

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**January 27, 2025**

**MEETING # 898**

Present:

**Scott Ryan**, *Chairman, Grange Member*  
**Brian Holloway**, *Vice Chairman, Farm Bureau Member*  
**Martin Kelly**, *Legislative Member*  
**Richard Kennedy**, *Member at Large*  
**Robert Headwell, Jr.**, *Legislative Rep*

**Corey Nellis**, *District Manager*  
**Karen Klemczak**, *District Clerk-Treasurer*  
**Scott Davis**, *District Technician*

**Public Comment: None**

**CALL MEETING TO ORDER @ 7:32 PM**

***Election of officers: Martin Kelly made motion to keep the same slate of officers, seconded by Richard Kennedy, all in favor, motion carried.***

***Review of Policies:*** Internal Review; Bill Payment; Investment; Procurement; Director’s Attendance; FOIL policy; Sexual Harassment Policy; Workplace Violence Policy Code of Ethics; Breach Policy.  
***Designation of Official Publication:*** Amsterdam Recorder; Official Depository: NBT Bank.

***Audit:*** Brian Holloway and Robert Headwell, Jr. will review the 2024 Annual Treasurer’s Report and let the board know their results

**TREASURER’S REPORT as of January 27, 2025**

<b>District Checking:</b>	<b>69,965.56</b>
<b>Building Acct:</b>	<b>93,033.30</b>
<b>Canjo 27 (Michalak) C701470</b>	<b>584,427.47</b>
<b>Canjo 28 (Ulman) C701511</b>	<b>147,987.96</b>
<b>Creek Acres Farm CRF</b>	<b>354,640.04</b>
<b>AEM</b>	<b>66,971.10</b>
<b>Ridgedale C701426</b>	<b>55,975.62</b>
<b>Crowe Irrigation CRF C012432</b>	<b>119,251.91</b>
<b>Slate Creek Farm T00335GG</b>	<b>4,594.30</b>
<b>Part C:</b>	<b>198,094.39</b>
<b>Water Quality</b>	<b>936.92</b>
<b>Petty Cash</b>	<b>250.00</b>
<b>Undeposited Funds</b>	<b>.00</b>
<b>Total in all accounts</b>	<b>\$ 1,696,128.57</b>

Review of disbursements (check register 12/4/24 through 1/27/25)

Review of outstanding accounts

**ABSTRACTS # 1-2025: Bills paid, to be paid and transfers.**

Motion: by Brian Holloway to approve Abstracts #1-2025, accept the Treasure’s report, pay all audited bills, approve all salary payment for the next month and/or the next board meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Richard Kennedy, all in favor, motion carried.

**Old Business:**

**1.) Field Work –**

- *Michalak – Jessica Skinner should be wrapping up the final design on the project*
- *AEM projects – Scott Davis is working on the designs for the rest of the AEM projects to be completed in 2025*
- *Ulman – some work has been done on the milkhouse waste storage*

## New Business:

- 1.) **Legislative Days** – *Scott Ryan along with some district staff will be attending Legislative Days, Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>. Appointments to meet with legislators will begin at 8:30 they will break at noon for lunch and continue with appointments at 1:00.*
- 2.) **Bond Act Money** – *Districts will be exempt from having to pay prevailing wage as was previously the policy. Corey asked the board to reconsider applying for Bond Act money now that they will not be required to pay prevailing wage. Robert Headwell, Jr. made a motion to allow the district to apply for Bond Act money, seconded by Brian Holloway, all in favor, motion carried.*
- 3.) **Wildlife Cameras** – *Using Part C funds, there was discussion about installing wildlife cameras around Montgomery County to be used as an educational tool. The board would like the district to get more information on the cost and the details of the program to see if it is something we would want to do in Montgomery County.*
- 4.) **Annual Newsletter/Tree Sale** – *The annual newsletter was mailed out last week. We sent out 1800 newsletters via mail and about 400-500 through email. We have been receiving tree orders since they went out.*
- 5.) **John – Paternity Leave** – **Martin Kelly made a motion to allow John VanDerwerken to use his sick time to take 2-weeks paternity leave for the birth of his second child. The motion was seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr. all in favor, motion carried.**
- 6.) **Discuss Paternity Leave Policy** – *No motions were made to change our policy for paternity leave. Employees have been allowed to use their sick leave to take time off when having a baby but must get board approval prior to the event. The United States Dept of Labor does provide workers job-protected leave through FMLA (The Family and Medical Leave Act) which allows eligible employees to take time up to 12 workweeks off for the birth, adoption, or foster care placement of a child and to bond with the child.*  
*Eligible employees*
  - *have worked for their employer for at least 12 months*
  - *have at least 1,250 hours of service with the employer during the 12 months before their FMLA leave starts*
  - *work at a location where the employer has at least 50 employees within 75-mile radius**\*\*Public agencies (including Federal, State, and local government employers, regardless of the number of employees) must offer FMLA to their employees.*
- 7.) **AED position** – *Applications were received but there weren't any that were a good fit for the position. For now, the position will remain vacant.*
- 8.) **Proposed State Budget** – *In the proposed state budget there was level funding for our programs. Part C funding is slated to remain the same for 2025.*
- 9.) **Erosion and Sediment Control 4 hour course** – *Montgomery Co SWCD will be hosting the 4-hour course on March 5<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM. The class will be held at the Emergency Management Office on Route 5s, Fultonville.*

