

MONTGOMERY COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

October 24, 2022

MEETING #877

Present:

Scott Ryan, *Chairman, Grange Member*

Richard Kennedy, *Member at Large*

Robert Headwell, Jr, *Legislative Rep*

Brian Holloway, *Vice Chairman, Farm Bureau Member*

Martin Kelly, *Legislative Rep*

Corey Nellis, *District Manager*

Karen Klemczak, *District Clerk-Treasurer*

Corinne Hansch, *guest*

CALL MEETING TO ORDER @ 7:29 PM

MINUTES of the July 25, 2022, meeting were reviewed. Martin Kelly made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr. All in favor, motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT as of October 24, 2022

District Checking:	66,538.61
Building Acct:	165,636.64
MCSWCD Savings (Grants)	115,231.93

Trumbull C701373	577.92
Bolster CRF C012140	64,173.98
Water Quality	990.41
Saltsman C701372	76,476.74
Kelly CAFO C012082	945.08
Holloway C012182	953.90
Hoefele C012183	59,306.81
Fisher C012181	580.91
AEM	100,179.27
Ridgedale C701426	90,422.75
Crowe T012325	4,344.89
SOTF Grant	718.31
Undeposited Funds	842.12
Total in all accounts	\$ 747,078.15

Review of disbursements (check register 8/22/22 through 10/24/22)

Review of outstanding accounts

Bills to be paid: MVP - \$2233.37

NYCON - \$212.03

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 Richard Kennedy, all in favor, motion carried.

**Public Comment** – Corinne Hansch joined our meeting. She is an organic farmer in Amsterdam, and she would be interested in taking a position on the board if there was a position that became available. She is very passionate on soil health and has many ideas for prioritizing organic and regenerative methods for soil health. She would like to be a voice for organic. She sits on many boards and is active in the farming world.

**Old Business:**

- 1.) **Field Work** – There is one project under construction right now at Hoefele's farm. Next Tuesday there is a pre-construction meeting at Conards. There aren't any projects in place before the winter season comes.
- 2.) **Budget** – Our budget was submitted to the county. Corey added a 6% increase over our budgetary line item. Financially we are in good shape, the increase is mainly to cover the increase in salaries. There hasn't been any final word from the county yet as to whether the budget did pass.

**New Business**

- 1.) **Kelly Pit** – The floor of Kelly's pit has been fixed, a new floor was poured, and it is holding water. Jessica Skinner is willing to sign off on the project.

- 2.) **SOTF – Sundae on the Farm** was a huge success this year. There were officially 5049 people in attendance. Becky Ferry was able to secure a \$25,000 grant that helped with the purchase of picnic tables, pop up tents and other items that were utilized during the event.
- 3.) **Annual Plan of Work – Martin Kelly made a motion to accept the 2023 Annual Plan of Work, seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr., all in favor, motion carried.**
- 4.) **No Till Drill** – The district has been currently using both drills. The drill has been used in adjacent counties as well as Montgomery with a fee of \$15/acre and a \$75 delivery fee. It is free to Montgomery County residents. We should be wrapping up the season soon.
- 5.) **Hydro Seeding** – Some road ditches were seeded last week. We did about 8.2 miles of hydroseeding this year. Corey had a goal of 4 miles, and that goal was well exceeded.
- 6.) **Legislative Tour** – Scott Davis, Joe and Corey participated in a legislative tour to show local legislators different projects the office completed in Montgomery Co. Included in the tour were manure storages, silage leachate collection enhancement, and the Marie Curry School trail. There was good conversation at each location about the state of conservation and everything happening in agriculture.
- 7.) **Tire Recycling** – The tire recycling event was successful again this year. There were 1880 tires, 90 people registered for the tire event. The actual number of tires brought in was 1756. The Town of Root called to ask if they could bring in about 70 tires that they collected on the side of the roads, and the county also had about 2 truckload of tires they were looking to dispose of. There was additional room on the trailer and the board said that it would be ok to take those tires from the county and the town. The board members also said that they would like to see this program remain in place since there is such an overwhelming response from the residence of Montgomery County.
- 8.) **Water pumping – emergency Management** – The water pump has been in great demand this year. Corey asked the board if they would be willing to make a purchase to buy a couple thousand more feet of pipe and approve spending to restore the trailer used to haul the water pump. Robert Headwell, Jr. made a motion, seconded by Martin Kelly, all in favor, motion carried.
- 9.) **District Law** – It was brought to the attention of the Soil and Water Districts that there is a group that has actively been working to try and make changes to district law. They have already composed a draft copy with the changes they would like to have made and will be bringing that to the legislature to have it approved. This was all done without any input from Soil and Water managers and could change the configuration of the board and the way funding is spent within the districts. This has all unfolded very recently and there is still much more to learn about why, what, and how these changes will affect the Soil and Water districts. Now that they are aware NYACD and management within Soil and Water will be getting more information on what is happening and how to make sure that they can deter any of these changes from happening if they are not in the best interest of the Soil and Water Districts.
- 10.) **NYS Grown and Certified Resolution** – Martin Kelly made a motion to apply for the NYS Grown and Certified Grant, seconded by Scott Ryan, all in favor, motion carried.
- 11.) **Part B resolution** – Martin Kelly made a motion accept the Part B project for 2023, Amsterdam Community Gardens, seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr., all in favor, motion carried.

