

MEMORANDUM

April 20, 2022

TO: Planning, Housing, and Economic Development (PHED) Committee
FROM: Gene Smith, Legislative Analyst
SUBJECT: **FY23 Operating Budget – Office of Agriculture (OAG)**
PURPOSE: Make recommendations for Council consideration

Expected Participants:

Jeremy Criss, Director, OAG
Mike Scheffel, Agricultural Lan Preservation Program Administrator, OAG
Jackie Arnold, OAG
Derrick Harrigan, Fiscal and Policy Analyst, Office of Management and Budget

Summary of FY23 Recommended Budget - OAG

	FY22 Approved	FY23 CE Recommended	Change from FY22 Approved
General Fund	\$1,018,865	\$1,065,396	4.6%
Personnel Costs	\$674,711 4.15 FTEs	\$715,848 5.15 FTEs	6.1% 1.00 FTEs
Operating Costs	\$344,154	\$349,548	1.6%
Total Expenditures (All Funds)	\$1,018,865 4.15 FTEs	\$1,065,396 5.15 FTEs	4.6% 24.1%

I. Budget Overview

See the Executive’s recommendation on ©1-6. OAG was created by Bill 25-15, which privatized some functions of the County’s Department of Economic Development (e.g., marketing and business development) and retained some functions in the County. **OAG’s functions were retained in the County to promote agriculture as a viable component of the County’s economic sector.** OAG partners with local businesses, the University of Maryland (UMD), and State and Federal agencies to provide support to agriculture businesses and the agriculture industry generally.

Table 1 below compares FY22 approved and FY23 recommended expenditures and FTEs by program area. **In addition to this budget, 5.35 FTEs of OAG’s personnel complement are recommended to be funded in other areas of the County’s budget for FY23.** The total recommended FTEs in other funds are 3.10 FTEs through the Water Quality Protection Fund (WQPF) and 2.25 FTEs through the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). For the WQPF, the Executive has recommended an increase of 1.00 FTEs in FY23.

Table 1: Comparison of FY22-FY23 by Program Area for OAG

Program Area	FY22 Expenditures	FY23 Expenditures	FY22-23 Change	FY22 FTEs	FY23 FTEs	FY22-23 Change
Agricultural Services	\$613,199	\$649,966	\$36,767	2.25	3.25	1.00
Soil Conservation	\$248,445	\$258,709	\$10,264	1.90	1.90	0.00
UMD-Extension	\$157,221	\$156,721	(\$500)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	\$1,018,865	\$1,065,396	\$46,531	4.15	5.15	1.00

The Executive’s FY23 recommendation increases OAG’s operating budget by \$46,531 or 4.6%. **Most of the recommended increase in FY23 is from the addition of a new position to the OAG.** The OAG budget funds 5.15 FTEs of the total 10.50 FTEs for this office, with the other FTEs funded through the WQPF and CIP. The Council, during its review of the FY23-28 CIP, supported the PHED Committee’s recommendation to shift the FTEs from the CIP to the Operating Budget beginning in FY24.

The County’s General Fund supports 100% of OAG’s FY23 operating budget. OAG receives some revenue from the Maryland Department of Agriculture – Chesapeake Bay Trust. These additional resources are for position cost share payments and are estimated to be \$52,167 in FY23. The other intergovernmental aid is from reimbursement payments through the cost share program.

A. Expenditures by Program Area

1. *Agricultural Services*

This program area is responsible for the coordination of the OAG and of the State and Federal partners located at the Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood. **This program area accounts for 61.0% of the recommended FY23 expenditures for the OAG’s budget.** It manages and implements the OAG’s programs for farmers, such as the New Farmer Project, the Mobile Science Laboratory, and annual farm tour. This program area is supported by an additional 2.25 FTEs from the CIP.

The FY23 recommended budget increases expenditures by \$36,767 when compared to the FY22 approved budget. The recommended increase is due to the addition of 1.00 FTE, but these new expenditures are offset partially by other compensation adjustments in FY23. This new position is discussed in more detail in the Expenditure Discussion Section below.

