**APPROVED MINUTES**

 **CARROLL SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**

**February 15, 2024**

Prior to the meeting being called to order, Josh Smith, Executive Director of Western Maryland RC&D addressed the board (remotely) to give a short presentation on Western MD RC&D programs and activities for 2023.

 Board Chairman Donald Maring called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. at the Carroll Soil Conservation District office. The following participated:

Board Chairman Donald Maring District Manager Matt McMahon

Board Supervisor James Leppo NRCS Acting District Conservationist Samantha Cox

 Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara UMD Extension Agent Bryan Butler

**MINUTES**

Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 18, 2024 Board Meeting. Board Supervisor James Leppo seconded, and the motion passed.

**TREASURERS REPORT**

Board Chairman Donald Maring cited the Financial Report, breakdown of District’s Equipment Account and the following list of bills to be approved for payment:

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| --- | --- |
| PNC Bank - COTY luncheon, gift cards, copy paper | 2,012.82 |
| WB Mason - office supplies | 49.71 |
| Advance Business Systems - plotter lease | 347.75 |
| Chris Weaver - Supervisor expense - 4th qtr 2023 | 205.00 |
| Donald Maring - Supervisor expense - 4th qtr 2023 | 222.50 |
| Greg Dell - Supervisor expense - 4th qtr 2023 | 190.00 |
| Myron Frock - Supervisor expense - 4th qtr 2023 | 300.00 |
| Janet O'Meara - Supervisor expense - 4th qtr 2023 | 288.75 |
| PNC Bank - Sympathy bouquet, water, dues Taste of MD, Future Harvest | 1,088.60 |
| PNC Bank - Office Supplies | 342.95 |
|   |   |
| TOTAL | 5,048.08 |

Account Breakdown -

Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara moved to approve the Treasurer’s report and payment of bills. The motion was seconded by Board Supervisor James Leppo and the motion was passed.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

The next Board Meeting will be March 21, 2024, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the District office.

**DISTRICT**

District Manager Matt McMahon reported that the SSCC met this morning. Mike Mason from Providence Strategies gave an update on the various Bills being discussed in the State Legislative session. The MASCD Board of Directors meeting will be March 26th. MASCD has put forth the Maryland Bay Friendly Farming Program. This is a certification program very similar to the FSCAP program from previous years, where producers can work with the District to implement certain practices to qualify for being certified as a Bay Friendly Farm. These producers would be given a sign designating them as a Bay Friendly Farm, along with a 3-year waiver from State Nutrient Management inspections. Matt and Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara met with our new Budget Analyst Ryan Nowicki to go over our County Budget request for FY25. The dates for the 2024 Envirothon have been set. Instruction Day will be March 19th and Competition Day will be April 23rd. The District received a request from Extension requesting donations to support the 4-H Youth Camp. The cost for each camper to attend is $325. Last year the District donated the amount to cover the cost of two campers (one from each age group). Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara made a motion to do the same this year (in the amount of $650). Board Supervisor James Leppo seconded, and the motion passed.

**MDA**

District Manager Matt McMahon reported that early fertilizer top dress for small grain acreage was approved to begin today. The application is approved statewide, but MDA is asking producers to use their best judgement as to whether the conditions in their area have been such that green-up has begun before applying top dress to their small grains. A Technical Advisory Committee is being formed for next year’s Cover Crop program, and they will be meeting early next month to discuss the program. Each region has been asked to choose one representative for the committee, and Matt will represent the Western Region.

**NRCS**

NRCS Acting Soil Conservationist Samantha Cox reported that members of the staff have recently attended training from NRCS for Ag Chemical facility design/construction as well as design/as-built documentation. Carroll currently has 83 applications for EQIP funding. So far 3 EQIP contracts have been pre-approved and 1 AMA contract. Practice reminder letters have gone out to all current contract holders. IRA funding is available for practices directly associated with Climate-Smart BMPs. Jennifer Kemp has accepted a Soil Conservationist position in Baltimore County and therefore will not be taking over as Acting DC this month as planned. Samantha will serve another 60-day term, after which another Acting DC will be brought in and this will continue until the position is filled permanently.

**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND - EXTENSION**

Extension Agent Bryan Butler reported some Nutrient Management Plan writer positions have been filled. Extension is still using contract labor to try to keep up with the demand for plans. The program is now a statewide program and not county-specific, meaning that requested plans may be written by someone in another county if their workload is less than that of the plan writer in that county. Carroll County currently has 75 NM Plan requests in the queue. The plan writer for Carroll is also assisting Frederick, Montgomery, and Howard Counties, and is not able to keep up with demand currently. Due to the unfilled plan writer positions, Bryan is still recommending that producers utilize private consultants to get their plans written whenever possible in order to stay in compliance with programs such as Cover Crop and MACS.

**FSA**

No Report

Board Supervisor James Leppo inquired as to whether or not anything was being done at the County level to prevent China and other foreign governments from purchasing excessive amounts of farmland within the County. There is currently legislation in the state legislation to address land purchases by adversarial foreign governments.

At 8:15 p.m., Board Supervisor James Leppo made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara, and the motion was passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt McMahon, District Manager