

Maryland Environmental Trust
Board of Trustees Open Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2019

Trustees Present:

Mary Burke, Chair
Royden Powell, Vice Chair
Julia Jitkoff, Treasurer
Dr. Scott Barao
Tom McCarthy
Thomas Lloyd
Gregory Bowen
Mark Hoffman
Senator Addie Eckardt

Trustees Absent:

Sarah Taylor-Rogers, Secretary
Delegate Jim Gilchrist
Paulette Greene
Phil Hager
Gary Burnett
Ken Montague

Others Present:

John Turgeon, Acting Director for Maryland Environmental Trust
Wendy Hershey, Dept. of Natural Resources Liaison
Kelly Price, Maryland Environmental Trust
Ann Carlson, Maryland Environmental Trust
Erin McNally, Maryland Environmental Trust
Jon Chapman, Maryland Environmental Trust
Talley Kovacs, Office of the Attorney General
Devyn Croghan, Americorps Member

I. Call to order

MET Board Chairwoman Mary Burke called the meeting to order at 4:19 pm at 100 Community Place, Third Floor Conference Room, Crownsville, Maryland 21032.

Ms. Burke advised the Board, due to a quorum not being met, that the Board cannot vote on the September 9, 2019 Board meeting minutes. She also stated that the Board could not vote on the consent calendar shown on today's meeting agenda. A vote will be taken via email following the meeting.

II. Board Work Plan & Governance Topics

A. Adopting the Minutes

The September meeting minutes will be voted on at the next Board meeting on November 4, 2019.

B. Chairwoman Report

Ms. Burke informed the Board that Ms. Martha Clark has resigned her position on the MET Board and Dr. Scott Barao has volunteered to be the new chair for the Agriculture Committee.

In an effort to ensure all Board members can actively participate in meetings, Ms. Burke asked Mr. Turgeon to explore options for video conferencing for Board meetings.

Ms. Burke provided an update on planning for the upcoming Board Retreat to be scheduled for early February 2020. She and the Acting Director have had conversations regarding the Retreat agenda and will be working on an RFP for a proposed Retreat facilitator.

The previous Board meeting Ms. Burke had volunteered to be a liaison to the Forever Maryland Foundation Board. Ms. Burke requested that a vote be taken at the next Board meeting to confirm her nomination or present other names.

Ms. Burke informed the Board that a joint holiday gathering of MET and FMF Board and Staff members will take place at Ms. Jitkoff's residence on December 12, 2019, from 6:30-8:30 pm.

IV. Acting Director's Report

Mr. Turgeon had sent an email over the weekend to all Board members that contained a memo updating them on MET's progress for the first quarter of FY20. Mr. Turgeon went over a few highlights in the memo regarding land conservation, stewardship, and the Keep Maryland Beautiful Grant.

Mr. Turgeon reviewed with the Board that the grant commitment for the Forever Maryland Foundation was executed at the end of July 2019. Since then, Mr. Turgeon and Ms. Stringfellow (Associate Executive Director for the Foundation) have scheduled monthly meetings for updates on the Foundation's progress. The Foundation is working on the Keep Maryland Beautiful grants and organizing and planning the FY20 annual conference. A planning committee has been selected, and Mr. Turgeon, Ms. Grafton, and Mr. Hager are a part of the committee.

Mr. Turgeon informed the Board that 508 acres have been protected involving seven easement transactions for the first quarter of FY 20. For the 2019 calendar year, 12 new easements have been recorded protecting just over 1,000 acres.

Mr. Turgeon updated the Board on the Easement Planner Position that is vacant at MET. He advised that the Hiring Freeze Exception (HFE) has been lifted, and Ms. Carlson is in the process of developing the job description and posting for the position.

Mr. Turgeon announced that MET's first land trust roundtable event for FY20 would be held on Tuesday 10/8/19, which will entail an extended session from the last MET conference regarding Federal Tax Cases Involving Conservation Easements.

Mr. Turgeon advised the Board that he has been in contact with the Department of Housing and Community Development regarding the Keep Maryland Beautiful MOU. MET and DHCD are working together to develop a three year MOU committing DHCD to contribute \$150k each year for the grant.

Ms. Jitkoff asked Mr. Turgeon to give the Board an update on the Forever Maryland Foundation's progress. Mr. Turgeon advised the Board that MET is currently working with the Foundation to complete an MOU regarding the Salesforce database that both organizations are presently sharing. The MOU has been approved by the Office of Attorney General and has been sent to the Foundation to review. MET's staff created this database and have been working on it for the last two years. The database currently holds all of MET's information for easements, stewardship, and donations. Both MET and the Foundation will have access to one another's data. The database agreement will be reviewed after one year to see if we want to continue

sharing it. Ms. Jitkoff was concerned about MET's information being shared with a non-profit. Senator Eckardt suggested including a firewall in the database between the two organizations.

Ms. Burke has requested that MET change the password on the MET Board of Trustees page on the DNR website.

A. Stewardship Presentation

Ms. Hershey provided a memo to the Board regarding the FY20 easement monitoring plan and a 10 year overview of MET's monitoring program. Ms. Hershey advised the Board that Stewardship staff is in the process of making information packets for new landowners of easement properties. Ms. Jitkoff requested a packet be sent to her for review.

