

## Montgomery County Forest Conservancy District Board



### Minutes for the Montgomery County Forest Conservancy District Board Meeting – 12 November 2024

Board Chairman Jim Harris called this meeting to order at 1:36 PM

#### Chair's Report (1:36 PM)

Chairman Jim Harris mentioned that he had been in communication with Board Member Laura Miller, who sent an email indicating that she will be working reduced hours until December 8, 2024. Laura directs anyone who may need urgent assistance throughout this timeframe to contact Mike Vacek. Jim mentioned that he will contact Mike regarding Tree City USA certifications. Jim noted that he received an inquiry from a citizen asking whether it is too early to apply for the 2025 session of the Natural Resources Career Camp, to which Jim answered that it surely was not too early to apply. Jim told the board about a blog called *Wilderness Whispers*, which is about people living in hollow trees. Jim finally noted that he attended the Tree Care Industry Expo in Baltimore on November 9<sup>th</sup>, where he witnessed examples of impressive spray rigs.

#### Treasurer's Report (1:44 PM)

Treasurer Joli McCathran noted that the overall account balance is \$5,055.85 and it has remained unchanged since October 2024.

#### Legislative Report

No legislative report was given at this meeting.

#### DNR Report

No DNR report was given at this meeting.

#### New Business

At 1:45 PM Board Member Joe Howard showed the board a book called *Around the World in 80 Plants* by Jonathan Drori, and Joe asked if anyone wanted to borrow it. Joe then shared with the board an article titled *Trees Please!* which outlines some miraculous aspects and services that trees provide.

At 1:55 PM Board Member Vince Fillah mentioned that he had gone out with Board Treasurer Joli McCathran twice to measure big trees in October. Joli recounted that one landowner was deeply incensed by her and Vince's presence on his property, and he strongly demanded that they immediately leave. This was despite the fact that Joli gave advance notice that she and Vince would access his property, and he gave no reply to her notice.

At 1:58 PM Board Member Carole Bermann mentioned that although she has not been in Maryland much recently, she led a walk for Nature Forward located at Hoyles Mill Conservation Park in Boyds, MD. She encourages people to visit this park given its great diversity of tree species.

At 2:06 PM Board Member Paula Perez said that she enjoyed attending the recent State Forestry Board meeting.

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At 2:07 PM Board Member Natasha Shangold mentioned that she was invited to elementary schools to talk about trees to second graders. She also volunteered to complete a weed warrior activity with the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission.

At 2:11 PM Board Secretary Chris Barger noted that there has been an increase in wildland fire activity across the State of Maryland and advised board members to encourage citizens to be sensible and responsible with fire. Chris then showed the board a series of thank-you cards written by students who attended the 2024 Natural Resources Career Camp. The students expressed their thanks to the board for funding their enrollment in the camp.

At 2:21 PM Board Treasurer Joli McCathran mentioned that the board should mail out certifications for champion tree nominations to those landowners owning champion trees. Chairman Jim Harris approved a motion to fund the corresponding postage and envelopes, and mileage costs associated with measuring big trees. Joli finally remarked that a new co-champion Virginia pine tree is in Bethesda.

Chairman Jim Harris adjourned this meeting at 2:35 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 14 January 2025 at 1:30PM. The meeting will be located at the Lathrop E. Smith Environmental Education Center's library at 5110 Meadowside Lane in Rockville, MD 20855.

### Attendance:

Jim Harris, Board Chairman  
Joli McCathran, Board Treasurer  
Joe Howard, Board Member  
Mary Howard, Guest  
Vince Fillah, Board Member  
Carole Bergmann, Board Member  
Paula Perez, Board Member  
Natasha Shangold, Board Member  
Chris Barger, Board Secretary