

**Maryland Environmental Trust
Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes
September 8, 2025**

This meeting was held in person at 100 Community Place Third Floor, Room 3.218 (MHT Boardroom) Crownsville, MD 21032,
and virtually via Google Meet at: meet.google.com/sze-ynpy-wdk,
and by telephone conference call at:
1-478-331-6121 PIN: 535 627 611#

Trustees Present:

Lori Lynch, Vice Chair

Thomas (Toby) Lloyd, Secretary

Mark Hoffman, Treasurer

Keith Colston

Julia King

Megan Benjamin

Crystal Chissell

Megan D'Arcy

Nathan Volke

Alice Chalmers

Hillary Bell (representing the Governor of Maryland who is an ex-officio trustee)

Delegate Natalie Ziegler (representing the Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegates who is an ex-officio trustee)

Trustees Absent:

Gary Burnett, Chair

Craig Highfield

Diana Conway

Others Present:

John Turgeon, Director, Maryland Environmental Trust (MET Staff)

Josette Markline (MET Staff)

Wendy Foster (MET Staff)

Kelly Price (MET Staff)

Matt Ludington (MET Staff)

Michelle Grafton (MET Staff)

Dan Skalos (MET Staff)

Kevin Bull (MET Staff)

Cynthia McCann, Assistant Attorney General (Office of Attorney General)

Talley Kovacs, Assistant Attorney General, Senior Counsel (Office of Attorney General)

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Lynch called the regular meeting of the MET Board of Trustees to order at 4:07 p.m.

II. Minutes of June 2, 2025, Regular Meeting

Vice Chair Lynch asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees held on June 2, 2025. Delegate Ziegler moved to approve the June 2, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes; Mr. Hoffman seconded the motion. Ms. Chambers abstained from the vote due to her not attending the June 2, 2025, meeting. All voted in favor and the minutes were unanimously approved.

III. Board Chair's Report

No Report.

IV. Director's Report

Mr. Turgeon updated the Trustees on the recent FY25 Managing For Results (MFR) report that was submitted to the Secretary's office regarding all units within DNR. He went over some of the metrics and informed that Board of MET's progress. He stated that MET expects this fiscal year will be another record year for easement monitoring reports completed.

Mr. Turgeon mentioned to the Board that the Keep Maryland Beautiful Grants program will be launched on September 15, 2025. He mentioned that the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Maryland Department of Agricultural (MDA) will be participating again this year and will contributing money towards the grants. MDOT will be contributing \$80,000 and MDA is undetermined that this time as they are finalizing the RFP with the Chesapeake Bay Trust. Mr. Turgeon anticipates that the amount for MDA will be around \$150,000.

Mr. Turgeon reminded the Board that at the last meeting the Board delegated to Mr. Turgeon to work with Office of Attorney General (OAG) staff to reach out to the Irvine

Nature Center and their legal representatives to work out a solution regarding the activities that are taking place on the property.

Closed Session

At 4:21 p.m., Delegate Ziegler moved to go into a closed session, seconded by Mr. Colston. All voted in favor. Megan Benjamin abstained from the vote to close the session, recused herself from participating in the closed session, and did not enter the Google Meet breakout room in which the closed session was held. The meeting was closed under the Annotated Code of Maryland, General Provisions Article, §3-305(b)(7) to consult with counsel to obtain legal advice and General Provisions Article, §3-305(b)(8) to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation. The topic discussed was the status of the Irvine Nature Center easement stewardship matter and recent updates. MET staff set up a breakout session in Google Meet where the following MET Trustees, counsel, and staff were in attendance:

Trustees present for the discussion were Lori Lynch, Toby Lloyd, Mark Hoffman, Keith Colston, Julia King, Megan D’Arcy, Crystal Chissell, Nathan Volke, Alice Chambers, Hilary Bell, and Delegate Natalie Ziegler.

John Turgeon, MET Executive Director, Josette Markline, Stewardship Manager, Kevin Bull, Easement Stewardship Specialist, Dan Skalos, Conservation Easement Program Manager, Matt Ludington, Conservation Easement Planner, Kelly Price, Administrative Director, Wendy Foster, Easement Monitoring Specialist, Michelle Grafton, Outreach and Engagement Program Manager, Cynthia McCann and Talley Kovacs, Assistant Attorney General, were also in attendance.

At 5:02 p.m., a motion to reopen the meeting was made by Mr. Colston, seconded by Ms. D’Arcy. The Board members in attendance unanimously adjourned the closed session and reconvened in open session.

Open Session

Upon returning to open session, there was no item for vote, and no action was taken.

V. Committee Reports

A. Land Trust Outreach

Mr. Turgeon informed the Board that Mr. Lloyd has been nominated by the committee to be the new chair. The board congratulated Mr. Lloyd on taking on this new role.

B. Lands

Ms. Benjamin reported that the Committee met on August 27, 2025, to review the items on the Consent Agenda.

