

MONTGOMERY COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

February 23, 2023

MEETING # 881

Present:

Scott Ryan, *Chairman, Grange Member*

Robert Headwell, Jr, *Legislative Rep*

Martin Kelly, *Legislative Member*

Richard Kennedy, *Member at Large*

Corey Nellis, *District Manager*

Karen Klemczak, *District Clerk-Treasurer*

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

CALL MEETING TO ORDER @ 7:59 PM

MINUTES of the January 23, 2023 meeting were reviewed. *Martin Kelly made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Richard Kennedy. All in favor, motion carried.*

TREASURER'S REPORT as of February 22, 2023

District Checking:	50,622.07
Building Acct:	183,294.74
MCSWCD Savings (Grants)	5.00
Trumbull C701373	579.09
Bolster CRF C012140	64,305.14
Water Quality	992.43
Saltsman C701372	76,633.03
Kelly CAFO C012082	947.01
Holloway C012182	955.85
Hoefele C012183	152,638.15
Fisher C012181	582.09
AEM	100,189.93
Ridgedale C701426	88,353.01
Crowe T012325	995.32
SOTF Grant	167.89
Undeposited Funds	.00
Total in all accounts	\$ 721,260.75

Review of disbursements (check register 1/20/23 through 2/22/23)

Review of outstanding accounts

Bills to be paid: None

Martin Kelly made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, pay all audited bills, approve all salary payments for the next month and/or the next board meeting, seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr. All in favor, motion carried.

Old Business:

- 1.) **Field Work** – Scott Davis has two designs completed for this year's field work. Hoefele's is now under construction.
- 2.) **2023 Annual Report** – The annual report is complete and has been submitted to the state. Bob Headwell took the reports home to do the annual audit.
- 3.) **Grant closeouts** – Corey has been working with Scott Fickbohm to get Trumbull's grant closed out and Joe has also been working with Scott on the closeout of Bolster. Holloway's is almost ready to be handed in and then Corey will move on to Fisher's and Kelly's grant.
- 4.) **Legislative Days (Feb 27<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>)** – Corey will be going to Legislative Days this year with Scott Ryan. They will be discussing the district law changes and the class C stream certification changes with the legislators. They have 13 meetings set up.
- 5.) **Truck Bids** – We got 3 truck bids. A new truck will cost: Main Motor \$43,828.34, Maguire Cars \$49479.70, L.T. Begnal Motor \$50,317.91. The Kelly Blue Book value for our trucks are: 2021 Ram 1500(white) \$33,910.00 and 2022 Ram 1500(blue) \$30,853.00. Bob Headwell said to put the 2021 Ram1500 up for sale for \$38k and see if we get any buyers.

## New Business

- 1.) **Employee Evaluations (Scott, John, Becky, Joe)** - *Corey's recommendation was to move Joe, John, and Scott up one step. The board discussed and the following recommendations were made... Upon their reviews, Scott was moved to a GS 9-2, Joe was moved to a GS 9-7 and John was moved to a GS 6-3. Becky will be a 3-month probation, remain at 8-3 and be reevaluated in June. Robert Headwell, Jr. made a motion to approve the raises and recommendations, seconded by Richard Kennedy. All in favor, motion carried.*
- 2.) **Leopold nomination** – *Robert Headwell, Jr made a motion to nominate the Dygert Farm for the Leopold Award, seconded by Richard Kennedy. Martin Kelly recused himself from the vote. Scott Ryan also approved of the nomination, all votes in favor, motion carried.*
- 3.) **Interest on Bank Accounts** – *The interest rates at NBT Bank have gone up. Our Grant Savings is not earning as much interest because it is in a savings account not a money market account. That account will be closed out and when our Part C money comes in, we will open a new money market account at the higher rate.*
- 4.) **Resolution for CRF Round 7** – *Martin Kelly made a motion to apply for Round 7 CRF grant, seconded by Richard Kennedy, all in favor, motion carried.*
- 5.) **Ag Ball registration** – *The Ag Ball registration has been going very well. Becky has been having a lot of interest and have about 50 people registered already.*