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

**Martin Kelly made a motion to enter Executive Session at 9:05 PM to discuss personnel issues, seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr., all in favor, motion carried.**

**Motion made by Martin Kelly to reenter the regular meeting at 9:30, seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr. all in favor, motion carried.**

#### **NRCS:**

- EQIP cutoff date has been announced – applications for financial assistance under EQIP need to be received by my office by Close of Business on Friday, **November 5, 2022** for consideration for Fiscal Year 2023 fun
- So far, I have 4 new applications on hand from Montgomery County producers for 2023 EQIP; 2 high tunnels, 1 cropland/wildlife, 1 farmstead. Unfunded applicants from 2022 have been asked if they want their applications to roll over, none have responded to date.

- During the height of the pandemic, USDA established Coronavirus Agricultural Relief Payments (CARP) as a method of assisting current contract holders who were struggling with paying for their portion of contracted conservation practices that were subject to high costs due to the pandemic. These relief payments are only available for very specific practices. This past month, NRCS announced that they have added high tunnels to the list of available practices. Six recently completed high tunnels in Montgomery County will be eligible to receive CARP payments. The payments for high tunnels are in the range of 25-35% of the cost (above and beyond what has already been paid out).
- The Federal Government failed to pass a fiscal year 2023 budget by the October 1, 2022 deadline. Therefore, we are operating on a Continuing Resolution until it expires on December 16, 2022.

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

#### **AED:**

Sundae on The Farm -

- \*Over 5000 people attended
- \* Working with Karen on finishing the close out on the grant
- \*Interim report done and claim for next portion submitted.
- \*Awaiting final report to close this out

NYS Seed Grant-

- \*Did a post online on eligibility to contact the office for help.
- \*Have helped with 6 applications currently and reaching out to more.
- \*There is no deadline just when money runs out like the Payment Protection Program was.

NYS Pandemic Relief Grant –

- Eligibility was changed to allow more farmers to qualify 9/12/22 and I helped 3 farms apply and it was due 9/30/22.

USDA- Milk Handling Grant

- \*Working with 4 producers on this application due October 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - Dygert – milk chiller
  - Fieldridge- milk tank, plate cooler, variable speed pump
  - Michalak- plate cooler, water collection, and crowd gate
  - Art Schuster- plate cooler and water collection
- All were submitted. There were 178 applications received. Awaiting decisions

Loan Applications

- Have helped two with Farm Storage Facility Loan applications
- Helped with 2 operating loans
- Helping with a Farm Transfer plan and loans currently as well
- Helping with financing package for slaughterhouse

Workshop Series

- Social Media – Planning for week of November 9<sup>th</sup>
- Basic Bookkeeping – Planning for week of the November 14<sup>th</sup>.
- Starting promotion and sign up and location is either SWCD office or possibly talking to Extension for the county room depending on sign up.

Grants – Since May

17- different applications requested

5- I don't have amounts for because they didn't need to tell me amounts.

Grant amount totals for applications I wrote or assisted is \$335,300 for farmers in Montgomery County.

I plan to work with Dave Balbian and Nicole Tommel to do more workshops. I will be out the week of November 22<sup>nd</sup> for surgery on my leg. I won't be able to walk on that leg for 4-6 weeks but will work on planning to have some in December.

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

**AEM:**

- Conard CREP Project
  - Fence, forest buffer and water system.
  - Setting up a preconstruction with Rick for the fence and water system.
  - Waiting on a quote for the tree planting project, from a company that comes in from out of state, recommended from Upper Susquehenna Coalition, Chenango County SWCD.
- Joe Lipiec CREP Project
  - Joe is interested in doing a forest buffer as well, for next year. A buffer is part of his State Grant. Will be enhancing it further with forest buffer
- Received award for Crowe Climate Resilient Farming Round 6 Project.
  - Irrigation and pond construction state funding \$470,000
    - With our project we plan to store excess storm precipitation and snow melt in an upland irrigation reservoir. We will use this stored precipitation to irrigate 274 acres of corn and soybean using a 2,506 ft center pivot irrigation system

Joseph Slezak  
Resource Conservation Specialist

**FSA:**

The FSA office just completed year end rollover and with that annual conservation payments were sent as well. We are now making Dairy Margin payments and according to the projections we will be for the rest of this year and all of next year due to high feed prices. We have started sign up for 2023 dairy margin coverage along with ARC/PLC sign up (corn base program). Our new temporary PT Lori Davis is working a few special cleanup projects for the office so she will be starting to call producers to work on updating owners and leases.

IF you have any questions, please contact the office

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

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned @ 9:30 PM

**NEXT MEETING:** December 7, 2022 @ Winner Circle 11:00 AM

***Respectfully, Karen Klemczak***