



Sustainable Forestry Council

580 Taylor Avenue – E-1 • Annapolis, Maryland 21401 • 410-260-8531

SUSTAINABLE FORESTRY COUNCIL

February 18, 2014

Minutes

Eric Sprague, Chair
Alliance for the
Chesapeake Bay
Annapolis, MD 21403

Donald Outen
Natural Resource
Manager
Baltimore County
DEPRM
Towson, Maryland 21204

Gary Allen
Center for Chesapeake
Communities
Annapolis, MD 21401

Kirk Rodgers
Private landowner
Woolford, MD 21677

Kim Finch
MNCPPC,
Prince George's Co.
Planning Dept.
Upper Marlboro, MD
20772

Kenneth Roberts
NewPage Corporation
Westernport, MD 21562

Attendees:

Eric Sprague
Don Outen
Gary Allen
Kirk Rodgers
Kim Finch
Al Goetzl

DNR:

Don VanHassent

Called to order at 10:05 AM.

Eric Sprague gave a brief recap on the Woodland Incentive Fund (WIF). HB 1402 has been introduced by Delegate Stein. This bill would raise the cap on WIF to \$300,000 and changed the “percent wooded” requirement from 100% to 90%. The official DNR position on this bill is yet to be determined. Other state departments (Agriculture and Assessment and Taxation) will likely take a position. State departments can not be officially opposed to each other. No hearing date has been scheduled.

Eric announced that Connie Hoge has officially resigned. We have previously discussed the possibility of inviting Bryan Seipp to submit an application to the Council. With Connie departure we will send the application forms to Bryan.

Don VanHassent informed the Council of the need to submit the annual Ethics Commission disclosure forms. Don will send the web link via e-mail.

Gary Allen gave an update on SB 530 and HB 931. These cross-filed bills are the result of the Thermal Renewable Energy Credit Task Force on which Gary has been representing the Sustainable Forestry Council. The Senate Finance Committee will hold a hearing on February 18 and the House Economic Matters Committee will hold a hearing on February 20.

Minutes from the November 12, 2013 meeting were presented. Gary Allen moved to accept and Kirk Rodgers seconded. The minutes were approved.

Don VanHassent gave a legislative update. This has been a quiet legislative session from a forestry perspective. Of primary interest to foresters is HB 511 which extends the sunset provision of the State Board of Foresters. This effort passed the Senate last year but died in the

House Economic Matters Committee (ECM). We met over the interim and gave a briefing to ECM on January 15. That same committee held a hearing on February 7 and heard a strong case presented by six members of the forestry community and former Governor Marvin Mandel who signed the original law to create the Board. The committee has not yet voted on the bill. There are two bills relating to Licensed Tree Experts (LTE) – HB 291 and HB 582. HB 291 would prohibit an LTE from supervising more than one tree care company at a time. HB 582 would allow an LTE to supervise more than one company at a time and would require them to report certain information to the Department. One other bill of concern is SB 1020. This bill would exempt the creation of “solar farms” from complying with the Forest Conservation Act, sediment and erosion control requirements and the Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) from the Public Service Commission. Non-compliance with FCA would certainly not help meet our no-net loss of forest goal. Due to several state departments being involved our position is not yet decided but it is likely that multiple agencies would be opposed to this concept.

An “Urban Tree Roundtable” is being planned for early April. The event will be held in Annapolis and the Governor is hopefully attending. Don Outen is on the planning committee. Marian Honecny is the representative from the Forest Service.

The next Council meeting will be March 25 at a site to be determined. Subject matter will include: cost-share programs, private land forest certification and funding for conservation easements.

The meeting adjourned at 11:18AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donald VanHassent