2. *Soil Conservation*

This program area is staffed by County, State, and federal employees. Staff assist farmers and landowners with issues related to soil conservation and to protecting local water ways to achieve the State mandated nutrient reduction goals for farmland. The WQPF is recommended to support 3.10 FTEs in this program area for FY23. **The FY23 recommended budget increases expenditures by \$10,264 and maintains the same general fund FTEs for this program area compared to the approved FY22 budget.** The increases in this program area are due to compensation adjustments for existing personnel costs.

3. *UMD-Extension*

This program area is funded through local, State, and Federal governments and serves as the agriculture outreach and education component of the UMD-Extension. This program area provides a variety of educational programs for farmers, families, and youth. **The FY23 recommended budget decreases expenditures by \$500 and maintains the same FTEs for this program area compared to the FY22 approved budget.**

B. Expenditures Discussion

The recommended FY23 appropriation for the OAG is a shift from previous fiscal year recommendations; it includes an increase in the service level of the office. Prior to this recommended increase, the OAG's total budget increased modestly by 0.9% from FY17-22 but maintained the same expectations for service level. **During this time, the OAG's operating expenses were reduced to accommodate increases in personnel expenditures.** See the OAG's operating expenditure items for FY22 and FY23 on ©7. Below are additional elements for the committee's consideration and discussion of the OAG's recommended FY23 budget.

Recommended new personnel. The Executive recommends adding 1.00 FTE to the OAG budget and 1.00 FTE to OAG through the WQPF. The recommended FY23 expenditures in the OAG budget includes \$58,479 for this new position, which includes some lapse to account for the hiring process. OMB estimates that the annualized FY24 expenditures for this new position are \$141,433. **This increase of \$89,954 from the FY23 recommendation will be added to the base budget in FY24 if approved.**

The recommended 1.00 FTE to the OAG budget is for a *Senior Business Development Specialist* – Grade 27. This position will be responsible for several core elements of the office, including Climate Action Plan initiatives, food resiliency initiatives, and the farm incubator. See ©8 for a more complete list of potential responsibilities of this new position as shared by the OAG.

The recommended 1.00 FTE for the OAG through the WQPF is for a *Senior Engineer* – Grade 27. This position will be added to the Soil Conservation District and will be responsible for elements related to the County's MS4 permit. See ©8 for more details about this position's responsibilities and ©9 for a memorandum from the Soil Conservation District to the County Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). **This information**

is included for reference during the PHED Committee’s review today. The position and funding will be formally reviewed and considered by the Transportation and Environment Committee when it reviews the recommended FY23 Department of Environmental Protection budget.

Maryland Agriculture Education Foundation (MAEF). MAEF, more commonly known as “Ag in the Classroom,” promotes the understanding and importance of agriculture in our daily lives. In the County, MAEF partners with Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) to provide a hands-on experience for MCPS elementary students. This program is well-received by the students and administration of MCPS. This program was reduced during the pandemic because MCPS was not conducting in-person education in 2021. **Since MCPS returned to in-person instruction, this program has resumed normal operations.** See ©10 for a list of schools visited in FY22.

Cost share program. The OAG provides financial assistance to farmers that qualify for assistance from the Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO). See ©11 for a summary of the program in recent years. **The OAG has set aside about \$25,000 for this program in FY23; the FY22 disbursements were \$53,122, including \$25,561 in reimbursements received from MARBIDCO.** Total program funding is based on applications, and in some years, the OAG has had to defer payments to wait for additional funding.

Council staff recommends approval of the Executive’s FY23 appropriation for the OAG.

<u>This packet contains:</u>	<u>Circle #</u>
Executive recommended FY23 OAG budget	1
OAG FY22 and FY23 operating expense breakdown	7
OAG new position details	8
Soil Conservation District, re: Engineer position	9
OAG MAEF FY22 school list	10
OAG MARBIDCO summary sheet	11



Agriculture

RECOMMENDED FY23 BUDGET

\$1,065,396

FULL TIME EQUIVALENTS

5.15

 JEREMY V. CRISS, DIRECTOR

MISSION STATEMENT




The Office of Agriculture (OAG) was created in July 2016 and exists to promote agriculture as a viable component of the County's economic sector, as well as to preserve farmland as a resource for future agricultural production. The goal of the OAG is to promote Montgomery County as a leader in the agricultural industry by providing support to our farm community and working to educate our residents.

