



THE OFFICE OF AGRICULTURE

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

MEMORANDUM

May 6, 2016

TO: Agricultural Advisory Committee Members (AAC)
FROM: Jeremy V. Criss, Agricultural Services Manager
Department of Economic Development
SUBJECT: May 10, 2016 Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will meet on **Tuesday, May 10, 2016 at the Up County Regional Services Center 12900 Middlebrook Road Germantown in Room D at 7:00 pm. Please note that Room D is upstairs.**

The agenda is on the next page.

The other attachments for our meeting will be posted on the Agricultural Services web site. Due to the County's paper reduction mandate, please print these attachments out and bring them with you to the meeting.

I hope to see you on Tuesday evening.

*Sign language interpreter services will be provided only upon request with notice as far in advance as possible but no less than 72 hours prior to the event. If you need other services or Aids to participate in this activity, please call 301-590-2810

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**Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda
May 10, 2016**

1. Meeting called to Order and Introductions
2. Approval of the April 19, 2016 AAC meeting minutes
3. **Update on the Office of Agriculture-OAG FY17 Operating and Capital Budgets**

The PHED Committee recommended approval of the FY17 Operating Budget for the Office of Agriculture-OAG. George Leventhal recommended an additional \$8,000 for the Mobile Science Lab-Food Fiber and You.

The Office of Agriculture is allocated a total of \$1,671,967 in County funding and consists of 9 positions-people that total 8.5 FTE.

<u>Source of Funding</u>	<u>Personnel Costs</u>	<u>Operating Costs</u>	<u>Totals</u>	<u>FTE</u>
General Fund	636,560	365,397	1,001,957	4.15
Water Quality Prot	217,199	102,801	320,000	2.1
<u>Capital Fund</u>	<u>245,409</u>	<u>104,591</u>	<u>350,000</u>	<u>2.25</u>
Totals	1,099,168	572,789	1,671,967	8.5

Jeremy Criss, Karen Walker, Jackie Arnold, David Plummer.9 FTE, Melissa Steed.25=4.15

James Harne, Shelly Ingram, David Plummer.1 FTE= 2.1

John Zawitoski, Cathy Yingling, Melissa Steed .25= 2.25

Totals 8.5

The PHED also recommended approval of the Ag Pres CIP program increase in appropriation for FY17 \$1.1 million for easement acquisitions. The increase is associated with increased collections of agricultural transfer taxes in FY16.

The OAG staff and the Ag Pres Advisory Board have continued discussions with DEP staff for new funding from the WQPC. The DEP is interested in exploring how the farmers can assist them with the County's MS4 permit requirements through nutrient trading. There is a short-term need for MS4 due to the delayed schedule for stream restoration and reconstruction. Short term 1-5 year nutrient trading scenarios are being discussed. Interested farmers should contact the MSCD to request a Baseline Assessment on their farm that includes a \$500 incentive payment. No WQPC funding for the FY17 cycle is being considered at this time.

4. New Improvements and Communication Systems at the AHFP

New communication systems are finally moving forward.

The Access Agreement was held up in Parks legal office because they wanted language in the Contract that would allow termination with Comcast at any time with no liability. Comcast found this language unacceptable given their \$40 K investment to run the cable up the driveway.

All utilities were surveyed and marked and they will be marked again prior to digging.

The existing Verizon phones will be replaced with Comcast Business Service.

All phone numbers for agricultural agency staff will be the same.

The existing Verizon T-1 lines will be replaced for OAG, UM-Extension and the MSCD.

The FSA, NRCS and MDA will maintain their existing Verizon T-1 lines.

5. Update on the Sugarland Road Pilot Project for Broad Band

A public meeting on March 21, 2016 was held for area residents and representatives from Comcast to discuss this project. Through the hard work of some incredible neighbors, they have achieved a total of **70** Expression of Interest Forms out of 95 homes. This outcome is impressive and it represents a 74% inclusion in the area. There are a few residents that we are still working with for signing expression of interest. Comcast and the County are continuing to assess the potential for more residents and business owners.

6. Agricultural Advisory Committee need for new farmer members

We are still looking for more new farmer members to serve on the AAC to replace the following folks: Drew Stabler, Jane Evans, David Heisler

David Weitzer requested a waiver for a third term

Eleanor Leak requested a first term

7. ZTA 16-02 Agricultural Zone-Transferable Development Rights Requirements

Representatives from the SCA and MCA met with the Planning Staff on April 22, 2016. Representatives for AAC-David Weitzer, APAB-Michael Jamison, MCFB-Paula Linthicum, and MAP-Bob Cissel met with the Planning Staff on April 25, 2016. The Planning staff is preparing a transmittal back to the County outlining a proposed resolution on the ZTA. The OAG may be asked to provide recommendations to the DPS and the MNCPPC on all requests for farm tenant dwellings.

8. Recommendations from the AAC and APAB-Farmer members serving

Please see the attached letter regarding the joint recommendations from the AAC and APAB on farmer members serving on the County Boards and Committees.

9. 2016 Farmers Markets in Montgomery County

The OAG conducted the annual training for farmer's market masters and vendors in April. The 2016 farmers markets are now listed in the updated flyer:

http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/agsservices/Resources/Files/Farmers_Markets/2016FARMERSMARKETFLYER.pdf

There are 24 farmers markets in Montgomery County for 2016 which represents the highest number of markets in the State of Maryland.

10. 27th Annual Farm Tour and Harvest Sale event-July 23 & 24, 2016

The OAG is preparing for the 27th Annual Farm Tour and Harvest Sale and we have 21 farms that will be featured. The number of farms continues to increase each year. In 2014 we had 17 farms and in 2015 we had 19 farms. We are currently working a promotional program for this year's farm tour that includes featuring the owners of the farms and some background information on their farms in social media. We hope this program will help to promote the farms throughout the growing season. Another promotion project includes developing farmer trading cards for those farmers that are interested in participating.

11. County Council Proclamation-Drew Stabler-Good Steward Award-National Corn Growers Association

The County Council-George Leventhal will honor Drew Stabler of Sunny Ridge Farm on May 17, 2016 for the Good Steward Award from the National Corn Growers Association.

12. Recommendations from the AAC Sub-committee:

Micro-Alcohol Production Facilities- Fruit and Grain based Alcoholic beverages.

Limited Use Standards for Private Events on farms including food.

Food trucks-trailers prohibited on farms due to Transitory Uses restricted under Section 3.1.5 TDR Prohibitions. *ZTA 16-04 Agricultural Reserve (AR) Zone- Transitory Uses- This ZTA will remove the prohibition for Food Trucks and Food Trailers from locating on farms encumbered by Transferable Development Rights TDR easements. Public hearing is scheduled for June 21, 2016 at 1:30 pm.*

Next meeting of the AAC-June 21, 2016 at 7:00 pm

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Bd-May 10, 2016 @ 7:30pm

Agricultural Advisory Committee-May 10, 2016 @ 7:00pm- One week early for May

Montgomery Soil Conservation District-May 13, 2016 @ 11:00am

Flocks and Farms Festival-May 22, 2016 Black Hills Regional Park

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Picnic-June 5, 2016

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors-June 7, 2016 @7:00pm