

Maryland Environmental Trust Board of Trustees
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
Date & Time: Monday May 1, 2023, 2:00 to 3:00pm
Type: Google Meet Teleconference and In Person

Executive Committee members present: Gary Burnett, Julia Jitkoff, Mark Hoffman, Greg Bowen, John Turgeon (non-voting)
Committee member absent: Megan D'Arcy
MET & OAG Staff Participants: Kelly Price, and Talley Kovacs AAG

The MET Executive Committee meeting started at 2:05pm. John Turgeon started the meeting by reviewing the upcoming Board Meeting agenda items that were listed in the Board Packet that was emailed out. He asked the committee members if anyone had any concerns, changes or additions needed to the agenda, and the committee members did not have any concerns, changes or additions needed. Gary Burnett mentioned that he will update the Board of Trustees at the Board meeting regarding Forever Maryland and the changes taking place in that organization.

Mr. Turgeon advised the Executive Committee that he will relate some key points from his Director's report that was emailed out to the Board, and he highlighted some areas to the committee that are in his report. He also went through each committee report listed in the agenda and advised the Executive Committee of any topics that would need to be discussed. Mr. Turgeon mentioned that the Board meeting agenda lists the five Trustees that are up for re-election since their terms expire on May 31, 2023. There was some concern from the Committee regarding a quorum being met due to the voting needing to take place due to recusals by Trustees. Discussion took place amongst the committee members. Ms. Kovacs looked up the bylaws to let everyone know the process.

Mr. Turgeon gave an overview of a deed held by an organization in Anne Arundel County, Habitat for Humanity. He stated that there is a project proposal from Habitat for Humanity for conveying a open lot that they have and keep it in the Trust. This is a fee simple land project with a non-profit organization.

An open discussion took place amongst the Executive Committee members regarding this matter.

Mr. Hoffmann motion to not accept the lot that Habitat for Humanity presented to MET. Ms. Jitkoff seconded the motion. All in favor.

Ms. Kovacs mentioned that a formal letter should be sent to the Director of Habitat for Humanity letting them know of the Committee's decision. Mr. Turgeon agreed that he will send a response.

Mr. Turgeon reported to the Executive Committee that he received a request from Catoctin Land Trust for stewardship funds for the Land Trust to be added as an easement co-holder with MET for several land easements that MET has. Currently, they are being held with another Land Trust that is declining and not able to uphold the monitoring and easement needs. This matter was discussed at both the Lands and Finance Committees and both Committees tabled the item for further discussion.

An open discussion took place amongst the Executive Committee members regarding this matter.

Mr. Hoffmann mentioned that he has a meeting with some of the commissioners such as Delegates, Senators and that he could have a conversation with them regarding the need for MET to bring on three ex-officio officers onto the MET Board of Trustees. The thought is that maybe they would be able to recommend some people. Mr. Turgeon did state that he has a potential candidate for the Governor's ex-officio that was mentioned to him by Mr. Paul Peditto, and his thought was that Ms. Hilary Bell would be a good candidate. Mr. Hoffmann agreed, and Mr. Turgeon said he would work with Mr. Peditto to try to secure Ms. Bell on the Board.

Mr. Turgeon mentioned that there are currently three vacancies on the Board, and they would be scheduling meetings with the legislative branches to help fill the vacancies.

Mr. Turgeon briefed the Executive Committee on the changes to the Keep Maryland Beautiful Grants Program and the change from Forever Maryland administering the Grants program to MET entering a MOU with the Chesapeake Bay Trust. He explained that this would be a great partnership for MET and CBT, and that CBT is already working with DNR and other State agencies on various grants. Mr. Turgeon mentioned that there would be a 7% administrative fee that would be paid to CBT, and this was less than Forever Maryland, which previously charged 10%. The Executive Committee has no concerns with CBT administering the KMB Grants Program for MET.

Ms. Jitkoff stated that she was concerned with Forever Maryland and wanted to make sure that MET was able to preserve our list of grantors or donors. Mr. Burnett said that Forever Maryland will maintain MET's Salesforce database, and that MET will not lose access to any files or anything on the database. He also stated that there will be movement of programs, but that their core process and their mission will remain the same. The conference will be kept with Forever Maryland, the organization will continue to support the Land Trusts, and they will stay operating under a 501C3. Mr. Burnett said that there are potential new Board members for Forever Maryland that are Land Trust members.

Ms. Jitkoff stated that Mr. Jon Chapman is retiring from MET as of July 1, 2023, and wanted to know if MET has a potential candidate for this position. Mr. Turgeon mentioned that Ms. Josette Markline is interested in applying.

Executive Committee adjourned at 3:09pm.