

APPROVED

**MINUTES**

**CARROLL SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' MEETING  
March 20, 2025**

Board Chairman Greg Dell called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. at the Carroll Soil Conservation District office. The following participated:

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Board Chairman Greg Dell       | Board Supervisor Donald Maring                    |
| Board Supervisor Janet O'Meara | District Manager Matt McMahon                     |
| Board Supervisor Kim Crone     | NRCS District Conservationist Sam Cox             |
| Board Supervisor James Leppo   | Associate Candidates Brian Rasche and David Swain |
| NRCS ASTC Eric Hines           | UMD Extension Agent Bryan Butler                  |

**MINUTES**

Board Supervisor James Leppo made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2025 Board Meeting. Board Supervisor Donald Maring seconded, and the motion passed.

**TREASURERS REPORT**

Board Supervisor Kim Crone cited the Financial Report, breakdown of District's Equipment Account and the following list of bills to be approved for payment:

PNC Bank - 4070	779.81
PNC Bank - 3498	0.00
WB Mason - office supplies	91.48
Jeanne Turman-reimburse for notary fee	11.00
Advanced Business Systems- Plotter	369.32
University of MD Soil Judging Team- Donation	500.00
Commissioners of Carroll County-Postage for Dec 24	21.83
Advanced Business Systems- Plotter	369.32
Kyocera - District copier	4.45
TOTAL	2,147.21

**Account Breakdown -**

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

**CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Due to conflicts on April 17<sup>th</sup>, the next Board Meeting will be held on April 24<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. at the District office.

**DISTRICT**

District Manager Matt McMahon reported on the following:

Administrative Assistant Jeanne Turman and Sediment Control Planner Bryan Snyder assisted Matt with interviews for the PT Secretary position on March 12<sup>th</sup>. Kayla Hartman was selected, and her first day will be April 10<sup>th</sup>. Cover Crop Spring Certification has begun and runs until June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Envirothon Instruction Day was held March 11<sup>th</sup> at Bear Branch Nature Center. 6 teams are participating this year, and Competition Day will be April 15<sup>th</sup>.

## MDA

District Manager Matt McMahon reported that newly hired MDA technician Addis Tekle was terminated by MDA effective today. MDA is hopeful that they will be able to post his and other vacant PINs soon. Matt attended the Cover Crop TAC Meeting in Annapolis on Tuesday March 18<sup>th</sup>. Changes are being made to the SQL program that is used for reporting which will hopefully simplify the process. The main topic of discussion was the impact of the State Budget deficit and its possible impact on the program. With CBTF funding possibly being reallocated to other areas of the budget, there is a strong possibility that approximately \$11M is all that will be available for next year's program. Options being discussed for how the program would be implemented if this happens include but not limited to lowering the base payment significantly, placing acreage limits on all participants, or geographic limitations. The Cover Crop Plus Program is not taking any new applications. Current contracts will be carried out to completion. The Small Acreage Cover Crop Program is also still available for producers planting less than 10 acres. Sign up runs until April 25<sup>th</sup>.

## NRCS

District Conservationist Sam Cox and ASTC Eric Hines gave the following update:

Financial Assistance:

- \$2 million in applications preapproved in Carroll, 9 contracts.
- 88 applications

Local Updates:

- Return to Work – may get NRCS or other USDA staff working from the office or other federal agencies for return-to-work orders
- Biosecurity- informed staff to practice good biosecurity on farms
- Maryland Historical Trust- Dairy Heritage Focus Plan

State Office Updates:

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- NRCS has resumed issuing payments to farmers for conservation program contracts that are funded through the IRA. New contracts with farmers are moving forward with traditional Farm Bill program funding.
- Secretary Rollins continues to evaluate other paused funding as she ensures that programs are focused on directly supporting farmers.
- While some Maryland partnership agreements include IRA funding that is on hold, Farm Bill work is continuing through these agreements.

Personnel

- All terminated probationary employees were returned to pay status and received back pay, from the date of termination. (1 planner, 1 technician)
- USDA is working to develop a phased plan for return-to- duty. While those plans materialize, all probationary employees will be paid.
- We are developing contingency plans to ensure we can continue working with partners and landowners to get conservation on the ground in Maryland.

Lease Terminations

- USDA is optimizing building capacity and consolidating underutilized offices to reduce inefficiencies while continuing to prioritize customer service for farmers and rural communities.
- The Maryland NRCS state office continues to operate out of USDA's Beltsville Area Research Center, with an estimated August 2025 move-in for the new shared FSA/NRCS state office in Annapolis. Lease terminations have not affected any other NRCS offices in Maryland.
- For further information regarding the termination of federal leases, please contact the General Services Administration (GSA).

Agency Reduction in Force and Reorganization Plans (ARRP)

- Agencies were required to submit a phase 1 ARRP by March 13. Phase 1 ARRPs focused on initial agency

cuts and reductions. Phase 2 plans are due April 14 and include a proposed reorganization structure. Phase 2 plans are expected be implemented by September 30, 2025.

General

- NRCS offices continue to provide technical and financial assistance made available through Farm Bill programs, like EQIP and CSP.
- No matter what changes come, NRCS will continue to deliver voluntary, locally led, science-based solutions by supporting conservation, working with landowners, and strengthening our partnerships.
- We appreciate the patience our partners and customers have shown as we work together through this time of change.

**UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND - EXTENSION**

Extension Agent Bryan Butler gave the following report:

The Ag Venture program is set for April 21-25 at the Ag Center. 11 schools are set to participate.

**FSA**

No report.

Board Supervisor Janet O’Meara inquired if the MASCD Coloring Contest was set to start. District Manager Matt McMahon indicated that he had just received this year’s coloring page and associated materials and would be advertising the contest next week.

**Equipment**

Board Chairman Greg Dell reported that repairs were completed on the John Deere and Frontier drills and that both are currently out and in use.

At 8:31 p.m., Board Supervisor Donald Maring made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Board Supervisor Kim Crone, and the motion was passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt McMahon, District Manager