Proposed new conservation easements:

- a. John and Meg Menke to MET, 19.2 acres in Montgomery County
- b. Edwin B. Looper, III Trust to MET, 240.9 acres in Anne Arundel County
- c. John Zebelean, III to Neighbor Space Baltimore County and MET, 16.5 acres in Baltimore County
- d. Eastern Shore Land Conservancy to MET, 29.0 acres in Queen Anne's County

Approval of actions affecting existing MET easements:

- e. Request to Amend Conservation Easement 0850STE05.DORC

Mr. Lloyd moved to approve the Consent Agenda as stated above; Delegate Ziegler seconded.

Mr. Hoffmann asked for clarification regarding the ESLC property on the agenda. Mr. Skalos gave information and more insight into the matter regarding a donor to the ESLC and the development of the property. ESLC is selling the property to an adjacent landowner, but they are wanting to put the property into a conservation easement prior to the sale.

All voted in favor, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved

Mr. Skalos gave an update for FY25, MET protected 3 easements totaling 335 acres. This was not the goal expected due to turnover at MET. The pipeline now has 22 easements projects in progress totaling approximately 2200 acres. Thus far, the easement program has closed one easement totaling 100 acres.

Mr. Skalos informed the Board that he and Mr. Ludington attended the Land Trust Alliance Rally conference at the beginning of September. He said it was a very overwhelming conference, they learned a lot and were able to meet with local partners and talked about having a roundtable in November to focus on finding digital products to help target land conservation priorities.

Mr. Ludington mentioned that MET now has DocuSign for all the legal documents needing signatures.

Ms. Markline reported that Laural Paterini's employment is in the process of being converted from a long-term contractual employee to a full merit pin. She mentioned that the Stewardship staff have been working to get a form published on the MET website to get inquiries from the public to make it easier and more efficient in providing the help and guidance that is being asked for or MET. The team all took turns staffing the Maryland State Fair and was able to give out grant information and inform the public on MET and our processes. Ms. Markline stated that the Stewardship staff are gearing up to do more on the ground monitoring as the weather is getting nicer.

C. Governance

Mr. Lloyd noted that there is one vote this evening.

Mr. Lloyd informed the Board that Derek Baumgardner has reached out to MET and asked to be a Board member. Mr. Lloyd gave a brief overview of Derek's background.

Ms. King motioned to add Derek Baumgardner to the list of recommended Trustees. Mr. Colston seconded. All voted in favor.

Mr. Lloyd mentioned that MET has a strong list to send to the Legislative and Executive offices for review. He stated that if anyone has any other recommendations.

D. Finance

Mr. Hoffmann mentioned that the discussion for MET fundraising is moving forward, and MET will be soliciting in the newsletter and sending end of the year appeal letters.

Mr. Hoffman referred to the three documents distributed prior to the meeting:

1. Budget vs. Actuals: FY25 July 2024 - June 2025
2. MET Balance Sheet
3. MET FY26 Budget vs. Actuals July 1-July 31, 2025

Mr. Hoffman asked for a motion to approve the financial statement as distributed in the Board Packet prior to the meeting. Delegate Zeigler so moved; Mr. Lloyd seconded. All voted in favor.

An open discussion took place on MET funds, the financial firm that manages the funds for MET, and the projected outcome for the future of the money invested.

E. Ad-hoc Committee Re: Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project

Mr. Lloyd stated that there is nothing to report.

VI. Other Business

No other business was brought before the Board.

VII. Adjourned

Vice Chair Lynch called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Colston moved; Ms. Chambers seconded. All voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.

**PRESIDING OFFICER'S WRITTEN STATEMENT FOR CLOSING A MEETING ("CLOSING STATEMENT")
UNDER THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT (General Provisions Article § 3-305)**

This form has two sides. *Complete items 1 – 4 before closing the meeting.*

1. **Recorded vote to close the meeting:** Date: 09/08/2025; Time: 4:24 PM; Location: Google Meet and 100 Community Pl Third Floor Crownsville MD 21032;
Motion to close meeting made by: N. Ziegler Seconded by: K. Colston;
Members in favor: All in favor; Opposed: None; Abstaining:
M. Benjamin; Absent: N/A.

2. **Statutory authority to close session (check all provisions that apply).**
This meeting will be closed under General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b) only:

(7) X "To consult with counsel to obtain legal advice";

(8) X "To consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation"

3. **For each provision checked above, disclosure of the topic to be discussed and the public body's reason for discussing that topic in closed session.**

Citation (insert # from above)	Topic	Reason for closed-session discussion of topic
§3-305(b) (7)	0525IRV00.BACO-Irvine Nature Center Activity	For the Board to receive legal advice related to Irvine Nature Center activity on easement ID# 0525IRV00.BACO.
§3-305(b) (8)	0525IRV00.BACO-Irvine Nature Center Activity	For the Board to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation related to Irvine Nature Center activity on easement ID# 0525IRV00.BACO.

