



Cecil Soil Conservation District

105 Chesapeake Boulevard, Suite B-3, Elkton MD 21921

(410) 398-4411 Ext.3

Board of Supervisor's Meeting March 18, 2026

The Cecil Soil Conservation District held a Board of Supervisors meeting with a Zoom call-in option. The meeting was called to order at 8:32 by Chairman – Bruce Yerkes. Attendees Supervisors – Van Funk, Willie Ewing, and Alice Crothers. Other attendees: District Manager - Chris Brown, Administrative Assistant – Patty Pierce, District Coordinator – Tracey Rach and Darren Alles, MDA Area Coordinator, Visitors: John Gonzalez and Don Jackson.

Visitor: Don Jackson introduced himself. Don works for Ag Industrial and is a farmer in Port Deposit. Don was also on the Cecil County Farm Bureau board. Everyone in the room introduced themselves to Don and explained their roles.

- Van Funk made a motion to accept the February 11, 2026 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. Willie Ewing made a motion to file the treasurer's report and pay bills. Van Funk seconded the motion. Motion carried. Chris Brown shared with the Board that the District's County Budget Meeting appointment is April 7th at 4:30pm to 6:15pm. Chris shared with the group that he has met with the administration to review this year's budget request. The only changes that are proposed are associated with staff salaries that were associated with the county's Salary Study Workgroup.

Old Business

- Chris Brown provided updates on upcoming education and outreach events, including the Envirothon Spring Training scheduled for the following Tuesday, March 24th, 2026 where various teams will assist with different stations including soils, forestry, and aquatics. Chris, Mari and Sean will be assisting with the event. There will be 66 students in attendance. Chris shared a quick overview of the Envirothon event – national and locally.
- Ag Day at the Cecil Land Trust Fairview Farm also known as the Patsy Dupont Farm event is scheduled for April 10th. The flyer for registration is shared on Instagram and Facebook. The Cecil Land Trust is sharing copies of the flyers with the Amish Community and Tracey emailed a copy of the flyer to all of the cover crop participants. Cherish Warner is spearheading this event. The event will offer three nutrient management credits, the most we have received for similar events.
- The CCAED 7th grade Ag education event is scheduled for April 28th, 29th, and 30th. Chris Brown is managing the volunteer list and currently the event has 61 registered. He is still looking for more volunteers and sponsorships. This event will include district staff as well as students from the Cecil County School of Technology. Tracey Rach shared information regarding expenses and stated Land O'Lakes grant funding of \$13,000 was received to use for transportation. Tracey thanked Alice

Crothers for letting the district know about the grant. Chris Brown shared details about the event and information regarding stations and partners involved.

- Chris Brown shared news regarding Rachael Coffey's retirement announcement. Rachel will be finishing out the school year with the CCST Ag Science Class.
- The refreshed District website is live. The district has login rights to make updates or modifications. Almond Branch Marketing has provided training tools for maintaining. Chris explained issues that districts across the state are having with bringing their websites into ADA compliance. Districts have until April 2027 to update accordingly. Currently, the CSCD website is at 98% compliance.
- Rob Weaver shared dates for NRCS Bootcamp scheduled for May 5th, 6th and 7th are onsite and the 8th is virtual.
- Chris Brown and Tracey Rach went to Cecil College on March 4, 2026 to award one of the District's scholarship funds to the college and a few photos were taken. There will be a press release made by the college regarding this scholarship donation.

New Business

- Rob Weaver presented the District Activities Report. He provided a detailed overview of the district's activities, discussed various technical assistance requests and training activities, including AutoCAD, 4R's Symposium, and a Precision Ag Technology Conference. Rob shared office activities including the recent HPAI outbreak here in Cecil County. Rob and Chris discussed issues with bird mortality at a Delaware facility, where vultures were observed on the building and potentially causing ventilation problems through feathers being drawn into roof vents. Chris Brown and Darren Alles shared legislative updates information. Engineering activities included plan reviews, TAC meetings, and small pond reviews. Staff visited two farms for Inventory & Evaluation. Five full resource conservation plans are in progress. One design was approved "in-house". Two projects are in progress. One application, one approval, and one claim for best management practices was submitted to MDA/MACS for cost share. Rob Weaver shared NRCS financial assistance conservation program activities. 29 applications were ranked. The Federal Government allocated 8 million additional dollars to the \$16 million bringing the total to \$24 million for the current funding round for projects. Twenty-five urban E&S plans were reviewed and thirteen urban E&S plans were approved. Three forest harvest plans were reviewed and two forest harvest plans were approved. Eight 378- Small Pond plans were reviewed. Five urban meetings were attended. The team discussed various project activities including solar, stormwater management, and forest harvest plans, with specific updates on approved projects and upcoming work including a pre-construction meeting scheduled for next week at a farm with TeamAg as the engineer. Staff completed Inventory and Evaluations for Agricultural Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control Projects. Van Funk made a motion to accept the activities report as presented. Willie Ewing seconded the motion. Motion carried. Amend that Van Funk did not attend the NACD winter meeting or last month's SSCC meeting. With amendment made, Van Funk made a motion to accept the Activities Report. Willie Ewing seconded the motion. Motion Carried.
- Rob Weaver provided NRCS updates. The report went over several key developments, including the addition of \$8 million in funding and the appointment of Susie Daubert as acting state coordinator for Delaware in addition to Maryland.
- Willie Ewing made a motion to accept John Carre and Dawn's Chance Farm as new cooperators. Van Funk seconded the motion. Motion carried.

