



Cecil Soil Conservation District

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Board of Supervisor's Meeting October 22, 2025

The Cecil Soil Conservation District held a Board of Supervisors meeting with a Zoom call-in option. The meeting was called to order at 8:33AM by Chairman – Bruce Yerkes. Attendees Supervisors – Van Funk, Willie Ewing, Associate Member Alice Crothers. Other attendees: District Manager - Chris Brown, MDA Area Coordinator - Darren Alles, Administrative Assistant – Patty Pierce, District Coordinator – Tracey Rach and John Gonzalez.

Visitor: Darren Alles – District Operations – Mr. Alles presented MDA Updates. MDA is in the midst of updating a Planner reporting workbook. The workbook will outline other work that conservation planners perform including bmp reporting, trainings, responsibilities of the cover crop program as well as telework activities in addition to planners MS22 requirements (number of plans). The document is being vetted by a workgroup of planners (Sean McCandless attends the meetings). Mr. Alles also highlighted upcoming training events including, Ag 101 and field training at three sites in Carroll County. Ivan Tokash is signed up for this. Conservation bootcamp will be held Dec 2-4th in Frederick County. Mr. Alles also shared that MDA's Program Planning and Evaluation folks will be transitioning WIP reporting from Conservation Tracker system to new salesforce platform before the end of December. MDA's Annual Agricultural Nutrient Management Update Trainings will be offered in two locations, Dec 4th in New Midway, MD and Dec 15th at MDA Headquarters in Annapolis, MD. The nutrient management certification exam is Feb 6th at MDA Headquarters in Annapolis, MD. The group discussed MDA's Conservation Grants Program and definition and eligibility of animal operation expansions. Darren explained the AFO permitting process in Maryland.

- Van Funk made a motion to accept the September 17, 2025 Board meeting minutes. Willie Ewing seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Bruce Yerkes asked if the board had reviewed the treasurer's report, and expenses. There were no questions. The Maryland Envirothon dues request was presented. Van Funk made a motion to sponsor the Maryland Envirothon at the one-thousand-dollar level and file the treasurer's report and pay bills. Willie Ewing seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Old Business

- Chris Brown and Tracey Rach provided a quick update on the 7th Grade Ag Education Meeting this month. Planning for next year's event continues.
- Envirothon training was yesterday October 21st at the Fair Hill Nature Center. Approximately 120 students attended this training.

- The district is once again planning to hold the Ag Day at the Dupont Farm in early April, 2026. Last year's event received positive feedback from the Cecil County School of Technology Ag Science students as well as our local farmers who attended.
- On October 8th, Harford and Cecil counties hosted a joint Ag Tour for the Maryland Ag Commission. Chris, Tracey and Patty attended. Chris provided a recap regarding the day. Chris Brown explained that the Governor has tasked the Ag Commission with developing a Definition of Agriculture for the state. Once finalized, the governor will push to all the state departments. Chris explained that the current definition is extremely complex and would suggest re-defining it using a broad overview but then delving into specific components that are covered under "Agriculture". MASCD has asked to be involved in the development of the definition.
- Van Funk provided a summary of the SSCC meeting held on October 16th. Last meeting met at St. Mary's SCD. The main presenter was RC&D.

Annual Business

- Chris Brown and Tracey Rach reminded everyone that banquet time preparations are beginning. Tracey has already emailed out "Save the Date" to all partnering agencies and political affiliates. She will also begin seat reservations through ZEFFY, a platform that Farm Bureau has utilized, beginning November 1st. Alice Crothers completed a questionnaire and has returned it to the staff.
- NACD registration has begin for February 15th-19th of 2026 in San Antonio, TX. Board needs to determine what staff member will be offered to attend this year. Chris Brown will review the staff seniority list and see who is next up for the offer. Please let Tracey Rach know right away if you plan to attend as there is an early registration discount.
- The MASCD Winter Meeting will be February 9th & 10th at the Westin in Annapolis. Tracey will need to know who plans to attend. Chris Brown, Bruce Yerkes, and Van Funk will attend. All board members are encouraged to attend in order to engage with elected officials during this difficult budget year.
- Tracey Rach provided an accountant update. A discussion was held about possibly changing to a different accountant for the Annual Review as fees have increased.

New Business

- Chris Brown presented the District Activities Report. Staff visited two farms for Inventory & Evaluations for various practices. Three designs were reviewed "in-house". Four projects are in progress. One application for best management practices was submitted to MDA/MACS for cost share. Staff are currently conducting on-farm *status reviews* received from MDA/MACS. Three claims were submitted to MDA. WIP reconciliation round 30 was completed and submitted to MDA. Chris Brown shared NRCS financial assistance conservation program activities. There were no Farm Conservation Plans completed for this month but annual goals / year to date acres information was shared with the group. Planners are currently working through smaller parcel acres. Chris Brown shared information regarding the planning activities and how they will plan into the new year. Historically priority has been taken from tracker for the largest tract of acres but this required multiple meetings with cooperators. Chris is working with planners regarding better use of time and efficiency and meeting with cooperators through running producer reports. Thirty-three urban E&S plans were reviewed and twenty-two urban E&S plans were approved. Four 378- Small Pond plans were reviewed. Six urban meetings were attended. Two agricultural stormwater management and erosion and sediment control I&Es Pond repair and ag fills. One stream restoration/wetland creation projects is in progress. Two information and education events

were attended by staff. Staff attended five trainings and seven-monthly meetings. Vic Priapi made a motion to accept the activities report as presented. Van Funk seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- NRCS updates were provided by Chris Brown and status of the Federal shutdown. FSA is back tomorrow.
- The website refresh quote was sent out to Board Members for review. Tracey asked if there were any other questions and if the Board agreed to move forward. Van Funk made a motion to approve the proposal for the website refresh with Almond Branch Marketing. Willie Ewing seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Van Funk made a motion to accept Levi Glick, Melvin Lapp, and Mikelle Farm LLC as a new cooperator. Willie Ewing seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- As mentioned at the last meeting the position of Ag Coordinator with Cecil County Economic Development is currently vacant. Chris Brown shared there should be a decision made October 27th.
- Taste of Maryland is February 5th at the LIVE Casino. If anyone would like to attend, please let Chris Brown or Tracey Rach know for tickets.
- Harford County SCD Meeting is tomorrow October 23rd. Bruce Yerkes, Van Funk, Chris Brown, Tracey Rach, and Patty Pierce plan to attend.

The next meeting will be held on November 19 at 8:30 AM. The meeting will be held at the office with a teleconference option. The teleconference option will continue to be offered for those working in the field.

As there being no further general business, Bruce Yerkes called for a motion to adjourn the general meeting. Van Funk made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alice Crothers seconded the motion. The general meeting adjourned at 9:51 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia A Pierce
Administrative Assistant