

MONTGOMERY COUNTY SOIL & WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

March 25, 2024

MEETING # 891

Present:

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

Corey Nellis, *District Manager*
Karen Klemczak, *District Clerk-Treasurer*

Public Comment: None

CALL MEETING TO ORDER@ 7:35 PM

MINUTES of the February 26, 2024 meeting were reviewed. Richard Kennedy made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr. All in favor, motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT as of March 25, 2024

District Checking:	31,544.10
Building Acct:	489,597.42
Canjo 27 (Michalak) C701470	573,636.90
Canjo 28 (Ulman) C701511	149,094.01
Water Quality	1,022.67
Hill Side Farm (Lipiec) C701471	338.63
Hoefele C012183	244.47
Fisher C012181	1.10
AEM	170.89
Ridgedale C701426	57,959.11
Crowe T012325	363.15
Crowe Irrigation CRF C012432	185,877.17
Slate Creek Farm T00335GG	4,486.27
Part C:	331,807.61
Undeposited Funds	.00
Total in all accounts	\$ 1,826,143.50

Review of disbursements (check register 2/26/24 through 3/25/24)

Review of outstanding accounts

Bills to be paid: None

Richard Kennedy 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 Brian Holloway, carried.

Old Business:

- 1.) **Field Work** – Corey has been working with Bunker and NRCS, trying to help get him funded through EQIP. Michalak is also close to getting funded through EQIP and work on his manure storage should begin. Scott and Corey are working on getting the design completed for Conard's barnyard. Work on the manure storage at Ulman's will begin too. It is gearing up to be a busy field season.
- 2.) **Trucks Ordered** – The two district trucks were ordered and should be here in about 60 days. There shouldn't be any delays. The two ½ ton trucks we have now will go up on Auctions International once the new trucks come in.
- 3.) **Recap of Legislative Day** – Scott Davis and Scott Ryan attended Legislative Days. They had 9 appointments scheduled for the day.

New Business:

- 1.) **2024 Director Training – Module 6 – Bob Headwell** – Bob Headwell confirmed that he received the Module 6 material and completed his mandatory director training for 2024.
- 2.) **Farm Tractor Tire Recycling** – Scott Davis is working on securing the dates for the farm tractor recycling. Right now, he is trying to set the date of the event for April 29th – May 3rd. Once that is confirmed we will begin advertising.

- 3.) **Part C money** – *The district received \$207,832.85 for our 2023 Part C money. We don't have any large projects lined up just yet.*
- 4.) **DEC Permits** – *SWCD Districts that are working with DEC are having issues getting permits. They are taking 8 to 13 months and longer. The districts are being stalled when trying to work on stream jobs or culvert projects. At the most recent manager's meeting this was discussed. A resolution is being put together now and it was suggested that it be written to exempt districts from having to apply for permits on C classified streams and these other projects.*
- 5.) **Close out & Payments** – *Corey will be working on the closeouts for Hoefele and Lipiec. Once the paperwork is completed the final vouchers will be sent in. Corey asked the board if we could make the final payments to the farmers before we receive the final payment from the state. **Robert Headwell, Jr. made a motion to approve the final payment to the farmers, seconded by Richard Kennedy, all in favor, motion carried.***
- 6.) **AEM yr 17 closeout** – *AEM yr 17 has been closed out and we received the final payout in the amount of \$126,142.93.*
- 7.) **Solar** – *Montgomery Co has become a focus by the state for the expansion of solar. Mainly because of the thruway corridor and the 3-phase electricity that runs the whole length of the thruway. Montgomery Co will have 10% of all the active solar panels in the state by the end of 2024. There was a lengthy discussion about whether the board wants to pass a resolution to take a formal stand on Solar. There were pros and cons to taking a side in the expansion of Solar on productive ag land. The discussion was tabled for next month's meeting.*
- 8.) **CRF** – *Brian Holloway made a motion to apply for Round 8 CRF grant, seconded by Robert Headwell, Jr., all in favor, motion carried.*

Committee Reports:

AED:

I want to say Thank you to the Board for allowing me to go to the Young Dairy Leadership Institute Training. I received a lot of valuable training at the in-person training. Phase I really focused on me as an individual and how I communicate and how I respond to other communication. We then went into picking up on other people's communication styles and how to be an effective leader but understanding how others need to be communicated to. The importance of how as a leader it's better to understand your workers to be able to better empower them to accomplish tasks and bring a team together. One thing is to understand yourself and listen and observe your staff to know how to better communicate to them.

Next, we moved in to presentations. We worked with a professional communication team on how body language and tone affect your presentation and how to properly use your hands and tone during a power point presentation. Then worked on crisis communication preparedness. How to handle situations from manure spills to Peta questions, and problem solving.

Finally, we really go to the root of ourselves and wanting to figure out our "why". The why we get up every day, the reason we work hard, and the reason we have passion for agriculture. I found and shared my "why" with the class and the board.

We are in Phase II which is the length of the year and have many things to accomplish. I have every other month check ins with my mentor and peer group and look forward to completing everything.

Again, thank you for this opportunity.

Becky Ferry
Ag Economic Development Specialis

FSA:

We do not have a lot to report we finished ARC/PLC sign up and we are working on farm record cleanup gearing up for acreage reporting. We have been busy doing climate smart eligibility work for NRCS.

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

AEM:

- Will write a plan for Joseph Zitone, tree buffer planting.
- Gretchen and Clark Subik interested in expanding pasture and planting trees along a intermittent stream.

Grant opportunity

- I was told about a grant opportunity called “Dairy Manure Management Incentive Transforming the Farmer-to-Consumer Supply Chain” which is a USDA Partnerships for Climate-Smart Commodities Grant
- Payment terms and timing: Up to 91% of project funding will be funded upon execution of a contract with the farmer. The remaining 9% of project funding will be paid in equal installments over the duration of the contracted project (up to 4 years).
- Submitted an application for Michalak, we will submit for Creek Acres and also Bru Mar. We are waiting back on some information for Bru Mar. Deadline to apply is March 29th.
These three farms also applied for EQIP.

Chuctanunda Creek

- Grant with the County to develop a trail by the Elmwood Museum. The County and the City worked together to clear cottonwoods from the border of the parking lot, where the trail will be developed. This was the first step. We will help with lining up a contractor to build the trail.

Water Quality Symposium

- Attended a class on Agroforestry. Many funding opportunities for forestry practices in our County. CRF, CSP AGNPS, AEM, CREP. Agroforestry can be an income generating practice for landowners/farmers especially on underutilized land, buffers, hedge rows etc. There are ecosystem service benefits such as Flood Control, Nutrient Uptake, Biodiversity, Carbon Drawdown.

Joseph Slezak
Resource Conservation Specialist

NRCS: No Report

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned @ 9:20 PM

NEXT MEETING: April 22, 2024 @ 7:30 PM

Respectfully, Karen Klemczak