

ALLEGANY SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT MINUTES MAY 2020

The regular monthly meeting of the Allegany Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held by teleconference on Tuesday, May 12, 2020. Carl Robinette, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM by taking roll.

Present in the conference room were Carl Robinette, Supervisor; Chad Bucklew, District Conservationist; Adam Heavner, District Manager; and Mona Lee, ASCD Secretary. Present on phone were Supervisors Steve Young, Lee Heavner, Ron Hawk and Amanda Paul. Others on the call were Wesley Gordon, Associate; Sherry Frick, Extension; and Heather Hutchinson, MDA Western Area Supervisor.

A spelling typo in the first line from the District Conservationist's Report of the March minutes was corrected from Corina to Corona. Lee moved to approve the minutes as corrected, seconded by Amanda. Motion passed.

Everyone reviewed the treasurer's reports for March and April that were mailed to them. Lee moved to approve the reports as presented. Amanda seconded; motion approved.

Bills – There were no bills for approval.

Permits – There were 22 permits approved in March and April with fees totaling \$1,966.00

District Conservationist's Report – Chad reported that USDA is offering telework as an option but not mandatory. He and NRCS Soil Conservationist, Slater Hafer, have been keeping things moving as much as they can. The office is open by appointment only. Payments are being made, some habitat contracts were wrapped up and applications are getting ranked. There is a teleconference this afternoon with Ramon Ortiz, NRCS Assistant State Conservationist, regarding the rental lease.

Other Agency Reports – Sherry reported the Ag Newsletter went out yesterday and contains a lot of financial resources for farmers regarding Covid 19. Extension staff is tentatively scheduled to return to the office May 26, 2020. Everyone is available through email or by leaving a voice message at the office. No in-person meetings or programs are being planned through June 31, 2020. A decision will be made by June 5th about the Allegany County Fair and Ag Expo. The University of Maryland Western Cluster has a series of videos on You Tube.

Heather reported both MDA vehicles are scheduled to be replaced but with the hiring freeze by the State of Maryland Allegany field office only has one technical person working. Therefore, one vehicle will be replaced and when a budget is in place and another tech position is filled, the other vehicle will be replaced. MACS is open for business and are accepting applications and claims. WIP goals are not expected to be modified.

OLD BUSINESS

Tree Sale – Event was cancelled due to Covid 19. Refunds were made to all who ordered and our down payment to Boyer's was refunded.

SSCC Nominations – The email from Alisha Mulkey requesting nominations for areas 1 and 3 is attached. Heather reported that nominees from Catoclin and Washington counties have been submitted. Lee moved to have Adam reply to the email indicating ASCD's support of the nominees. Amanda seconded; so moved.

NEW BUSINESS

Covid 19 Updates (Local, State, and Federal Governments) – Adam reported that for local staff, he and Brent Walker have been in the office two – three times per week as well as teleworking. The permit process has slowed but is expected to pick back up as the weather warms. Brent is making field visits and keeping pre-construction meetings. The new form adopted by the county for forest harvest permits will go into effect 10/1/2020. Brandon Butler is resigning as County Administrator at the end of this month. Jason Bennett will be Acting Administrator.

Heather explained the procedure for state employees working in field offices. MDA headquarters is open to staff three days per week from 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.

Chad reported that federal government is prioritizing payments and farm bill programs.

Picnic – After discussion Amanda moved to cancel the annual cooperators' picnic to comply with Covid 19 safety issues. Ron seconded; motion passed. Postcards will be sent to let cooperators know we will not have the event this year but hope to plan one for 2021. Ways to recognize awardees were shared (local newspaper article, annual newsletter in February, social media).

OTHER BUSINESS

The MASCD summer meeting may be re-scheduled; options are being considered.

There were no Cooperator Agreements, Conservation Farm Plan Approvals, or Cancellations.

Correspondence – Letter from FSU Foundation announcing Sara Kershner has been selected as the 2020-21 ASCD scholarship (copy attached).

On the motion of Ron, seconded by Amanda, the meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mona M. Lee,
ASCD Secretary
5/12/2020 12:50 PM