Ms. McNally presented to the Board on MET's LOCATE easement database which is an application of the Salesforce program that the staff is currently using. Ms. McNally showed the Board how the staff searches for specific easements, addresses, landowner information, or contacts. She explained that the search process is an easy way to identify different properties.

Ms. McNally demonstrated to the Board how reports are created using LOCATE and how data is exported from our database and used to create our annual Monitoring Plan.

Ms McNally informed the Board of three recent volunteer easement monitor trainings hosted by MET and a volunteer refresher training offered as well.

Ms. McNally informed the Board that MET currently has 43 active volunteers with monitoring assignments.

Ms. McNally and Ms. Hershey will be co-hosting a Volunteer Training with Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust on Saturday October 12, 2019 from 9 am-12 pm. MET Stewardship staff provided MET Volunteer Manuals (Staff Manual and Volunteer Manual) to Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust's Board to use as a template to guide their program. MET assisted Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust with volunteer recruitment for this training as well.

Ms. McNally introduced MET's new AmeriCorp staff member Devyn Croghan.

Mr. Croghan introduced himself and gave background information on his prior work. Mr. Croghan informed the Board that he would be with MET for nine months and provided an overview of his scope of work for MET.

An open discussion took place regarding easement monitoring.

V. Committee Reports

A. Governance Committee

Mr. Lloyd updated the Board on the Director search for MET. He advised the Board that 9 applicants have been accepted, and all nine will be interviewed over two days. The interview dates are set for November 4th and November 8th. The DNR Human Resources Department will be reaching out to the qualified candidates over the next week to schedule the interviews.

Mr. Lloyd met with Mr. Medoff and Ms. Kovacs to create a list of what needed to be worked on regarding governance issues. They will be working on this over the next couple of months. Mr. Lloyd mentioned that the goal is to have the edits done to the MET Bylaws by early spring.

Mr. Lloyd advised the Board that they need to submit names to the Forever Maryland Foundation as MET's nominees to the Foundation's Board. Mr. Lloyd asked all MET Board members to submit names to him by the next Board meeting.

Mr. Lloyd mentioned that the MET Board needs to submit names to the Legislative and Executive branches regarding nominees to the MET Board. Ms. Jitkoff has requested that Mr. Lloyd follow up with the Legislative and Executive branch offices to see if previous names that were submitted would be reconsidered for the FY20 nomination process. Mr. Lloyd advised he would reach out to the offices for clarification.

B. Finance Committee

Ms. Jitkoff sent a revised draft of the MET Financial Guidelines for the Board to review previous to the meeting. A quorum for this Board meeting not being met, voting on this matter was therefore conducted via email.

Ms. Jitkoff announced that the Committee recommended four Trustee signatories for MET's bank account. They are Ms. Burke, Ms. Jitkoff, Mr. Powell, and Mr. Burnett. An email was sent to the Board due to quorum not being met for voting.

Ms. Jitkoff updated the Board on the private side funding for FY20. She advised the Board that the check for \$425,000 from MET was received and cashed by the Forever Maryland Foundation.

Mr. Turgeon informed the Board that the sale of the Merryman Estate is set for October 15, 2019. The settlement price is \$400,000, and MET will split the proceeds with The Delaware Nature Society. Therefore MET will be receiving \$200,000 by the end of the month for the sale.

Mr. Turgeon stated that an additional distribution from the Merryman Estate in the amount of \$250,000 should also be sent to MET by the end of the 2019 calendar year. This will be the end of all funding that has been awarded from this estate.

Due to the lack of quorum at this Board meeting, an email was sent out to all Board members for voting purposes. Dr. Scott Barao made the motion via email to approve both the resolution and the financial guidelines.

Mr. Lloyd seconded the motion. All voted in favor

C. Easement and Stewardship Committee

Ms. Carlson updated the Board on the Easement program for 2019. A total of 12 easement projects have been completed, protecting over 1,000 acres. Ms. Carlson said she would be closing an additional project on 10/11/19 that will protect an additional 98 acres.

Ms. Carlson informed the Board that she is currently working on six more easement projects that she is anticipating will close by the end of this calendar year.

Ms. Carlson advised that she has 21 active projects with 29 potential new projects.

Mr. Powell informed the Board that two new easements were presented at the last Committee meeting, which are included on the consent calendar. He said a vote on these projects will be taken via email.

Mr. Chapman spoke briefly regarding the Stewardship program for MET. Mr. Chapman said the program had completed 83% of the 215 tasks that were assigned this calendar year.

Due to the lack of a quorum at this Board meeting an email was sent out to all Board members following the meeting to vote on the consent calendar. Mr. Powell moved to approve the consent calendar that was sent out in the Board packets.

Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

D. Agriculture Committee

Nothing to report.

E. Land Trust Advisory Committee

Mr. Turgeon referred to materials from the Committee that are included in the Board packet, which are for the Board to review and vote on at its November meeting. He also advised the Board that the LTA Committee is planning to have a retreat, and they are working on scheduling a date.

F. Grants Committee

Nothing to report.

G. Other Business

Ms. Kovacs reported on the Chase Farm easement in Howard County. She informed the Board that litigation is still pending in Howard County. One party has hired a new attorney.

Ms. Kovacs and Mr. Turgeon are in contact regularly regarding the case.

Ms. Burke is asking the Board to think about a date for the Board Retreat. She is suggesting February 28, 2020 as a possibility. The agenda would reflect an entire day of meetings.

MET Board meeting adjourned at 5:44 pm.