BUDGET OVERVIEW



The total recommended FY23 Operating Budget for the Office of Agriculture is \$1,065,396, an increase of \$46,531 or 4.57 percent from the FY22 Approved Budget of \$1,018,865. Personnel Costs comprise 67.19 percent of the budget for ten full-time position(s) and one part-time position(s), and a total of 5.15 FTEs. Total FTEs may include seasonal or temporary positions and may also reflect workforce charged to or from other departments or funds. Operating Expenses account for the remaining 32.81 percent of the FY23 budget.

COUNTY PRIORITY OUTCOMES

While this program area supports all seven of the County Executive's Priority Outcomes, the following are emphasized:

-  **A Greener County**
-  **A Growing Economy**
-  **Thriving Youth and Families**

INITIATIVES

-  Funding provided for the addition of one new Agricultural Business Development Specialist position related to the County's Climate Action Plan. This position will help implement zero waste goals from farm composting, and promote farm to food bank initiatives and agritourism.
-  Funding provided for the addition of one new Senior Engineer position related to the County's Climate Action Plan and Water Quality Protection Plan initiatives. While assigned to the Office of Agriculture, this position will be funded through the Water Quality Protection Fund (WQPF).

- ★ The Office of Agriculture is working with members of the County's delegation on legislation that will expand on-farm composting opportunities by increasing the footprint for the composting area without a permit from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE).
- ★ Continue to work with the Department of Technology and Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) to expand broadband/high speed internet access in rural areas of the County.
- ★ The Office of Agriculture (OAG) partnered with the Department of Environmental Protection and the Sugarloaf Citizens Association to review the Association's agreement with the County seeking an amendment to the agreement that would allow smaller 20-yard dump trucks to deliver leaf grow to table food farmers that are working with the OAG that will improve soil health.
- ★ Montgomery County's Farm to Food Bank program, a partnership between the Montgomery County Food Security Task Force, the Department of Health and Human Services, Manna Food Center, the Montgomery County Food Council, the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture, and the Greater Washington Community Foundation - has collectively invested and committed over \$630,000 to support a sustained and resilient local food supply and provide more nutritious and culturally diverse produce to residents who experience hunger. Since July of 2020, over 112,235 pounds of fresh, locally produced food has been purchased or donated to over 30 food assistance providers, providing over 90,000 meals for the Montgomery County community.

INNOVATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENTS

- ★ The Office of Agriculture is working with the Office of Technology Enterprise Business Solutions (TEBS) to find a more efficient way to streamline its client intake process and data collection.

PROGRAM CONTACTS

Contact Jacqueline Arnold of the Office of Agriculture at 301.590.2859 or Derrick Harrigan of the Office of Management and Budget at 240.777.2759 for more information regarding this department's operating budget.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

★ Agricultural Services

The Office of Agriculture (OAG) serves in a variety of capacities to provide the following services: implement agricultural policies and programs; provide financial and technical assistance to farmers; manage agricultural education programs; provide financial and staff support to its partner agencies; serve as a liaison between the Executive Branch and the agricultural community via the Agricultural Advisory, Agricultural Preservation, and Montgomery County Farm Bureau Boards; oversee the various land preservation programs; co-sponsor farmers' markets, an annual farm tour, and other activities that promote agricultural businesses and products; and provide mentoring and specialized business training programs. Additionally, the OAG is responsible for the coordination of programs offered by its partner agencies, which are all co-located at the Agricultural History Farm Park in Derwood. These Federal, State, and local partners include the University of Maryland-Extension, the Montgomery Soil Conservation District, the Natural Resource Conservation Service, and the Farm Service Agency.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Estimated FY22	Target FY23	Target FY24
Technical assistance contacts with farmers	700	1,241	1,000	1,000	1,000

