

**Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee -January 17, 2023**  
Office of Agriculture- Jeremy Criss

**Call the meeting to Order-**

**Approval of the November 15, 2022, AAC minutes-** *Please note that the Agricultural Advisory Committee did not meet in December 2022.*

**Bill 40-21- Individual Water Supply and Sewage Disposal Systems - Amendments (McCartney-Green)**

*During the October 24, 2022, Transportation and Environment Committee work session several questions were raised that DEP staff did not have all the information. We are monitoring the County Council for another T&E Committee work session to be scheduled.*

**Bill 18-22 Noise Control – Leaf Removal Equipment – Amendments-**

*This Bill 18-22 Noise Control-Leaf Removal Equipment was introduced on June 21, 2022, and the Public Hearing was on September 20, 2022. Some of the agricultural groups remitted letters to the County Council opposing the Bill 18-22 which prohibits gasoline leaf blowers. The T&E Committee work session is scheduled for February 13, 2023, at 9:30 am.*

[https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220920/20220920\\_9.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2022/20220920/20220920_9.pdf)

**Office of Legislative Oversight on the Status of TDRs and BLTs -**

*The Draft Office of Legislative Oversight-OLO report was remitted to the County Administrative Officer and the CAO responded back to OLO staff. The Council is supposed to approve the release of the report this Tuesday. There is a Planning Housing and Parks work session tentatively scheduled for February 13, 2023 at 1:30 pm.*

*The findings from this report shows that the County Government and MNCPPC have not proposed new receiving capacity for TDRs since 2012. The findings also show that the imbalance of TDRs in the sending area -4,565 TDRs is more than three times higher than the total TDR capacity in receiving areas-966 TDRs. The OAG is hopeful that the new Planning Board and new County Council will help to address the imbalance of TDRs that has existed since the program began and take the necessary actions to get the TDR program back on track.*

**UME Staff updates-**

*Chuck Schuster is serving as the Acting/Interim Area Extension Director that Rick Walter held. Three candidates applied for the Area Extension Director and Presentations were held on January 4, 2023.*

*Interviews for the candidates that applied for the Master Gardeners administrative position replacing Linda Walters were held on December 21, 2022, and several candidates are promising.*

*The 4H Agent Associate position that Santana Mays held was posted and on October 28, 2022, and the applicants are under review.*

*University of Maryland Extension is seeking to fill **ten (10) Tech Extension Educator/Navigator** positions, with one position at each of the following county Extension office locations:*

- *Central Maryland (1 position in Montgomery or Howard County)*

*Jeremy does not know where this position will be assigned Montgomery or Howard County?*

**FY 23 Operating Budget for the OAG:**

*The BDS position that Kristin Fisher once held was offered to Natalia Salazar and she accepted the position and will be starting with the OAG later this month.*

*The MSCD Engineering Position-Technical assistance on small ponds was posted twice. The OHR is allowing the MSCD to interview on January 20, 2023, the one candidate that has applied.*

**Update on the FY22 Farm to Food Bank-F2FB Program-**

There are 25 applications from participating farmers to the capacity building grants program (up to \$10,000) for the third year of the program. There are 18 applicants that will receive Grants and funding for the 2023 growing season.

**Update on the New County Council for 2023**

*The leaders of the Agricultural Groups met with the six new Council members on Tuesday. Please see the attachment with the agricultural issues that were discussed.*

*Evan Glass, President*

*Andrew Friedson, Vice President*

*The Planning Housing and Economic Development-PHED Committee has been split up.*

*Outlined below you will see the County Council Committees and its members.*

*Planning, Housing and Parks-Andrew Friedson, Chair, Will Jawando, Natali Fani-Gonzales  
Economic Development- Natali Fani-Gonzales, Chair, Marilyn Balcombe, Laurie Ann Sayles,  
Evan Glass*

*Government Operations-Kate Stewart, Chair, Andrew Friedson, Sidney Katz*

*Public Safety- Sidney Katz, Chair, Dawn Luedtke, Kristin Mink*

*Education-Will Jawando, Chair, Gabe Albornoz, Kristin Mink*

*HHS-Gabe Albornoz, Chair, Laurie Ann Sayles, Dawn Luedtke*

*T&E-Evan Glass, Chair, Kate Stewart, Marilyn Balcombe*

**Article on the Wells #2 and #3 in Poolesville taken offline because they detected Forever Chemicals-These wells are located towards the center of town and in residential areas.**

There was a meeting on Monday, where the Agricultural Leaders discussed the attached map of the Town of Poolesville wells and developed a proactive strategy moving forward. Please the attached agenda from this meeting including the recommendation from the OAG.

<https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/investigations/toxins-in-poolesville-drinking-water/65-292eae8d-f798-4203-8b55-496bdf3a28e2>

Here is another article regarding the WSSC Bloom product containing PFAS.

<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2021/05/25/pfas-pfos-forever-chemicals-garden-fertilizers/7418828002/>

### **Agricultural Trainings and Workshops**

**Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Training** – Full details can be found here: [registration link](#)

Date: Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup>

Time: 8:30am – 4:30pm (must attend the full day to receive the MDA training certification certificate)

Location: Ag History Farm Park 18410 Muncaster Road, Derwood MD 20855 – or there is also a virtual option available if needed.

Cost: Free

This training is for fruit/vegetable producers interested in developing a good safety plan and build a food safety culture on their farms; farmers that want help writing their food safety plan (80% will be completed during this training); farmers that want to increase their market access (potential institutional buyers require MD Gap Certification).

**Beginning Farmer Training Course** - More information and registration can be found on the [course website](#)

It will be a 10-week course, **meeting every Thursday evening from 7:00pm-8:30pm from February 2 through April 6, 2023**. The course kick-off class on February 2 and the graduation class on April 6 will be held in-person at one of several locations across the state, including the Montgomery County Extension Office. All other classes will be offered via Zoom. Classes will be taught by Extension Educators from around the state. Topics include marketing; financial planning; soil health; licenses, permits, and certifications; food safety; integrated pest management; acquiring land and zoning; and specialty crops. Cost for the course is \$65. A flyer is attached.

Additional educational opportunities can be found on the OAG [calendar of events](#).

### **Upcoming Meetings and Events:**

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors-January 3, 2023

UME Area Director Candidates-Presentations-January 4, 2023

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-January 10, 2023

Agricultural Advisory Committee-January 17, 2023  
Good Agricultural Practices-GAP Certification Training-January 27, 2023  
New and Beginning Farmers Training-February 2- April 6, 2023  
Taste of Maryland-February 2, 2023  
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-February 7, 2023  
Farm Bureau Day in Annapolis-February 8, 2023  
Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-February 10, 2023  
Annual Montgomery Weed Control Board of Directors-February 15, 2023  
Agricultural Advisory Committee-February 21, 2023  
Annual Agronomy Update-February 22, 2023  
6<sup>th</sup> Annual Farmers Forum-February 23, 2023  
On-Farm Composting Workshop-March 9, 2023