- The CSCD Annual Report which is shared with the County at the Budget Meeting and utilized for the MASCD awards is completed and professionally printed. Chris Brown reviewed the Annual Report with the board.
- Van Funk provided the State Soil Conservation Committee (SSCC) update. The meeting is Thursday, March 19th. Legislative updates will be discussed as well as the new MDA flat rates. The main topic for this month's meeting will be a presentation and Q&A with Jason Keppler from MDA. Loretta Collins will discuss closed meeting sessions and how they should be conducted. Next month's meeting will be held at the Baltimore County Ag Center.
- Darren Alles provided an MDA update on various programs and initiatives. Darren discussed the planner reporting workbook, a comprehensive spreadsheet designed to track planner activities and work, which will include scoring and credit systems similar to those used for technicians. Darren provided updates on recruitment for three technician positions in Hartford, Carroll, and Talbot counties with 30 candidates scheduled for interviews, and the upcoming end of Conservation Tracker on March 26th. The team discussed regional flat rates, with four main components being developed including sediment control pond and heavy use area protection, and noted that the cover crop program budget was reduced from \$22.5 million to \$19.5 million for fiscal year 2027, covering approximately 300,000 acres. Maryland Cover Crop Program Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting is March 26th at MDA Headquarters. The group also addressed challenges with CAFO permits and Rob Weaver explained how the regenerative pilot project could offer up to 5-year contracts for cover crops through EQIP, though farmers would need to modify their practices to qualify for the funding. 2025 Annual Implementation Report (AIR) has extended filing deadline to April 1st, 2026. The group addressed concerns about the upcoming elimination of 100% cost share funding on July 1st, with some confusion about whether applications or claims needed to be submitted before the deadline. All applications will need to be submitted to MACS prior to May 15th to reach the Board of Public Works prior to July 1st. Once approved the funding will have been allocated.
- Chris Brown provided a review of the MASCD Winter Meeting minutes. The MASCD Summer Meeting is rescheduled for August 3-5 at the Hyatt Regency, Cambridge, Maryland. Tracey Rach asked everyone to let her know as soon as possible who is attending so that she can register and book rooms. The MASCD District Awards are nearly completed. The district will submit a nomination for Cooperator of the Year, Long Green Farms, the Conservation Education Award and the Outstanding District Award. Chris has some final updates to make on the Outstanding District Award. Once that is complete there will be forms the Board Members will have to Docusign before Tracey can submit to MASCD by May 1, 2026.
- Chris Brown shared some points with the Legislative Bill Review. Chris Brown shared Mike Mason's update with the group. Mike Mason holds meetings and keeps everyone updated.
- Bruce Yerkes provided the NACD Update with a recap of the NACD Annual Meeting in San Antonio just a few weeks ago. It was a good meeting with variety of breakout sessions. It is always interesting to see issues in mid-west. Maryland is always recognized for conservation efforts and received recognition for its 100% NACD membership. The National summer meeting will be held in Michigan. The winter meeting is in Las Vegas next year. The NACD Fly-In is scheduled for March 25, 2026.
- Chris Brown provided an update on the Chesapeake Club, noting a recent 2-hour meeting with their development team regarding stormwater management plans and their efforts to get on the Planning Commission agenda. Chris, Mari and Gerry attended the meeting. The meeting focused on a project involving stormwater plans and E&S requirements, where the team discussed ongoing challenges

with plan updates and deadlines. Chris reported that while the plans laid on the table looked better drafting-wise, they still have not re-submitted revised plans sets for District review.

The next meeting will be held on April 22, 2026 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 adjourn. Bruce Yerkes seconded the motion. The general meeting adjourned at 10:07 AM.

Respectfully submitted,



Patricia A Pierce
Administrative Assistant

Board Member Current Attendance Record February 2025 to February 2026

Bruce Yerkes, Chairman	100%
Willie Ewing, Co Chairman	91%
Van Funk, Treasurer	100%
Vic Priapi, Member	58%
Alice Crothers, Member	91%