

Minutes from meeting of MET's Land Committee
Wednesday August 27, 2025
1:00 pm

Attendees:

Lands Committee Members: M. Benjamin, A. Jones, G. Burnett, M. D'Arcy, C. Highfield

MET Staff: J. Turgeon, J. Markline, L. Paterini, K. Bull, D. Skalos, M. Luddington,

OAG Staff: C. McCann, T. Kovacs

Members of the Public: None

M Benjamin motioned to rearrange the agenda items due to time constraints. M. D'Arcy seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motioned to rearrange agenda passed.

Easement Program

1. Donation to MET by John and Meg Menke - 19.5 acres in Montgomery County.
 - a. M. Benjamin - motioned add easement to Board of Trustees (BOT) consent calendar. Ann Jones seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motioned passed to place Menke easement on BOT consent calendar on September 8th, 2025 for approval.
2. Donation by Edwin B. Looper, III Trust to MET and Magothy River Land Trust – 241.8 acres in Anne Arundel County with public access.
 - a. A. Jones- motioned to add easement to BOT consent calendar and stressed importance for stating all the wonderful conservation attributes to the BOT. M. D'Arcy seconded. All in favor. None Opposed. Motioned passed to place Looper easement on BOT consent calendar on September 8th, 2025 for approval.
3. Donation by John P. Zebelean, III to MET and Neighbor Space Baltimore County - 16.5 acres in Baltimore County.
 - a. D. Skalos – Remarked that, there is towering old growth forest on the property consisting mainly of tulip, as well as trails. The property is within the Urban Rural Demarcation Line which is normally slated for development. M. D'Arcy - asked for clarification of the type of area around the property and whether MET typically places easements in areas set for development. D. Skalos - indicated that Neighbor Space is hoping to acquire the property in the future and allow regenerative farming and public access. M. Benjamin - clarified MET does have a policy on accepting urban easements which requires there is a co-holder willing to join on the easement and the property fits the mission of the coholder. M. D'Arcy- recommended MET ensure the deed of easement contains exactly what Neighbor Space wants now, consider the building envelope and the signage restrictions. D. Skalos - will review those items with Neighbor Space. M. D'Arcy - motioned to

add easement to BOT consent calendar. Ann Jones seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motioned passed to place Zebelean easement on BOT consent calendar on September 8th, 2025 for approval.

4. Donation by Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC) to MET – 29.0 acres in Queen Anne’s County.
 - a. D. Skalos - explained that this easement had been proposed before but was tabled and sent back to ESLC with the request that they either allow for a house to be built on the property or sell to an adjacent landowner to ensure the property was monitored. The former was not consistent with the agreement between ESLC and the donor who gave them the property. An adjacent landowner offered to purchase the property. The prospective buyers’ property does not have a dwelling unit on it either but they live 4 miles away and frequent the area. The easement would remain on vacant forest land. M. D’Arcy - asked about stewardship fees and whether the state requires donation from owners to stewardship funds. J. Turgeon - MET does not require fees but does ask for a voluntary donation when an easement is recorded. M. Benjamin motioned to put easement on BOT consent calendar. M. D’Arcy seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motioned passed to place ESLC easement on BOT consent calendar on September 8th, 2025 for approval.

Stewardship

1. Request for Amendment MET ID #0850STE05.DORC
 - a. M. Benjamin motioned for the amendment to go on the consent calendar for the BOT. A. Jones seconded the motion. All in favor. M. D’Arcy recommended that MET and ESLC do a site visit prior to recording the amendment to ensure there are no encroachments or other stewardship issues present.

M. Benjamin motioned to approve the minutes from the 5/21/2025 Lands Committee meeting. C. Highfield seconded. All in favor. Motion passed to approve the minutes from the previous Lands Committee meeting.

M. Benjamin left meeting at 1:37pm.

D. Skalos gave updates on the easement pipeline. 2024 closed with 3 easements for 335 acres, well short of goal of 10 easements for 1,000 acres. Pipeline has been reestablished after staff turnover and 2025 currently has potential to record 25 easements for 2,150 acres. One easement for 100 acres has been recorded so far.

J. Markline gave Stewardship update. 2024 closed with 1,008 easements monitored which is a MET record. She gave credit to K. Bull, W. Foster and L. Paterini for their hard work and dedication to monitoring. She also acknowledged that L. Paterini’s contract position was being moved to full-time, permanent.

Other items not on the agenda

M. D'Arcy asked if the Peters and Katz property came back in the pipeline. D. Skalos - we have not heard back from the owners on the number of development rights yet.

M. D'Arcy motioned to adjourn. C. Highfield seconded. All in favor. None opposed. Motioned passed to adjourn the meeting at 2:00pm