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Estimated FY22	Target FY23	Target FY24
Acres of land under easements inspected by Agricultural Services	3,927.07	1,032.72	3,000	3,000	3,000
Percent of easement acres under most restrictive easement disallowing development	24.4%	32%	33%	34%	25%
Percent of participants who learned or benefitted from Agricultural Services event, training, or farm tour ¹	100%	N/A	100%	100%	100%

¹ Data for this measure not collected prior to FY20. OAG cancelled FY21 events due to the pandemic and therefore has no data for FY21.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	613,199	2.25
Add: Agricultural Business Development Specialist	58,479	1.00
Increase Cost: Six Percent Inflationary Increase to Non-Profit Service Provider Contracts	4,140	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(25,852)	0.00
FY23 Recommended	649,966	3.25

Soil Conservation

This program is comprised of staff and other resources from Federal, State, and local Agricultural agencies. It provides technical and outreach educational assistance to farmers/rural landowners for implementing best management and conservation practices. The Montgomery Soil Conservation District (MSCD) assists the County which is required to achieve the nationally mandated, state assigned, Rural MS4 Permit - Chesapeake Bay Nutrient Diet - Watershed Implementation Program (WIP-III) Goals. Failure to achieve the WIP-III Goals will likely result in the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) instituting the backstop measure which will negatively impact the County and the Agricultural community by denying all permits moving forward, and harming the County's rural economy/infrastructure with increased regulatory requirements.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Estimated FY22	Target FY23	Target FY24
Soil conservation contacts with farmers and landowners to provide technical assistance	349	800	800	800	800
Water quality plans completed	46	72	72	72	72
Percent of interagency site visits coordinated within one business day of agricultural complaint	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Pounds of nitrogen reduced through conservation and best management practices ¹	20,144	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000

¹ The OAG is still awaiting the final approved actual for FY21.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	248,445	1.90
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	10,264	0.00
FY23 Recommended	258,709	1.90

University of Maryland-Extension (UMD-Extention)

The Montgomery County Extension Office serves as the agricultural outreach and education component of the University of Maryland. This agency is funded cooperatively through local, State, and Federal governments. Farmers, families, and youth are the primary audiences of the Extension Office. Educational programs for farmers include raising crops and livestock, protecting the environment, farm and business management, marketing commodities, and pest management. Programs for families and youth

include home horticulture, family budgeting, and consumer education, with a focus on promoting positive parenting, nutrition education and healthy lifestyles, leadership development, and traditional 4-H youth development programs. The Extension Office's professional staff has an extensive network of volunteers to assist them in program delivery. Extension Office staff manage a diverse group of over 3,000 volunteers to respond to over 100,000 information requests each year. Outreach education programs are delivered informally through one-on-one contacts, telephone assistance, the internet, classes and workshops, field days, radio, television, and print media.

Program Performance Measures	Actual FY20	Actual FY21	Estimated FY22	Target FY23	Target FY24
Nutrient management plans completed	109	89	99	99	99
4-H youth development program participants ¹	5,293	319	2,500	5,000	5,000
Average pre- to post-test score increase of Close Encounters with Agriculture participants on agriculture, nutrition, and the environment	49%	0	50%	50%	50%
Percent of Food Supplement Nutrition Education youth participants who try new healthy food	42%	42%	42%	42%	42%
Percent of participants who purchase produce they learn about from Food Supplement Nutrition Education farmers market programming	92%	92%	92%	92%	92%

¹ FY21 decrease due to pandemic.

