



OFFICE OF AGRICULTURE

Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Jeremy V. Criss
Director

MEMORANDUM

January 12, 2018

TO: Agricultural Advisory Committee Members (AAC)

FROM: Jeremy V. Criss, Director
Office of Agriculture

SUBJECT: January 16, 2018 Meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will meet on Tuesday **January 16, 2018 at the Germantown Library Room B 19840 Century Blvd. Germantown MD. 20874 at 7:00 pm.**

The agenda is on the next page.

The draft minutes from the December 19, 2017 AAC meeting are attached.

The other attachments for our meeting will be posted on the Office of Agriculture web site.
<http://montgomerycountymd.gov/AgServices/agboardscommittee.html>

I hope to see you on Tuesday.

*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

e:aacJanuary(aac18)



**Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda
January 16, 2018**

1. Meeting Called to Order and Introductions.
2. Approval of the December 19, 2017 AAC Meeting Minutes.
3. Election of the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Agricultural Advisory Committee.
4. The OAG is continuing to work with Office of Human Resources to complete the reclassifications of all OAG staff- The following reclassifications are complete-John Zawitoski, District Manager MIII, Karen Walker-OSC, Melissa Steed-PAA, Cathy Yingling-AA-II, Jackie Arnold, AA-II. The following reclassifications are still pending-Vacant Farmland Preservation Program Manager- James Harne and Shelly Ingram Resource Conservationist I, II, III, and Jeremy Criss, Director MII.

The Office of Human Resources had responded to the appeal from the OAG with a plan to modify the existing Business Development Specialist-BDS specific to the OAG for the vacant position and the two existing positions in the MSCD.

Then we received notice that a new Classification Consultant was hired by OHR to complete the reclassifications of the OAG. Once the reclassification of the modified BDS is approved, the OAG will request a waiver from the County's Hiring Freeze.

5. The ZTA 17-06 Agricultural Zone-TDR Requirements was heard by the Planning Housing and Economic Development-PHED Committee on November 27, 2017. **The Full Council work session on ZTA 17-06 is tentatively scheduled for January 23, 2018.**
6. Update on the Zion Road Bridge replacement-The Agricultural Advisory Committee and Montgomery Agricultural Producers submitted letters to the County DOT recommending a two-lane bridge. The Montgomery County Farm Bureau formed a committee of board members that met with DOT staff Barry Fuss on December 21, 2017. The DOT has received push back from the Rustic Roads Advisory Committee which recommends the single land bridge replacement of only 16 feet wide. The OAG provided to DOT the **attached list of specifications** (Weight, Width and Height) for most farm equipment used by farmers in Montgomery County. A draft a letter from the MCFB to DOT is pending.
7. The MNCPPC conducted the first Agritourism Study Advisory Committee meeting on November 29, 2017 and second meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 17, 2018. The Committee will discuss the definition of farming and how agritourism can be accessory to farming, current zoning-land use, building, health codes of the County to see if changes are needed to promote more opportunities of agritourism. **See the Attached agenda and scope for the Agritourism Study.**
8. Update on the Office of Agriculture tour of three agritourism farms in Loudoun County VA. The DPS Director announced on December 14, 2017 that DPS staff was incorrectly advising people to obtain commercial building permits for agricultural buildings that are used for storing, sorting, processing, and aggregating agricultural products. The OAG is still waiting

for a written response that includes the specific terms of any new policies and procedures. In December, the DPS starting to refer all agricultural building requests to the OAG for review and agricultural certification.

9. The Office of Agriculture has partnered with the Maryland Agricultural Resource Based Industry Development Corporation MARBIDCO to create a matching grant program for farmers installing deer fencing. two contracts have been approved and several more contracts are pending.
10. The OAG was required to propose reductions in General Funding to address the revenue short fall of the County. The Office of Agriculture has been in existence for 18 months and on the **attached chart summarizes** of the reductions and the sources of funding for the OAG.
11. The next meeting of the Agricultural Advisory Committee is February 20, 2018 at 7:00 pm. We will be meeting at the Gaithersburg Regional Library 18330 Montgomery Village Ave. Medium Room 3 Gaithersburg, MD 20879.

Upcoming Meetings and Events:

Celebration of David Weitzer's Life-January 13, 2018 @ 2:00 pm **No RSVP's**
Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-January 16, 2018 @ 7:00pm
Agritourism Advisory Committee-January 17, 2018 @ 6:00pm
Full County Council-ZTA 17-06 TDR Requirements-Tenant houses-January 23, 2018
Taste of Maryland Agriculture Networking-Food-Conversations-February 1, 2018
Montgomery County Farm Bureau Board of Supervisors-February 6, 2018@7:00pm
Maryland Farm Bureau Day in Annapolis-February 7, 2018
Agricultural Preservation Advisory Board-February 13, 2018 @7:00pm
Montgomery County Agricultural Advisory Committee-February 20, 2018 @ 7:00pm
Winter Agronomy Update-February 28, 2018-Urbana Fire Hall