad, Carrie and Roger are teleworking with office visits as needed.
- Three MDA Employees have been hired: Jarrod Sisler – Technician started 3/24/21; Cody Myers – Technician will start 04/21/21; Jessica Klotz – Planner will start 04/21/21. NRCS has hired Jacob Metcalf – Soil Conservationist (start date unsure)
- District Scholarship applications will be received until May 1; submissions for the MASCD Coloring Contest will be received until May 7.
- Signs and phone numbers have been updated on the No-Till Drill and Spreader; A new tire was purchased for the Drill; a jack and implement drive tire was purchased for the Spreader

Chad discussed the progress with EQIP preapprovals for the office. No large livestock projects have been preapproved, but 14 contracts have been preapproved for funding so far this year. Of the projects, 5 were Garrett Local Work Group projects, 2 were forestry projects, 6 were Golden Winged Warbler habitats, and one was irrigation related. The total value of the contracts is about \$400,000. In terms of staffing, Chad announced that there is still not a

defined start date for the new NRCS Soil Conservationist, Jacob Metcalf. Chad also mentioned that Shannon Farrell will be leaving to work in the private sector. An NRCS Forester position that will be based in Cumberland will be hired in a few months, but we will be missing this key role for at least a few months. Chad also mentioned that Beth Goering, Grazing Specialist, will be taking another job in WV in a few months. Because the Grazing Specialist position is funded through the RC&D, this position will likely not be backfilled once Beth leaves. The grazing planning role will likely be performed by existing and oncoming staff in the foreseeable future. Heather Hutchinson shared information from the SSCC meeting stating that off-site fill cannot be placed on farms under a conservation plan unless the fill is required as part of a specific conservation practice (i.e. access road, building pad, etc.). Heather also reported that MDA will be using aerial imagery this year to verify cover crop kill-down in lieu of field verification.

Discussion took place regarding the varying complexities of solar panel sites and E&S Control Plan approval for those sites. Due to the size and complexity of the Backbone Mountain Site, Roger recommended requesting a joint review with Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). A motion was made and seconded (Katharine/Bill) to request a joint review with MDE, providing there is no cost to the District (vote was in-favor (unanimous) with no objections).

Further discussion took place regarding the District developing a fee schedule to provide funding for possible future sites that may require outside/consulting assistance, and to possibly hire a reviewer in order to reduce the workload related to review and approval of Commercial, Timber Harvest and Standard E&S Plans. Roger will collect information from other counties to be used as a starting point to work on developing a fee schedule for the Garrett District.

The Board approved (with no objections) donating \$100 to MASCD in lieu of an auction item that the District typically provides (requested by MASCD due to the auction being canceled this year).

The Board approved (with no objections) donating \$50 to the Envirothon to purchase tee shirts in lieu of prizes that the District typically provides.

The District received a check (\$5000 deposited into the Local Account) from the Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund to purchase accessories for the state truck (\$1290) and to purchase computers for new employees (\$2822).

Checks will be written from that account to pay for the accessories (High Mountain Off-Road) and to reimburse Roger (due to limited payment options, the computers were charged to Roger's personal credit card).

RC&D requested that the District name a representative to fill a vacancy on the RC&D regional Board. Board members were asked to respond to Roger within 10 days if they are interested in accepting the position or would like to recommend a candidate.

A decision was made to continue to hold District Meetings via telephone conference for the foreseeable future.

A call for further business brought no response and the meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.