FY23 Recommended Changes	Expenditures	FTEs
FY22 Approved	157,221	0.00
Multi-program adjustments, including negotiated compensation changes, employee benefit changes, changes due to staff turnover, reorganizations, and other budget changes affecting multiple programs.	(500)	0.00
FY23 Recommended	156,721	0.00

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY21	Budget FY22	Estimate FY22	Recommended FY23	%Chg Bud/Rec
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	466,511	528,582	478,178	574,703	8.7 %
Employee Benefits	141,392	146,129	129,551	141,145	-3.4 %
County General Fund Personnel Costs	607,903	674,711	607,729	715,848	6.1 %
Operating Expenses	276,051	344,154	344,154	349,548	1.6 %
County General Fund Expenditures	883,954	1,018,865	951,883	1,065,396	4.6 %
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	8	8	8	10	25.0 %
Part-Time	1	1	1	1	—
FTEs	4.15	4.15	4.15	5.15	24.1 %
REVENUES					
Miscellaneous Revenues	20,649	0	0	0	—
Other Intergovernmental	63,064	63,064	63,064	63,064	—
County General Fund Revenues	83,713	63,064	63,064	63,064	—

GRANT FUND - MCG

BUDGET SUMMARY

	Actual FY21	Budget FY22	Estimate FY22	Recommended FY23	%Chg Bud/Rec
EXPENDITURES					
Salaries and Wages	2,636	0	0	0	—
Employee Benefits	0	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Personnel Costs	2,636	0	0	0	—
Grant Fund - MCG Expenditures	2,636	0	0	0	—
PERSONNEL					
Full-Time	0	0	0	0	—
Part-Time	0	0	0	0	—
FTEs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
REVENUES					
Federal Grants	2,636	0	0	0	%
Grant Fund - MCG Revenues	2,636	0	0	0	—
DEPARTMENT TOTALS					
Total Expenditures	886,590	1,018,865	951,883	1,065,396	4.6 %
Total Full-Time Positions	8	8	8	10	25.0 %
Total Part-Time Positions	1	1	1	1	—
Total FTEs	4.15	4.15	4.15	5.15	24.1 %
Total Revenues	86,349	63,064	63,064	63,064	—

FY23 RECOMMENDED CHANGES

	Expenditures	FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND		
	FY22 ORIGINAL APPROPRIATION	1,018,865 4.15
<u>Changes (with service impacts)</u>		
Add: Agricultural Business Development Specialist [Agricultural Services]	58,479	1.00
<u>Other Adjustments (with no service impacts)</u>		
Increase Cost: Annualization of FY22 Compensation Increases	10,353	0.00
Increase Cost: FY23 Compensation Adjustment	6,995	0.00
Increase Cost: Six Percent Inflationary Increase to Non-Profit Service Provider Contracts [Agricultural Services]	4,140	0.00
Increase Cost: Motor Pool Adjustment	1,113	0.00
Increase Cost: Printing and Mail Adjustment	141	0.00
Decrease Cost: Annualization of FY22 Personnel Costs	(6,042)	0.00
Decrease Cost: Retirement Adjustment	(28,648)	0.00
	FY23 RECOMMENDED	1,065,396 5.15

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Program Name	FY22 APPR Expenditures	FY22 APPR FTEs	FY23 REC Expenditures	FY23 REC FTEs
Agricultural Services	613,199	2.25	649,966	3.25
Soil Conservation	248,445	1.90	258,709	1.90
University of Maryland-Extension (UMD-Extention)	157,221	0.00	156,721	0.00
Total	1,018,865	4.15	1,065,396	5.15

CHARGES TO OTHER DEPARTMENTS

Charged Department	Charged Fund	FY22 Total\$	FY22 FTEs	FY23 Total\$	FY23 FTEs
COUNTY GENERAL FUND					
Environmental Protection	Water Quality Protection	347,374	2.10	449,240	3.10
CIP	Capital Fund	221,959	2.25	240,403	2.25
Total		569,333	4.35	689,643	5.35

FUNDING PARAMETER ITEMS

CE RECOMMENDED (\$000S)

Title	FY23	FY24	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28
COUNTY GENERAL FUND						
EXPENDITURES						
FY23 Recommended	1,065	1,065	1,065	1,065	1,065	1,065
No inflation or compensation change is included in outyear projections.						
Annualization of Positions Recommended in FY23	0	83	83	83	83	83
New positions in the FY23 budget are generally assumed to be filled at least two months after the fiscal year begins. Therefore, the above amounts reflect annualization of these positions in the outyears.						
Labor Contracts	0	19	19	19	19	19
These figures represent the estimated annualized cost of general wage adjustments, service increments, and other negotiated items.						
Subtotal Expenditures	1,065	1,167	1,167	1,167	1,167	1,167

