

**Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee -March 21, 2023**  
Office of Agriculture- Jeremy Criss

**Call the meeting to Order and Introductions-**

**Approval of the February 21, 2023 AAC minutes-**

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

**Timeline of events surrounding this PFAS issue**

January 3, 2023	Community Meeting in the Town of Poolesville
January 9, 2023	Ag Community Leaders and Ag agency staff meeting to develop a proactive strategy
January 26, 2023	Webinar conducted by Bloom representatives on PFAS testing etc.
January 30, 2023	Meeting between PEER, MCA, SCA, OAG, DEP, CEX to review PFAS test results
January 31, 2023	Letter from PEER, MCA, SCA to the CE and Council President on PFAS
February 7, 2023	Follow up meeting for Ag Community Leaders and Bloom representatives
February 8, 2023	DEP Briefing with the CE on the letter from PEER, MCA, SCA
February 16, 2023	The County Executive supports House Bill 319, <i>Environment – Pesticide Registration - PFAS Testing - Requirements</i>
February 21, 2023	The County Attorney reported that MC does not have the authority at this time to ban the application of biosolids on farmland.
February 24, 2023	The OAG has included a new PFAS resource page on our website outlining all of the applicable research on this issue. <a href="https://montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/faq.html">https://montgomerycountymd.gov/agservices/faq.html</a>
March 3, 2023	HB 319/SB 158 Pesticides Registration-PFAS Testing and Colby Ferguson does not believe it will move forward in 2023.
March 14, 2023	The Federal EPA has issued a new <a href="#">Enforceable Limits</a> of PFAS in drinking water.
May 22, 2023	There is a PFAS Summit scheduled for elected officials hosted at DC Waters Headquarters.

<https://www.wusa9.com/article/news/investigations/toxins-in-poolesville-drinking-water/65-292cae8d-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/>

**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. On March 7, 2023, the County Council passed a Resolution to extend the effective date of Bill 40-21. We will continue monitoring this Bill 40-21 that will be scheduled for a second T&E Committee Work Session.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2023/20230307/202303073A.pdf>

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

This Bill 18-22 Noise Control-Leaf Removal Equipment was discussed during the T&E Committee work session on February 13, 2023, Councilmember Marilyn Balcombe presented an amendment to permit the use of gasoline blowers for farming uses on agriculturally assessed properties. The Bill 18-22 was scheduled for final reading on March 7, 2023, however the Council members are recommending additional amendments that apply to the rebate amount for purchasing electric blowers and the language for the prohibition on the sale of gasoline blowers in the Down County.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2023/20230307/202303072A.pdf>

**The County Government and Sugarloaf Citizens Association Agreement-Amendment #7**

The Office of Agriculture has completed the process to amend the Sugarloaf Citizens Association Agreement-Amendment # 7 to permit a 20 Cubic Yard Truck to pick up and deliver leafgro to smaller scale food producers where their properties cannot accommodate a 40 Cubic Yard truck.

**Kevin Atticks-New Secretary of the Maryland Department of Agriculture visit to the County-**

On March 13, 2023, Kevin Atticks, Secretary of MDA visited Montgomery County and met with the Leaders of the Agricultural groups. One of the reasons for this visit is for Kevin to learn more about the traditional agricultural sector for grain production. Doug Lechluder, Pete Driscroll, and Lori Larson attended the event, and they did an excellent job of representing their specific sectors of the agricultural industry.

**Introduction – March 14, 2023 Rustic Roads Functional Master Plan Update - Planning Board Draft** (Orlin)

Public Hearing is scheduled for 4/18/23 at 1:30 p.m.  
TE Committee work session will be scheduled at a later date.

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council/Resources/Files/agenda/col/2023/20230314/202303145D.pdf>

Found in this link, <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Rustic-Roads-Functional-Master-Plan-Update-Volume-I -The-Plan-Planning-Board-Draft.pdf>

Recommendations:

28. To add diversity to the Committee while continuing to give commodity farmers a strong voice, the County Council should revise the membership criteria in Section 49-80 as follows:

*Membership. The County Executive must appoint, subject to confirmation by the County Council, a Rustic Roads Advisory Committee. In making appointments, the Executive should strive to achieve diversity on the Committee in support of racial equity and social justice. The Committee has nine voting members. Each member must be a resident of the County. The Executive should appoint:*

- (1) three members who operate commercial farmland earning 50 percent or more of their income from farming;*
  - (2) one member who is a representative of the Agricultural Advisory Committee and has been recommended to the Executive by the AAC;*
  - (3) one member who knows rural preservation techniques through practical experience and training;*
  - (4) one member who knows roadway engineering through practical experience and training; and*
  - (5) three at-large members to be drawn from other users of rustic roads. Examples of the at-large members include, but are not limited to: a table crop farmer who does not earn more than 50 percent of their income from farming; an expert in tourism or historic sites along the roads; a member of a religious institution on a rustic road; an operator of an agritourism business, such as a winery, brewery, farm stand, or recreation or entertainment venue on a rustic road; or a person who regularly uses the roads to engage in or reach places for outdoor recreation, such as to bike, boat, kayak, hike, fish, ride horses, or go birding.*
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**FY 24 Operating Budget for the Office of Agriculture**

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OMB/Resources/Files/omb/pdfs/FY24/psprec/65-Agriculture-FY2024-REC-Publication-Report.pdf>

**National Agriculture Day -March 21, 2023**

Breakfast with County Council at 8:00 am-If you want to attend, please let Jeremy Criss know.

9:00 am Proclamation recognizing National Agriculture Day, by Councilmember Friedson

**Update on the October 2023 Retirement of Jeremy Criss, Director of the Office of Agriculture**

The Montgomery County Food Growers Association remitted the attached letter to the County Executive, CE staff and County Council recommending the process to replace Jeremy Criss.

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

The Legislative Oversight-OLO report was scheduled before the County Council Planning Housing and Parks Committee work session February 13, 2023. Please see the attached briefing document. There

will be another Planning Housing and Parks Committee work session once the FY 24 Budgets are approved. The MNCPPC and the OAG staff met to discuss the **attached timeline** for this project including amendments to the Public Benefits Point System to encourage the use of both TDRs and BLTs.

### **New Engineering Position in the MDCD**

The MSCD Engineering Position will be filled, and the new staff Charley Chen will start on April 10, 2023.

### **Farm Tire Recycling Program for Montgomery County**

The County DEP and DOT are scheduling a farm tire recycling program on Earth Day Weekend for both Saturday and Sunday 9:00 to 2:00 pm. The Saturday April 22, 2023, location will be the Crabbs Branch Road-MCDOT Depot-Salt Storage facility and the Sunday April 23, 2023, location will be the Poolesville Depot on Jerusalem Road.

### **Next Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting-April 18, 2023**

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

New and Beginning Farmers Training-February 2- April 6, 2023

Agricultural Advisory Committee-March 21, 2023

Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Directors-April 4, 2023

Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-April 11, 2023

Montgomery Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors-April 14, 2023

Agricultural Advisory Committee-April 18, 2023