

**Frederick County SCD Board Meeting**  
**Monday, January 27, 2025**  
**Soil Conservation District Office**

**Supervisors in Attendance:** B. Sowers, M. Shafer, D. Flickinger, J. Falkenstein.

**Associates in Attendance:** S. Leatherman, R. Myers, M. Ahalt, S. Hipkins, A. Holter.

**Guests in Attendance:** P. Heizer. K. Potter, MDA Regional Coordinator. District Manager, H. Hutchinson. Soil Conservation Coordinator, K. McAfee. M. Townsend, UMD Frederick County Ag Agent. E. Hines, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist (joined at 12:43pm).

Meeting called to order by Chairman, B. Sowers at 11:07am.

**Meeting Minutes**

**Minutes approved from December Meeting by motion:** D. Flickinger motioned, second by M. Shafer. All in agreement.

**Minutes approved from December Closed Session by motion:** M. Shafer, second by D. Flickinger. All in agreement.

**Financial Reports**

**December Treasurers Report approved as filed by motion:** J. Falkenstein motioned, second by M. Shafer. All in agreement.

**Bank Account Reconciliation Report approved as filed by motion:** J. Falkenstein motioned, second by D. Flickinger. All in agreement.

**Expenses for the Month approved by motion:** D. Flickinger motioned, second by M. Shafer. All in agreement.

**Old Business:**

1. Office Lease: H. Hutchinson presented the final lease for the additional rental space. B. Sowers signed the lease.
2. Hood Climate Summit: The Hood Climate Summit will be held on 2/28 and 3/1. The SCD is a bronze sponsor and will have a booth there only on 2/28. Admission is free, but lunch tickets must be purchased.

**New Business:**

1. SSCC Meeting: H. Hutchinson and D. Flickinger attended the SSCC meeting on 1/16.
  - a. HPAI has been confirmed in MD and VA.
  - b. The Chesapeake Bay Advisory group farmer panel has been approved. Two representatives from each Bay state will be selected to serve on the panel.
  - c. MD Nutrient Management AIR's have been mailed. You can complete the paper form or online version.
  - d. There is a significant budget deficit. The MACs Capital program is not being funded through FY26. MDA said there are enough funds from reversions (money not used due

- to canceled projects, project actual costs being less than estimates, etc.) to fund projects during this time. The Cover Crop program has been fully funded.
- e. MDA received funding to create the LEEF program and hire support staff.
  - f. MDA will try again to replace the tiered fining structure for Nutrient Management violations with a single, \$1000 fine. There are multiple opportunities to achieve compliance before a fine is assessed.
  - g. HB278 was submitted to modify the income tax subtraction for enhanced agricultural management equipment allowing the Secretary of Agriculture to identify equipment that is eligible rather than going before the legislature to do so. This will improve the efficiency of recognizing new technology.
  - h. SB176/HB0140 was submitted for soil conservation and water quality plan- uses of information. This was submitted by MDA to allow them access to information in the plans for the purpose of enforcement.
2. MASCOD Winter Meeting: H. Hutchinson reported that everyone who said they were attending was registered. A. Holter is no longer able to attend, but if someone would like to take his place a ticket is available. R. Myers will now attend in place of A. Holter
  3. Legislative Day: H. Hutchinson reported that Farm Bureau's legislative day will be held on February 8<sup>th</sup> at the New Midway Volunteer Fire Company from 9am-3PM. H. Hutchinson raised concern about addressing the flood plain ordinance. The board agreed that the issue should be brought up at legislative day.
  4. Soil Health: H. Hutchinson reported that Grace Garst would like to have door prizes again and is requesting \$300 towards purchasing them. Items such as freeze-misers and soil probe buckets will be purchased.
    - a. M. Shafer motioned, second by J. Falkenstein, to allot \$300 towards purchasing raffle items for the Soil Health event. All in agreement.
  5. Frederick County Council approved the request for a fee increase at the Council meeting on January 21, 2025. A memo will be sent to engineers announcing the fee increase.
  6. Forest Clearing Workgroup: H. Hutchinson along with other district managers across the state met with MDE, DNR, and members of SSCC to discuss the process of forest clearing. DNR explained that forest harvest does not include stump removal, and that stump removal would require a grading permit. Forest clearing is not an agricultural practice in a conservation plan. Some counties restrict clearing to A and B slopes.
  7. Scholarship: D. Flickinger reported that the ruritan was told schools need scholarship information in January or earlier.
    - a. K. McAfee will work on posting the scholarship now and getting it to FCPS schools. Scholarship applications will still be due in May.
  8. Maryland Ag Education Foundation. H. Hutchinson presented a request for support from MAEF.
    - a. M. Shafer motioned, second by D. Flickinger, to give \$500 towards MAEF. All in agreement.
  9. Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project: D. Flickinger reports to stay current on information regarding MPRP. There are reports of drones being used for aerial views of properties on the proposed route.

**Communications:** No Report.

**NRCS Report:** E. Hines reported that there is currently a federal hiring freeze for at least 90 days. IRA funds are suspended for at least 90 days. Payments can still be made on current contracts, CSP, etc. All staff has 30 days to be back in the office working- please note the difference between being fully remote and teleworking.

**MDA Report:** K. Potter reported that HR is currently working on making offers to technicians. There are folks that have selected the Frederick office as their preferred space, so those offers could be coming soon, he will let H. Hutchinson know. Resource Conservation has started a HPAI team to help with outbreaks. WIP progress data went to the EPA in December. Elizabeth will contact the SCD's with more information.

**Cooperating Agencies:** M. Townsend noted that the Central MD Agronomy Update will be on 2/19 at the Urbana Fire Department from 9am-3pm. Doors open at 8:30am with a light breakfast and lunch provided. Tickets are \$25.00 and can be purchased online through Eventbrite or by calling (301)-600-3576, MD Nutrient Management, MD Private Applicator, and CCA credits will be available.

**Next Meeting:** Scheduled for Tuesday, February 18, 2025, at 9:00AM at the Soil Conservation District Office.

**Adjournment:** D. Flickinger motioned, seconded by M. Shafer, to adjourn the regular meeting at 1:24pm and that the board meet in special closed session to comply with a specific constitutional, statutory, or judicially imposed requirement that prevents public disclosures about a particular proceeding or matter as authorized by General Provisions Article Section 3-305(b)(13). The motion carried unanimously.

APPROVED