ANNUALIZATION OF FULL PERSONNEL COSTS

	FY23 Recommended		FY24 Annualized	
	Expenditures	FTEs	Expenditures	FTEs
Agricultural Business Development Specialist	58,479	1.00	141,433	1.00
Total	58,479	1.00	141,433	1.00

FY22 Expenditure Breakout

Fund	Account	Orig Budget
FY22 Approved Operating Budget		344,154.00
General Fund	Contract and Services Total: <i>Partial UME State Pymt \$156,721; Social Media Contract \$15,000 MCPS/MAEF balance \$69,000</i>	240,721.00
	General Supplies Supplies/Equipment/other/software supplies/equipment maint	1,000.00
	County charge backs: <i>linter office mail \$790; Central dup and imaging \$1,292; copier leases \$8500; postage \$700; other central dup services: \$1,676; postage \$700</i>	5,158.00
	Motor Pool Total	2,500.00
	Travel & Expense Reimbursement Total (3 staff)	900.00
	Memberships/subscriptions/ Dues/Sponsorship Total: DELMARVA Farmer \$40, Lexis/Nexis Matthew Bender \$100, MD Farm Bureau \$65	300.00
	Ag Educational Events: Bus Tours of Ag Reserve, Legislative Breakfast, Fair, Farm Tour, Farmer Forums/trainings, Close Encounters with Ag	25,500.00
	ACRE Cost Share Program: <i>\$27,768 paid thus far \$20,717 (open assuming projct completion by june 30)</i>	48,485.00
	LeafGro Soil Amendment Program & Miscellaneous operating: <i>(Leafgro program \$ 16,000; woodchips \$300</i>	16,300.00
	Marketing	3,290.00

344,154.00

FY23 Estimated Expense Breakout

Fund	Account	Orig Budget
FY23 CE Recommend		349,548.00
General Fund	Contract and Services Total: <i>Partial UME State Pymt \$156,721; Social Media Contract \$15,000 MCPS/MAEF balance \$69,000 Ag Educator \$20,000</i>	260,721.00
	General Supplies Supplies/Equipment/other/software supplies/equipment maint	1,000.00
	County charge backs: <i>linter office mail \$790; Central dup and imaging \$1,292; copier leases \$8500; postage \$700; other central dup services: \$1,676; postage \$700</i>	5,158.00
	Motor Pool	2,500.00
	Travel & Expense Reimbursement Total (3 staff)	1,000.00
	Memberships/subscriptions/ Dues/Sponsorship Total: DELMARVA Farmer \$40, Lexis/Nexis Matthew Bender \$100, MD Farm Bureau \$65	300.00
	Ag Educational Events: Bus Tours of Ag Reserve, Legislative Breakfast, Fair, Farm Tour, Farmer Forums/trainings, Close Encounters with Ag	25,500.00
	ACRE Cost Share Program:	25,000.00
	LeafGro Soil Amendment Program & Miscellaneous operating: <i>(Leafgro program \$ 14,000)</i>	20,000.00
	Marketing	8,369.00

349,548.00

OAG description of the new Senior Business Development Specialist position in FY23.

Development, Innovation & Entrepreneurship

Responsibilities:

- Research/Write Grants
- Climate Action Plan initiatives including: Agrivoltaic and other pilot projects (as needed)
- Food Resiliency Initiatives including: Urban Farming Initiatives and New Farmer Program
- Farm Incubator; Ag/Food Tech Transfer
- On Farm Food Scraps Composting
- New Market Linkages
- Ag Tourism

OAG description of the new DEP Engineer position in FY23.