## Committee Reports

NRCS: No Report

FSA: No Report

AED: No Report

AEM:

- **NEW for AEM Year 19**
- Option C for districts with Certified Planners can earn up to \$140,000 per year and the contract will be 3 years.
- The current rate is \$51 for all staff but going forward will vary based on credentials:
  - AEM Certified Planner, SAF Certified Forester, NYS Engineer in Training, or a PE will earn **\$70**
  - CCA, NRCS Certified Planner above Level 1, NRCS TSP, SAF Certified Forestry Technician will earn **\$62**
  - All others will be at a rate of **\$55**
- AEM Tier 4 implementation work will be \$300,000 for the three-year contract.

- An updated AEM strategy from 2026 through 2030 must be submitted by 12/31/2025.

### **Goals of the current AEM strategy to consider this year:**

- 1) Goal: Increase the number of farmers that are aware of and interested in the AEM program and the services the County can offer to the agricultural community.**
  - a. AEM planners and partner agencies display the AEM program and what it has to offer at educational events throughout the year, including grazing workshops, “Sundae on the Farm,” Farm Progress Show, Fonda Fair, SWCD Newsletter, etc.
  - b. The number of farms interested in and participating with AEM has increased. Maintain database.
  - c. Continue to push AEM signs and Cover Crop signs to farms that participate in the AEM program and Soil health practices.
- 2) Goal: Increase the number of farms practicing sustainable agriculture.**
  - a. Farms that have wanted to address all of their resource concerns on their farm are considered a higher priority.
- 3) Goal: Reduce the flow of nutrients into waterways, streams, ponds, and reservoirs.**
  - a. Farms located near hydrologically sensitive areas (HSAs), waterways, streams, ponds and reservoirs have been given a higher priority than farms not located near these areas.
  - b. CNMPs have been developed for farms working with the AEM Program.
  - c. The SWCD and CCE Central New York Dairy and Field Crops Team have organized workshops together covering topics from grazing management to feed management.
- 4) Goal: Reduce silt/sediment entering waterways, streams, ponds and reservoirs.**
  - a. Promote no-till and reduced-tillage as well as incorporating crop management BMPs such as cover cropping. Through use of District owned No till seeder, implement at least 300 acres annually.
  - b. Plan events promoting the environmental and economic benefits of reduced tillage.
- 5) Goal: Reduce pesticides entering waterways, streams, ponds and reservoirs streams.**
  - a. Pest Management plans have been developed for farms through the AEM program.
  - b. SWCD staff developed a booklet to inform farmers of corn insect pests.
  - c. Continue to promote workshops with the Cornell Field Crops team to educate farmers and have available trainings on the proper usage of pesticides.
- 6) Goal: Maintain current farmland in the County.**
  - a. Plain Sect families continue to move into Montgomery County. Work through the AEM program to implement BMPs on their farms.
- 7) Goal: Increase the awareness of low-income farmers of the resources available to them.**
  - a. Continue to encourage low-income farmers to work with the AEM program through available cost-share programs.
- 8) Goal: Improve local market opportunities for farmers.**
  - a. AEM planners have worked with the Agricultural Economic Development (AED) program as well as CCE and partnering agencies to promote the “Buy Local” campaign.

Joseph Slezak  
Resource Conservation Specialist

***Adjournment:*** Meeting adjourned @ 8:26 PM

***NEXT MEETING:*** February 24, 2025 @ 7:30 PM

*Directors meet at 7:00 PM for Employee Evaluations*

***Respectfully, Karen Klemczak***