



Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board

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Minutes of the Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board Meeting January 8, 2024

Call To Order:

The Garrett County Forestry Board met at 9:00 a.m. on Monday January 8, 2024. Due to weather, the meeting was held virtually. Those Board members in attendance were: Mike Minnick, Will Williams, John Bambacus, Mike Ferguson, Siera Wigfield, Fred Eggleston, Bill Buckel, Derek Buckel, Ken Fisher, Larry Tichnell and Melissa Nash.

The agenda was approved with motion by John and 2nd by Will.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved following a motion by Siera and 2nd by Will.

Bill B. read the treasurer's report. Changes since the last meeting included the \$1,000 donation to Garrett College Foundation for the Wildlife Club's Costa Rica trip, \$258.93 to Perkins for the December meeting breakfast, and \$630 to Clear Ridge Nursery for trees for the MUCFC planting. Balances were as follows:

Forestry Board	\$3,722.37
MUCFC	\$821.00
NRCC	\$3,702.26
Scholarship	\$2,494.07

The report was accepted following a motion made by Larry and 2nd by Will.

Volunteer Hours:

The Board's hours since the last meeting were as follows:

Ken – 3	Mike K – no report	Mike F. – 3
Mike M. – 8	Fred – 3	Derek – 3
Larry – 3	Will – 3	John – 9
Bill B. – 4	Bill A. – no report	Siera – 3

TOTAL 42 hrs

OLD BUSINESS:

Kitzmiller Light Up the Park

Mike M.'s daughter was able to record a walk through video of the entire set up. He will try to share it.

Watershed

Siera reported the dredging project in Arrowhead Cove is wrapping up and they will be moving to the restoration phase.

3 applications were received for the watershed coordinator position and are in review. They may readvertise and re-word the position description if this search is unsuccessful. The position does currently require a bachelor's degree.

A new ag district has been approved in Green Glade.

Big Tree Calendar

Melissa and Siera will meet this week to work on a county program logo and start drafting the calendar. A discussion was held on how many we should try to sell. Possible outlets include fair, Autumn Glory and possibly parks. John made a motion to order 250 and if we sell out, we sell out. Fred 2nd and the motion passed.

Big Tree – General

Melissa shared other possible ideas for promoting 100 years of the program including a scavenger hunt app and a big tree walk during the Kitzmiller homecoming. Siera suggested possibly partnering with the Arts Council as they currently have a “passport” activity format. If we want to request Heritage Area mini grant funding for anything for 2025, proposals will be due in late July or early August. We may want to look into purchasing some signage and/or banners once we have a new local program logo.

Melissa shared one tree that was missed for re-measurement in 2023. She will touch base with Mike K and try to measure as weather permits.

Chestnut

Mike M. suggested re-evaluating the status of all current trees once they leaf out. We are likely to lose some of our parent trees this year. Derek may be able to help pollinate the new tree on John's neighbor's property that has limited access.

Darling 58 (GMO chestnut) is on hold and the program is having to take a few steps back.

Poster Contest

Melissa learned in late December that there is no statewide contest planned this year (reason unknown). Fred made a motion, 2nd by Ken to still hold a county contest. The motion passed. Deadline to submit posters will be March 8th so we can judge at the March meeting and notify winners in time for the April Commissioners meeting & Arbor Day proclamation. Will made a motion to have a forest products theme. Fred 2nd and the motion passed. Melissa will work on getting the information together for Board of Ed approval and distribution.

Yough River

The judicial review will be held January 12th at 1pm at the Garrett County Courthouse. The county, DNR and plaintiff attorneys will be making presentations. The public may attend, but will not be allowed to present. The judge will make a decision.

John asked about new renderings of the bridge design. No update was available, but Larry would check on the status.

The Yough River Advisory Board will meet January 25th in the Commissioners meeting room.

Donation Letter

Mike M. read a thank you letter from Garrett College for our donation to their Costa Rica trip.

NEW BUSINESS:

Vice President

Derek would like to remain on the board, but step down as vice president as he is not able to attend many meetings. Mike M. asked for a volunteer. John nominated Will. Mike F. 2nd and Ken 3rd. Will accepted the nomination and was accepted as the new vice president. Mike M. thanked both Will and Derek for their commitment.

NRCC

Applications are now open. Melissa will send the information to the BOE for approval to distribute in schools. A webinar on NRCC will be held January 18th at 1pm.

Pest Update

Save the date for the Western MD Pest Update February 28th at New Germany State Park. No agenda is available yet.

Water Budget

A webinar on the Deep Creek Lake Water Budget will be held January 11th at 1pm.

Mt. Loggers

Next meeting is January 9th at 6pm at Pine Lodge.

Scholarship

Applications are due May 1. Melissa will send to BOE for school distribution approval.

Budget Request

Melissa will send out a draft for review soon. Larry advised it is due by February 23rd to the county.

Savage River Advisory Committee

The committee will meet January 16th at 6pm. Mike M. will attend if they can work out a virtual option. Plans should be available for public comment soon.

Smokey's 80th Birthday

Smokey Bear turns 80 this year. Melissa shared information about a reading challenge for school age students sponsored by the USFS and available to local libraries. She will contact the Ruth Enlow Library to see if they are interested in partnering on the challenge to promote Smokey locally. She will also check on window display availability. Ken suggested featuring Smokey in this year's window display. Other discussion included possibly offering prizes for participants who complete the challenge.

2024 Schedule

Mike M. went over the 2024 schedule. He will send out a written draft soon.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Monday February 12th at 9am at Mt. Nebo. If we need to move to virtual again due to weather, an announcement will be made the day before.

Melissa Nash
Secretary

Upcoming Dates

January 9 – Mt. Loggers
January 11 – Deep Creek Water Budget webinar
January 18 – NRCC webinar
February 12 – Next regular meeting
February 28 – Pest Update