In the attached letter from the Soil Conservation District, the reasons for the position are outlined. The engineer will allow the requirements of small pond approvals to be met. This will help the County in its MS4 permits for the urban sector. The engineer will also help survey, design, and approve agricultural best management practices (BMPs). These BMPs reduce runoff into waters of the state and help the County meet its Agricultural Sector WIP III goals for the Chesapeake Bay.



Montgomery Soil Conservation District

18410 Muncaster Road - Derwood, MD 20855 - Phone (301) 590-2855
www.montgomeryscd.org

November 15, 2021

Ms. Adriana Hochberg, Acting Director
Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
2425 Reddie Drive
Wheaton, MD 20902

Re: Meeting with DEP Concerning Engineer FY23 Budget Request

Dear Ms. Hochberg:

On behalf of the Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors, I wanted to thank the Department of Environmental Protecting for meeting with our staff and the Montgomery County Office of Agriculture to discuss the proposed engineer position that is being identified within the Office of Agriculture's FY23 Budget proposal.

As you may know, the request for an engineering position for the District is being driven by Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) decision to remove themselves from the review and approval of small ponds for the State of Maryland. Under State Law, Soil Conservation District's have delegated authority by the State to approve small ponds. These small pond approvals include many of the stormwater management pond retrofits DEP is involved with. Under the current arrangement the District, NRCS, conducts the technical reviews that allow the District to approve small ponds as a service to Montgomery County in accordance with State Law. On January 1, 2022, NRCS will no longer provide these engineer technical review services to the District, which effectively will prohibit the District from approving these small pond projects until such a time, the District has an engineer on staff.

The District appreciates the partnership we have with DEP, and we would like to continue to provide small pond approval services to the County. DEP's support in identifying financial resources for this critical need position will be vital if the District is to continue providing this service to the County.

Our meeting on November 2nd was a good start in understanding the issue with review and approval of small ponds in Montgomery County and it is our hope that we can continue this dialog and gain the support of DEP, the County Executive and County Council for this important District engineering position that will further expand the great partnership the District has with DEP. Thank you again for meeting with our staff on November 2nd and look forward to further discussions as this request for FY23 moves through the budget process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rob. Butz".

Robert Butz, Chairman
Montgomery Soil Conservation District

Marc Elrich, County Executive; Dale Tibbitts, Chief Administrative Officer
Mary Beck, OMB; Derrick Harrigan, OMB
Patty Bubar, DEP; Rick Harris, DEP
Jackie Arnold, Mike Scheffel, Jeremy Criss- OAG

MAEF Mobile Science Lab Schedule - Cohort 3 Schools			
	Date	School	# days at school
1	September 17 – 23, 2021	Wyngate	6
2	September 27 – October 4, 2021	Ashburton	6
3	October 6 – 12, 2021	Luxmanor	6
4	October 14 – 21, 2021	Bayard Rustin	6
5	October 25 – November 1, 2021	Rachel Carson	6
6	November 3 – 9, 2021	Thurgood Marshall	4
7	November 11 – 16, 2021	College Gardens	4
8	November 18 – 24, 2021	Bel Pre	4
9	November 29-December 6, 2021	Weller Road	6
10	December 8 – 15, 2021	Sargent Shriver	6
11	December 17 – January 4, 2022	Glenallan	6
12	January 6 – 13, 2022	Archola	6
13	January 18 – 26, 2022	Flora M. Singer	6
14	January 28 – February 4, 2022	Rock Creek Forest	5
15	February 7 – 10, 2022	Somerset	4
16	February 14 – 16, 2022	Carderock Springs	3
17	February 18 – 24, 2022	Kensington Parkwood	4
18	February 28 – March 4, 2022	Garrett Park	5
19	March 7 – 14, 2022	Farmland	6
20	March 16 – 21, 2022	Seven Locks	4
21	March 23 – 29, 2022	Bells Mill	5
22	March 31 – April 7, 2022	Beverly Farms	5
23	April 19 – 25, 2022	Great Seneca	5
24	April 27 – May 3, 2022	William B. Gibbs, Jr.	4
25	May 5 – 11, 2022	Wilson Wims	5
26	May 13 – 19, 2022	Little Bennett	5
27	May 23 – June 1, 2022	Snowden Farm	7
28	June 6 – 8, 2022	North Chevy Chase	3
			142

