



Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board

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Minutes of the Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board Meeting May 5, 2025

Call To Order:

The Garrett County Forestry Board met at 9:00 a.m. on Monday May 5, 2025 at the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce. Those Board members in attendance either in person or virtually were: Will Williams, Bill Buckel, Linda Harris, Bill Aiken, Larry Tichnell, Ken Fisher, Mike Kozier, John Bambacus, Mike Ferguson, Fred Eggleston, Siera Wigfield, and Melissa Nash.

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

A motion to dispense with reading of the minutes and approve following correcting a typo was made by Bill B. and 2nd by Linda. The motion passed.

Bill Buckel read the treasurer's report. Deposits included a donation from the Civic Club in support of NRCC and an anonymous cash donation. Expenses included payout of awards for the poster contest.

Forestry Board	\$5,748.15
MUCFC	\$268.76
NRCC	\$3,852.26
Scholarship	\$2,849.08
CD	\$10,288.00 (12 month @ 4.4%, matures Sept 2025)

The report was approved following a motion by Mike K. and 2nd by Fred.

Volunteer Hours:

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

Ken – 3	Mike K – 12	Mike F. – 7
Siera – 3	Fred – 3	Derek – no report
Larry – 3	Will – 20	John – 6
Bill B. – 11	Bill A. – 3	Linda – 9

TOTAL 80 hrs

OLD BUSINESS:

Watershed

Siera shared that Molly is working on a work plan. The next steering committee has been postponed. New date TBD. Several trails funding projects are in que in addition to the 135 and Oakland to Herrington Manor. Nothing solid is in place yet. Siera should have reports to share on the 135 and Oakland trails projects soon.

The Deer Park MUCFC grant projects will be planted this week.

MARL Transmission Line

Open houses hosted by NextEra will be held in Friendsville 5/6 and Lonaconing 5/7. The wildlands bill has not yet been signed by the governor.

There have been issues with the proposed powerline downstate over private property rights and surveyors entering property without permission. The governor has publicly stated he is against eminent domain. The county has discussed the project, but has not taken a position on it other than they are also against eminent domain. An article was recently published by the county encouraging landowners to seek legal counsel before signing any easements or agreements.

Many acres of State Forest land could permanently be taken out of production with the project, even if the line doesn't cross wildland.

Big Tree Program

The Bandwango tour is now live through the Chamber of Commerce website.

Melissa, Derek Mike K. and Will are planning to visit the Washington Elm on May 16th to do an assessment, measure for the Big Tree Program and collect cuttings to propagate.

Hats

Hats were distributed.

Fire Season

Melissa reported a busy spring fire season with a recent 30+ acre fire in Spring Lick. Discussion on fire towers followed – the last one was manned in 1999.

Further discussion included the possible purchase of a Smokey Bear sign to replace the one that was stolen from along Rt 219 at Deep Creek Lake a few years ago. Cost is approx. \$800. John made a motion, 2nd by Mike K. to purchase. Further discussion included that a rocker sign could be added to show that the sign was sponsored by the Board. The motion passed. Exact location of the sign is TBD. Other suggestions included a small sign saying that the sign is monitored by cameras to deter theft.

NRCC

There is 1 seat remaining and then the camp will go to a wait list. Will attended a recent committee meeting via Zoom. We are down to 1 student from Garrett after one student was a no-show for their interview and another backed out. The urban forestry camp is moving forward and accepting applications. Overall donations to the camps are down this year.

A follow up discussion was held on the Wild Bee private camp on Bumblebee Road. There was no further information available.

Envirothon

The team from Southern won and will advance to the state contest at the 4-H Center in June.

NEW BUSINESS:

MCC

Due to defunding of AmeriCorps at the federal level, state MCC crews have been cut.

Scholarships

A total of 5 scholarship applications were received (4 by the deadline). Those who qualified were reviewed. Bill A. made a motion, 2nd by John to award the scholarship to Ariella Malfaro. The motion passed. Melissa will invite her to our next meeting.

Plant Festival

The event is May 10th. Melissa will cover the morning from 8-12. Ken and Will can cover the afternoon from 12-3.

Pea Patch Chestnut

Melissa shared information on a volunteer work day at the Pea Patch Chestnut Orchard for May 24th.

FCA Audit

An article on a recent audit of the Forest Conservation Act was shared. The article stated that MD DNR failed to properly monitor funds.

ACM Forestry Presentations

Bill B. attended forest management presentations by Allegany College students since they inventoried his property this year. He said they were good overall and he gave them constructive feedback.

Mt. Loggers

Next meeting is May 13th at Pine Lodge.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be June 2nd at 9am at the Garrett County Chamber of Commerce.

The meeting was adjourned following a motion by Mike K and 2nd by Fred.

Upcoming Dates

5/6/25 – Garrett College NRWT water quality presentations @ 4:30pm in PAC

5/10/25 – Native Plant Festival 10am-3pm @ New Germany

5/13/25 – Mt Loggers @ Pine Lodge 6pm

6/2/25 – Forestry Board meeting at Chamber of Commerce