



Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board

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Minutes of the Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board Meeting September 9, 2024

Call To Order:

The Garrett County Forestry Board met at 9:00 a.m. on Monday September 9, 2024 at the Mt. Nebo office. Those Board members in attendance were: Mike Ferguson, Bill Buckel, Will Williams, John Bambacus, Fred Eggleston, Ken Fisher, Larry Tichnell, Siera Wigfield, Bill Aiken and Melissa Nash. Guests present included Senator Mike McKay and Delegate Jim Hinebaugh.

The agenda was approved following a motion by Ken and 2nd by John.

Will welcomed guests and gave an overview of the Forestry Boards. John highlighted forestry related issues and concerns in western MD including the Yough River trail, Yough River bridge and Savage River Lodge pending purchase. Board members expressed a general concern for the lack of information and response to questions about issues and lack of public involvement. Bill A. expressed concerns over the lack of timber markets and the impact forestry has on western MD. Discussion on the need for more public involvement and open communication followed.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved following a motion by Mike F. and 2nd by Ken.

Bill B. read the treasurer's report. Expenses included Bill Ashby Memorial Forestry Photo Contest awards, and postage to mail a calendar. Deposits included donations in memory of Bill Ashby and Mike Minnick and calendar sales. We received and distributed \$996 for an MUCFC grant to the Mt. Laurel Garden Club.

Forestry Board	\$15,733.72
MUCFC	\$0
NRCC	\$2,467.26
Scholarship	\$1,494.08

The report was accepted following a motion by Siera and 2nd by Fred.

Volunteer Hours:

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

Ken – 15	Mike K – (12) via email	Mike F. – 14
Siera – 3	Fred – 10	Derek – no report
Larry – 3	Will – 18	John – 7
Bill B. – 18	Bill A. – 6	

TOTAL 106 hrs

OLD BUSINESS:

Watershed Update

Siera reported that they have a consultant for the trail feasibility projects connecting trails in the Oakland and surrounding area and public outreach for comments will begin in October. The county hopes to be ready for next steps in the spring.

Siera is working on expanding grant opportunities for rural communities. She is looking at several park playground update grants for community parks.

The Deep Creek Lake report card should be available soon. Lake manager Eric Null has left for a position with Trout Unlimited. Siera is working on a platform for many groups to participate in discussing issues such as water quality and access.

Calendar Sales

Melissa said we are roughly half way through calendar sales. A discussion was held on whether to purchase booth space to sell calendars during Autumn Glory. Due to lack of available Board members, no commitment was made. We will look for other opportunities this fall.

NRCC

The camp was very successful and 2 out of our 3 Garrett students completed the camp (one went home sick). Melissa read thank you letters from the 2 students. Will thanked the Board members who came to serve as landowners.

Photo Contest

Only 4 entries were received this year and it was noted that exhibit entries seemed down in general this year. Melissa read 2 thank you notes from participants. There was confusion over when and where the awards were to be presented this year, so checks were mailed after the fair. A brief discussion was held on whether to keep the contest as a 4-H event or open it up to the public. Discussion was tabled.

NEW BUSINESS:

Chair Position

Will opened nominations to fill the chair position. Siera nominated Will and John 2nd. Bill B. moved to close nominations and John 2nd. The motion passed and the Board approved Will as the new chair.

Bill B. made a motion to nominate John to fill the vacancy of vice chair. Fred 2nd. Ken moved nominations be closed, 2nd by Mike F. The motion passed and the Board approved John as the new vice chair.

Mike Minnick Memorial

As of the meeting, a total of \$12,125 had been received in memory of Mike, including a \$10,000 donation that Mike himself left for the Board. Bill A. suggested creating a perpetual scholarship. Melissa and Bill B. provided some information on endowed scholarships from Garrett College and Allegany College. Discussion included that this would limit the award to a specific school, which we currently do not do. Siera made a motion to put money in a short term CD and Fred 2nd. Further discussion included that we should wait a year to make a final decision on changes to the scholarship process or location. Siera amended her motion to put \$10,000 in a short term CD. Fred 2nd and the motion passed. Bill B. will check with the bank to see what's available up to a year term.

Melissa made a motion to rename the scholarship in memory of Mike. John 2nd and the motion passed. Melissa will send out some suggestions and the name can be finalized at a future meeting.

Watershed Moments

The Appalachian Lab will host a watershed moments presentation at the Garrett College Performing Arts Center on September 24th at 6:30pm. The topic is "Water, Forests and Wildlife in Western MD".

October Meeting

Due to the 2nd Monday of October being a state holiday, the meeting will be held October 7th.

Envirothon Training

Envirothon training will be October 4th at Hickory. Melissa is not available. Will will take care of it. Schedule will be sent out when it's available.

A motion to adjourn was made by Fred and 2nd by Siera.

Upcoming Dates

9/24 – Watershed Moments presentation
10/4 – Envirothon Training
10/7 – Next regular meeting
10/8 – Mt. Loggers meeting