## **NRCS:**

- EQIP High Tunnel applications that ranked above a specified threshold were fast-tracked for approval this year. Montgomery County has two high tunnels that met the threshold and have already been obligated into 2023 contracts. (John Przybylo and First-Generation Farm, LLC)
- I have received 5 applications in Montgomery County for the 2023 Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). Statewide, we have not met our goal for CSP applications, therefore, we are now accepting applications for Round 2 funding. Applications will be accepted for Round 2 until April 3<sup>rd</sup>. Forest land, cropland and pasture are all eligible for this program.
- NRCS has received an influx of funds through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). There will be a special sign up for both EQIP and CSP that is related to the IRA. The only practices eligible under EQIP-IRA and CSP-IRA are those related to Climate Change mitigation. I have attached a list of Climate Smart practices. A cut-off date for applications has not yet been formally announced.

*Thomas Bielli  
District Conservationist  
Fulton, Hamilton, Montgomery, Saratoga, Warren & Washington Counties*

## **FSA:**

We are working on completing the ARC, PLC signup (corn base program) the deadline to sign up for 2023 is March 15<sup>th</sup>. We just finished training on PARP (pandemic Assistance Revenue Program) which will help farmers who had losses in 2020 due to the pandemic the program will look at your gross revenue in the normal base year (2018 or 2019) compared to the gross revenue in the pandemic year (2020). However, if you received payments in 2020 under the CFAP program that payment must be added into your gross revenue so you may not be able to get a payment. The other new program is ERP phase 2 (Emergency relief Program) this is based on losses that occurred due to a disaster condition. So, for our county in 2021 we had excessive moisture which makes us eligible for 2021. We would need your gross revenue for the crops grown in 2021 and compare it to the normal base year you choose (2018 or 2019). If you are eligible for a payment you will have to buy crop insurance for whatever crop you had a loss in. If you are interested in learning more about these programs, please call the office.

*Sandra L. (Ferry) Scott  
County Executive Director  
Montgomery, Fulton, & Hamilton*

## **AED:**

Taste of NY - Monday February 27<sup>th</sup> – Featuring Dygerts Mocha Milk

Harvest Connection – Loading Farms into the website. Training at next Farm to Table meeting for the farmers and working on promotion at every event. Developing a strategy for media campaign to drive consumers to the app and website.

Rural Business Development Grant - Grant for Hutchinson Harvest through RC&D due Tuesday February 28<sup>th</sup>. It will provide money for the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point Plan for getting USDA certified.

#### Workshop Series

- Graphic Design and Labeling – March 9<sup>th</sup>
- Insurance Information Session – March 23<sup>rd</sup>
- Ag Ball – March 25<sup>th</sup>
- Beef Quality Assurance Class April 29<sup>th</sup>
- Pork Quality Assurance class sometime in May TBD

The Quality Assurance Classes are to get farms qualified to take advantage of the NY Grown & Certified grants.

Youth Day – Farm Safety Day is going to be joined with youth day this year. Working with Brenda on getting that all setup.

Grants – Working on talking with farmers on being ready for other grants with Rural Development, HVADC, AG & Markets NE-DBIC. Topics are: Value Added Grants, Energy Efficiency, Processing Grants etc.

Future Projects – Homesteaders Workshops, Farm store owners' discussion group, Ag & Markets Inspector Training Meeting with New Regulations (Regulations being formulated now and not currently done yet), and Small Business owner discussion group.

**Becky Ferry**  
**Ag Economic Development Specialist**

#### **AEM:**

- Continuing to work on Round 17 projects and planning.

#### **Chuctanunda Trail**

Working with the friends of the North Chuctanunda and the County on a grant application for trail improvement and construction near the Walter Elmwood Museum in Amsterdam. The section is around 600 feet and will include the removal of nuisance trees and will also include some tree planting. The Friends group would like to start a memorial tree planting program, partnering with a tree service such as Goderie Tree Farm or other, to plant trees for deceased family members in the community. The plantings would take place throughout the entire trail system.

Joseph Slezak  
Resource Conservation Specialist

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned @ 8:30 pm

**NEXT MEETING:** March 20, 2023

***Respectfully, Karen Klemczak***