**APPROVED MINUTES**

 **CARROLL SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING**

**February 16, 2023**

 Chairman Myron Frock called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. at the Carroll Soil Conservation District office. The following participated:

Board Chairman Myron Frock  Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara

Board Supervisor Donald Maring Board Supervisor Greg Dell

 District Manager Matt McMahon District Conservationist Eric Hines

 UMD CES Agent Bryan Butler

**MINUTES**

Board Supervisor Greg Dell made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2022 Board meeting. Board Supervisor Donald Maring seconded, and the motion passed. Board Supervisor Greg Dell made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2023 Board meeting. Board Supervisor Donald Maring seconded, and the motion passed.

**TREASURERS REPORT**

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Advance Business Systems - Jan | 348.74 |
| Advance Business Systems - Feb | 348.74 |
| Myron Frock - 4th qtr 2022 Supervisor Expenses | 292.50 |
| Greg Dell - 4th qtr 2022 Supervisor Expenses | 192.50 |
| Chris Weaver - 4th qtr 2022 Supervisor Expenses | 305.00 |
| Donald Maring - 4th qtr 2022 Supervisor Expenses | 322.50 |
| Stacy Sellers - 4th qtr 2022 Supervisor Expenses | 318.75 |
| Eva Martin - W-2's and tax reporting | 75.00 |
| PNC Bank - supplies, MASCD Winter Mtg, Taste of MD | 1,994.73 |
|   |   |
| TOTAL | 4,198.46 |

\*District Manager Matt McMahon pointed out that the charges for Advance Business Systems mistakenly included tax and that he has since given them our tax-exempt certificate and that the monthly charges going forward would be $329.00.

Account Breakdown -

Board Supervisor Donald Maring moved to approve Treasurer’s report and payment of bills. The motion was seconded by Board Supervisor Greg Dell and the motion was passed.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

The next Board Meeting will be March 16, 2023, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the District office.

**DISTRICT**

District Manager Matt McMahon reported on the following: MASCD was February 9th and 10th, everyone present at the meeting was also at MASCD. Matt had the opportunity to speak with Delegate Tomlinson, who was the only one representing Carroll County that attended the social at MASCD. New MDA Technician Christopher Markle started on January 12th. New District Technician Gracie Roberts started on February 2nd . Both are doing well so far, showing a great deal of interest. Matt just finished up Annual Reviews for the District staff, with no significant issues to address. Envirothon Instructional Day is March 1st, with competition day set for April 26th. Westminster High and Venture Crew were not able to field teams this year so there will only be 5 teams. The District has an appointment to give a short presentation to the County Commissioners explaining what we do on March 9th at 1:15. It was recommended that as many of the Board members as possible should participate. The District was just approved for a grant of $115,500.00 for the design of a wetland restoration project on JP Smith’s farm being done by Ecotone. We received a request from U of Maryland Extension for a donation to help sponsor 4H members attending their Residential Camp program. The cost is $325 per camper. Board Supervisor Donald Maring made a motion to sponsor two campers (one from each of the two age groups). Board Supervisor Greg Dell seconded, the motion passed.

**MDA**

District Manager Matt McMahon reported on the following: Regional workgroups for updating the MACS flat rates met again on February 7th, and the Western Region submitted their proposed new flat rates on the 8th. They will be submitted to MACS and then to the State Committee for approval. The Western Region is also the pilot group for using the new cost share spreadsheet, which is similar to the one used by NRCS for its programs such as EQIP. MDA will be having another round of interviews to try and fill the technician and planner positions that did not get filled in the last round of hiring. Matt has been asked to be part of the interview panel. Carroll still has a technician vacancy that will hopefully get filled in this round.

**NRCS**

District Conservationist Eric Hines reported on the following: We currently have 84 EQIP applications for the next round of funding. Eric has completed the cost estimate for approximately half of them, totaling over $5 million. We are expecting approximately $1.2 million in the next round of funding for Baltimore and Carroll Counties. Once that is spent, we can request more, but we will not be able to get enough to fund all of our applications. There will also be additional funding coming from the Inflation Reduction Act, but that funding will have more conditions attached with it. US Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack will be visiting Carroll County at the Lippy Brothers farm next week on February 24th.

**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND - EXTENSION**

There is a severe shortage of Nutrient Management Plan writers due to the positions being contractual and not offering benefits. These plan writers often leave to take full time, permanent positions with MDA or other agencies. It has been proposed that MDA staff in the District offices will start writing Nutrient Management Plans. There has been a great deal of concern expressed over this idea because employees in the District offices aren’t trained in writing Nutrient Management Plans even if they are already certified. In addition, all Districts are already struggling to meet their WIP goals for Conservation Plans due to heavy workload with various programs and the number of Conservation Plans that expire each year. Another problem is that all planners working in the Districts are on the federal network, and NRCS will not allow the software used to write Nutrient Management to be used on that network. Matt has already expressed his concerns to Byron Petrauskas and Keith Potter at MDA about this, as have the District Managers from Frederick and Baltimore Counties. It was agreed that the board should communicate their concerns on this matter to MDA. This matter is also on the agenda for the Baltimore County District Board Meeting on Tuesday February 21st. Matt will attend this meeting to see what their position is and how they plan to move forward with expressing our concerns to MDA.

**FSA**

No report.

Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara expressed concern that our Board Meeting minutes were not posted on our website. \*\**the following day (2/17), District Manager Matt McMahon checked with Administrative Assistant Heather Shoppert who explained that she had just recently removed the 2022 minutes from the site and would be posting the approved 2023 minutes once she received them\*\**

The question was raised about the possibility of making the current part time Administrative Assistant position full time to help alleviate the workload in the office. District Manager Matt McMahon indicated that he would be in favor of having it be a full-time position but didn’t feel that this was the best year to propose that in light of the fact that he was requesting raises for the District Staff to bring them in line with raises recently given to County employees.

At 8:45 p.m., Board Supervisor Greg Dell 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