

**WASHINGTON COUNTY FORESTRY BOARD**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**April 1, 2026**

Present: Aaron Cook, Mary Jo Bartles, Greg Bartles, Don Grove, Linda Grove, Doug Inkley, and Judy Niedzielski. Guest: Anna Twigg

**Update on incorporation, administrative tasks** – The board has received the current draft of the new by-laws and discussed. The chapter agreement paperwork was received and discussed, the board signed the agreement, it will take some time before a trade name is issued and subsequent paperwork can be presented to the bank to change the account. Greg asked that the Treasurer's report be included in the agenda moving forward. Aaron will send the signed chapter agreement to Dawn Balinski. Aaron and Greg, along with Mary Jo transferred the current bank account to Greg with Mary Jo as a second signer.

**Outreach** – Aaron shared a draft agenda and list of invasive species with the board for feedback. ACWA has secured a venue (Washington County Public Safety Training Center) and a date was selected (8/22, morning). The board offered some changes, Aaron will make them and send the information along to ACWA to finalize the agenda and begin plans for advertising the event/ securing speakers. Discussion was had about events that the board may wish to support, recruitment efforts.

**Other Business** – The Flower & Garden Show in March was a success, the trees the board provides remain popular, most were gone by Saturday afternoon, the volume ordered could likely be increased by looking into lower cost per unit species, Aaron will try to keep species small and flowering. Prepackaging the trees and using the repurposed display rack to reduce space may have helped make it easier to give them out too quickly. The smokey posters remain popular, if funding support for them runs out, it may be better to stop giving them out as they too go very quickly. Thanks to everyone who helped staff the booth and answer questions!

Aaron brought up the UMD Master Naturalist program, which was highlighted at the statewide forestry board meeting. There are no local options, it may be worth collaborating with various partners to offer this program in Washington County, limited details on what that entails, but likely a heavy lift for one entity. This topic was tabled until more information can be gathered.

Doug reported that the non-native subcommittee of the Big Tree Committee has a draft ready for submission. 2026 measurements will kick off soon. Aaron mentioned the state forest contest winners were recognized at the statewide forestry board meeting, and there are plans to conduct the contest again this year, focusing on white oak.

The Arbor Day Poster contest entries are due 4/1, Aaron brought already submitted posters to the meeting, neither Aaron or Anna knew if there would be any last minute submissions. The board voted on the posters, and Anna agreed to get the posters to Tawes. Posters will be mailed back to the school directly following the event. Aaron will send certificates to the schools, along with a letter offering trees for planting regardless of the statewide results.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:45 PM.

**The next regular business meeting will be at 2:00 PM, May 6, 2026.**