# Projects	Application Date	Farm/Farmer	Project	Additional Information	Marbidco Approval	County Agreement #	Total Project Cost	Total Funding	Project Completed	County Funding	OAG/County Ck issued	MARBIDCO Funding	County rec'd reimburse.	comments
1	12/02/20	Woods Permaculture Farm	Deer Fencing		12/15/20	21-001085	\$ 14,669.54	\$6,000.00	02/25/22	\$ 3,000.00	03/15/22	\$ 3,000.00	NO	3/21 Email noting project complete and requesting reimbursement
2	12/29/20	Chirandu Farms, LLC	Deer Fencing		01/19/21	21-001657	\$ 18,083.00	\$7,000.00	08/10/21	\$ 4,000.00	YES	\$ 3,000.00	Yes	complete
3	01/06/21	One Acre Farm	Equipment	Fruit/Vegetable wash table	01/22/21	21-001084	\$ 9,309.01	\$4,662.00	No	\$ 2,331.00	YES	\$ 2,331.00	Yes	complete
4	01/20/21	Farms/DBA The Farm at Our House	Equipment		01/28/21	21-001656	\$ 8,248.00	\$4,124.00	No	\$ 2,062.00	04/13/21	\$ 2,062.00	yes	complete
5	02/09/21	1724 Lake, LLC	Deer Fencing		02/23/21	21-002205	\$ 11,992.45	\$5,996.00	08/24/21	\$ 2,998.00	yes	\$ 2,998.00	yes	complete
6	02/10/21	Kharis Lavender Fields	Equipmnet		02/23/21	21-002204	\$ 10,576.04	\$5,288.00	03/26/21	\$ 2,644.00	04/06/21	\$ 2,644.00	Yes	complete
7	03/15/21	Metro Microgreens	Equipment	Aquaponics	03/17/21	21-002206	\$ 14,146.15	\$6,000.00	07/13/21	\$ 3,000.00	NO	\$ 3,000.00	yes	complete
							\$ 87,024.19	#####		\$ 20,035.00		\$ 19,035.00		
8	07/01/21	Darimano LLC	Deer Fencing		07/23/21	21-004495	\$ 32,902.00	\$6,000.00		\$ 3,000.00		\$ 3,000.00	no	Project Delayed until Spring- Agreement Expiration date June 2022; 3/22/22 email Marbidco Granted 60 day extension until Aug
9	07/20/21	Flowered LLC	Deer Fencing		08/04/21	21-010893	\$ 5,058.90	\$2,526.00		\$ 1,263.00		\$ 1,263.00	no	3/22/22 email follow up for project status sent
10	07/20/21	Flowered LLC	Walk in Cooler/Refrigeration		08/04/21	21-010894	\$ 4,660.00	\$2,201.30		\$ 1,165.65		\$ 1,165.65	No	3/22/22 email follow up for project status sent
11	07/21/21	Sungold Flower Co, LLC	Deer Fencing		09/30/21	21-01868	\$ 7,981.02	\$3,990.00		\$ 1,995.00		\$ 1,995.00	No	
12	08/03/21	Gypsy Flower Farm	High Tunnel		08/09/21	21-010895	\$ 5,547.00	\$2,772.00	2/25/2022	\$ 1,386.00	3/15/2022	\$ 1,386.00	No	3/15/22: Project complete pyment made: email requesting reimbursement from Marbidco.
13	01/25/22	Farms/DBA The Farm at Our House	Equipment		02/03/22	22-000966	\$ 12,062.02	\$6,000.00		\$ 3,000.00		\$ 3,000.00	No	
14	03/09/22	Fresh Mama Farms	Deer Fencing											3/16 email from laurien she will get back to me
15	03/10/22	Farm at Home Produce	Deer Fencing											Stephen Fistere working on state of md business standing
							\$ 68,210.94	#####		\$ 11,809.65		\$ 11,809.65		