4. This statement is made by , Presiding Officer.

WORKSHEET FOR OPTIONAL USE IN CLOSED SESSION: INFORMATION FOR SUMMARY TO BE DISCLOSED IN THE MINUTES OF THE NEXT OPEN MEETING. (See also template for summary.)

➤ **For a meeting closed under the statutory authority cited above:**

Time of closed session: 4:24 PM

Place: Google Meet and 100 Community Pl Third Floor Crownsville MD 21032

Purpose(s): For the MET Board of Trustees to receive legal advice and consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation related to Irvine Nature Center Activity easement ID# 0525IRV00.BACO.

Members who voted to meet in closed session: Julia King, Hilary Bell, Megan D'Arcy, Crystal Chissell, Toby Lloyd, Nathan Volke, Lori Lynch, Keith Colston, Alice Chalmers, Mark Hoffman, Natalie Ziegler

Persons attending closed session: Julia King, Hilary Bell, Megan D'Arcy, Crystal Chissell, Toby Lloyd, Nathan Volke, Cynthis McCann, Lori Lynch, Kevin Bull, Keith Colston, Alice Chalmers, Matthew Luddington, Josette Markline, Dan Skalos, John Turgeion, Mark Hoffman, Kelly Price, Talley Kovacs, Wendy Foster, Natalie Ziegler.

Authority under § 3-305 for the closed session: § 3-305 (b)(7) and § 3-305 (b)(8)

Topics actually discussed: 0525IRV00.BACO- Activity on Conservation Easement Property

Actions taken: None

Each recorded vote N/A

➤ **For a meeting recessed to perform an administrative function (§ 3-104):** Time: _____

Place: _____

Persons present: _____

Subjects discussed: _____

**TEMPLATE FOR CLOSED-SESSION SUMMARY
TO BE INCLUDED IN THE MINUTES IN THE NEXT OPEN MEETING
(General Provisions Article § 3-306(c))**

Instructions: When a public body meets in a session closed under § 3-305 of the Open Meetings Act, it must disclose the following four sets of information in the minutes either of its next open session or in the minutes of the open session that it held that day, so long as the public knows to look there. This template provides a checklist for the required information. The worksheet at the bottom of the model closing statement contains a shorter form of the same checklist. Use of these forms is optional; the formatting of the summary is up to the public body so long as the public body includes the required information in its minutes at the required time.

The four sets of information required by § 3-306(c) are:

1. A statement of the time, place, and purpose of the closed session.
2. A record of the vote of each member as to closing the session.
3. Statutory authority to close session.
4. A listing of the actual topics of discussion, persons present, and each action taken in the session.

SUMMARY OF CLOSED SESSION HELD ON 09/08/2025

1. Statement of the time, place, and purpose of the closed session:

Time of closed session: 4:24PM Opened meeting again at 5:02PM

Place (location) of closed session: Google Meet and 100 Community Pl Third Floor Crownsville MD

Purpose of the closed session: For the Board to receive legal advice and consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation related to Irvine Nature Center activity.

2. Record of the vote of each member as to closing the session:

Names of members voting aye: Julia King, Hilary Bell, Megan D'Arcy, Crystal Chissell, Toby Lloyd, Nathan Volke, Lori Lynch, Keith Colston, Alice Chalmers, Mark Hoffman, Natalie Ziegler

Members opposed: None Abstaining: M. Benjamin

3. Statutory authority to close session:

This meeting was closed under the following provisions of General Provisions Art. § 3-305(b):

➔ **Topic #1: § 3-305(b) (7) to obtain legal advice and § 3-305(b)(8) to consult with staff, consultants, or other individuals about pending or potential litigation**

4. Listing of each topic actually discussed, persons present, and each action taken in the session:

Topic description	Persons present for discussion	Action Taken/Each Recorded Vote
#1: 0525IRV00.BACO-Irvine Nature Center	Julia King, Hilary Bell, Megan D'Arcy, Crystal Chissell, Toby Lloyd, Nathan Volke, Cynthia McCann, Lori Lynch, Kevin Bull, Keith Colston, Alice Chalmers, Matthew Luddington, Josette	No action taken.

	Markline, Dan Skalos, John Turgeion, Mark Hoffman, Kelly Price, Talley Kovacs, Wendy Foster, Natalie Ziegler	
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September 24, 2018

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Burnett', written over a horizontal line.

Gary Burnett, MET Board Chair

These minutes from the Open Session of the regular MET Board meeting on September 8, 2025 were approved by the Board of Trustees on November 3, 2025.

Please note that for most attachments listed and that are considered regular meeting handouts (like Stateside Budget Finance, MET Administered (non-State) Funds Budget/Finance and Director's reports), a copy is stored with handouts and MET Board Packets for the meeting at which that information was distributed to the Board. In that case, a duplicate copy will not be attached here.