

Maryland Environmental Trust
Board of Trustees Open Meeting Minutes
December 2, 2019

Trustees Present:

Mary Burke, Chair
Royden Powell, Vice Chair
Julia Jitkoff, Treasurer
Sarah Taylor-Rogers, Secretary
Dr. Scott Barao
Thomas Lloyd
Gregory Bowen
Delegate Jim Gilchrist
Phil Hager
Gary Burnett
Senator Addie Eckardt

Trustees Absent:

Paulette Greene
Mark Hoffman
Ken Montague
Tom McCarthy

Others Present:

John Turgeon, Acting Director for Maryland Environmental Trust
Kelly Price, Maryland Environmental Trust
Michelle Grafton, Maryland Environmental Trust
Ann Carlson, Maryland Environmental Trust
Jon Chapman, Maryland Environmental Trust
Talley Kovacs, Office of the Attorney General

I. Call to order

MET Board Vice-Chairman Royden Powell called the meeting to order at 4:16 pm at 100 Community Place, Third Floor Conference Room, Crownsville, Maryland 21032.

II. Board Work Plan & Governance Topics

A. Adopting the Minutes

Mr. Powell moved for approval of the minutes for the November 4, 2019 Board Meeting. Mr. Hager motioned to accept the minutes. Senator Eckardt seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

B. Chairwoman Report

Ms. Burke advised the Board that the RFP for the Board retreat has been posted to LTA's website. Ms. Burke stated that she and Mr. Turgeon are currently working on acquiring a facility.

Mr. Powell asked the Board members that have not RSVP'd for the holiday party at Ms. Jitkoff's house to submit their responses to the electronic invite that was sent out.

III. Acting Director Report

Mr. Turgeon reported that for the calendar year 12 new easements have been recorded protecting 1,174 acres. The Easement Program is actively managing a pipeline of 24 new easement and easement amendment projects. Acting Program Manager Ann Carlson is trying to complete another five easements and one amended and restated easement by the end of December 2019 that would protect an additional 300+ acres for the calendar year.

Mr. Turgeon informed the Board that for fiscal year 2020, the Stewardship Program has overseen the completion of 171 easement monitoring assignments, which accounts for over 30% of MET's annual work plan goal of 550 assignments completed. Program Manager Jon Chapman and Erin McNally performed monitoring visits of 100 easements. Volunteer easement monitors have completed 65 visits, and local land trust staff have monitored 6 easements that are co-held with MET.

Mr. Turgeon updated the Board on the Annual Conference that the Forever Maryland Foundation will be hosting on May 19th and 20th. The conference will be held at the Mount Washington Conference Center in Baltimore.

Mr. Turgeon advised the Board that he and Ms. Grafton met with the Office of Attorney General to discuss revisions to MET's cooperative agreement model document. Land trust partners are required by statute to have a cooperative agreement with MET in order to co-hold easements with MET, receive Keep Maryland Beautiful grants, or participate in conservation transactions with DNR's Rural Legacy program.

Mr. Turgeon stated that the Keep Maryland Beautiful Grants applications closed on November 14. Mr. Turgeon also reminded the Board that the Forever Maryland Foundation is administering the KMB grants application process on behalf of MET. Mr. Turgeon said he is continuously working with DHCD to finalize an MOU for DHCD's second three-year commitment to participate with KMB. DHCD has committed (unofficially) to provide \$250,000 in funding per year for the next three years. Mr. Turgeon updated the Board that the Forever Maryland Foundation reported that a record 120 grant applications were submitted requesting close to \$550,000. The Foundation anticipates distributing between \$200,000 and \$300,000 in grants.

Mr. Turgeon advised the Board that he and Mr. Lloyd are still working on compiling a list of suggested Board nominees to be provided to the Governor, President of the Maryland Senate, and the Speaker of the Maryland House. MET is trying to fill 5-6 vacancies to be at full Board capacity.

IV. Committee Reports

A. Governance and Nominating Committee

Mr. Lloyd informed the Board that the Executive Director search is in its final stages. They are following the Department of Natural Resources, Human Resources procedures, and they will have more information to come shortly.

Mr. Lloyd explained the process for Board nominations to the new Board members. He advised that the Governance Committee will meet to discuss the potential candidates that have been presented to the Board, and a letter with resumes will be sent to the Executive and Legislative Branches for the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House to choose three names from and submit back to MET.

B. Other Business

Mr. Hager motioned to close the meeting.

Mr. Burnett seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

The meeting was closed pursuant to Md. Code Ann., Gen. Prov. Section 3-305(b)(7), (8) in order to discuss and receive advice regarding litigation with counsel and MET staff in the case of McCauley et al v. Roxbury View, LLC et al.

Senator Eckardt motioned to end the closed session and to open the meeting.

Ms. Taylor - Rogers seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was reopened.

C. Finance Committee

Ms. Jitkoff gave an overview on the private-side budget and updated the Board on the change to the budget to reflect the Merryman Estate money coming into the account, and then a check going out of the account to show the money MET gave to FMF for starting funds. Ms. Jitkoff stated that there was not a line item generated on the FY20 budget to reflect merryman money when the budget was previously proposed to the committee for approval.

D. Easement and Stewardship Committee

Ms. Carlson reported to the Board that one conservation easement amendment will be taking place on Tuesday 12/10/19, and she is anticipating four more conservation easements will close by the end of December 2019.

Mr. Turgeon informed the Board that the Easement Planner position will be transitioning over to a Stewardship position. He advised the Board that Stewardship is in need of a paralegal and this position would help with administrative work, allowing Jon Chapman more time out in the field.

Mr. Chapman spoke about turnover in at MET, particularly with the Stewardship team in the long-term contractual position. He has emphasized his concerns and advised the Board they are working hard to try to achieve the goals set forth for the program.

Mr. Powell mentioned that the Board needs a motion to approve the consent calendar.

- a. Harford County Chapter, Izaak Walton League of America,
48.23 acres, Harford County w/ Harford Land Trust

Senator Eckardt motioned to have the consent calendar approved.

Mr. Lloyd seconded the motion. All in favor.

E. Agriculture Committee

Dr. Barao informed the Board that he is making an outline presentation that could be generic enough to use at a variety of places to help promote MET and the work that we do. This will be specific enough that it represents MET and the programs core mission.

Mr. Turgeon mentioned that there is a Rural Maryland Conference on 12/12/19 from 9-5 in Annapolis. He said there are handouts with specific information regarding the different sessions taking place. Mr. Turgeon encouraged people to attend that could.

F. Land Trust Advisory Committee

Mr. Hager mentioned that he and Ms. Grafton are working with the Office of the Attorney General on the Cooperative Agreements they will be sending to the local land trusts.

Mr. Hager announced that the next LTAC meeting will be on 12/10/2019 in the MET conference room.

Mr. Hager informed the Board that the LTAC retreat was held on 11/19/19 at the Crownsville building. He stated that it was a productive session with discussion in regards to changes that have taken place with MET and FMF. The retreat allowed for open discussion to take place regarding roles and services between the MET, FMF and the local land trusts.

Mr. requested that a Board member from the MET Board join the LTAC committee. He is wanting to have more Board involvement with the local land trusts and with FMF.

An open discussion took place regarding the progress of FMF and the MOU that was made.

G. Grants Committee

Nothing to report.

V. Adjourned Meeting

Adjourned open meeting at 5:01 pm