



## Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board

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### Minutes of the Garrett County Forest Conservancy District Board Meeting May 8, 2023

#### Call To Order:

The Garrett County Forestry Board met at 9:00 a.m. on Monday May 8, 2023 at Mt. Nebo. Those Board members in attendance were: Ken Fisher, Mike Minnick, Bill Buckel, Mike Kozier, Fred Eggleston, Will Williams, John Bambacus, Siera Wigfield, Larry Tichnell and Melissa Nash.

The agenda was approved with motion by Bill B. and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mike K.

Minutes of the previous meeting were approved following a motion by Mike K. and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Fred.

Bill Buckel read the treasurer’s report. Expenses this month included Envirothon books and mushroom workshop supplies. We deposited a total of \$1,231.02 into the scholarship fund from the mushroom workshop. We also received a \$400 donation from the Civic Club and \$650 donation from Western MD RC&D for NRCC. Lani Daugherty sent in her NRCC deposit. Per the motion at the last meeting, the workshop/ed fund has been merged with our general Forestry Board Fund.

Forestry Board	\$5,880.16
MUCFC	\$0
NRCC	\$3,942.26
Workshop/Ed	\$0
Scholarship	\$2,944.07

A motion to accept the report was made by Ken and 2<sup>nd</sup> by John.

#### Volunteer Hours:

The Board’s hours since the last meeting were as follows:

Ken – 11	Mike K – 23	Mike F. – no report
Mike M. – 22	Fred – 4	Derek – no report
Larry – 3	Will – 24	John – 11
Bill B. – 14	Bill A. – no report	Siera - 3

**TOTAL 115 hrs**

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

### **Yough River**

No further information on the status was available. Updates will be dropped from future meetings unless there is a significant update.

### **Mushroom Workshop**

The workshop sold out and was a successful fundraiser for the Scholarship fund. Suggestions were made for future workshops such as Christmas wreaths, bat boxes, bird houses or a pollinator oriented workshop.

### **NRCC**

We have now interviewed and accepted 5 students. Melissa received 2 additional deposits this morning which will be taken to the bank soon. We will recognize students and present certificates during camp. Melissa will send thank you letters to those who have donated money. Becoming an Outdoorswoman and the Allegany County Forestry Board each made a donation to the Foundation to support our students.

### **Kitzmiller**

Approximately 15 people attended the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event. John attended from Garrett and Champ Zumbrun attended from the Allegany Board. Two new specimen trees (red spruce and river birch) were planted and signs were installed. Melissa is still working on inventory, but 10 new Big Trees have been submitted (8 county champions and 2 state champions). A discussion was held on the yellow poplar. It is below the threshold for listing in the Big Tree Program (<60% of current state champion). A waiver has been requested since we do not currently have any other yellow poplar measured in Garrett. If it cannot be officially listed we will still include it on our website.

### **Envirothon**

The Southern Salamanders team won the county competition. Will meets with the state committee this week to determine training and testing locations at the 4-H Center. The state event is June 15-16. Will has the schedule and will send it out.

### **Legislative Update**

Melissa shared the final legislative update from Annapolis. It will be sent along with the minutes. John suggested inviting new legislators to a meeting for a brief overview of what we do now that the session is over. Will suggested inviting them to our NRCC meeting so they can see the camp.

### **Watershed**

Ken asked about making the progress of the DCL Watershed Plan public. Siera said she's working on how to do that and have it in an easily deliverable format for public review. John said the Yough Advisory Committee has not met since 1998 and there has been a similar lack of updates on that watershed. Other public concerns such as lake level are now readily available online. A lack of watershed coordinator in the county has

contributed to the problem. With the MOU stuck waiting on approval between 3 agencies, the process can't move forward.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

### **June Meeting**

The June meeting needs to be shifted as Melissa is not available on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday. Fred made a motion, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Will to move the meeting to June 5<sup>th</sup>. The motion passed.

### **Forest Service Staffing Changes**

Anne Hairston-Strang is now Acting State Forester/Director

Anne Gilbert is now Acting Urban & Community Forestry Program Manager

Sandy Olek is now Acting Urban & Community Forestry Associate Director (overseeing urban forestry and 5 Million Tree programs)

A discussion was held on staffing shortages in the Forest Service. Many vacant positions are not receiving quality applicants and going through multiple rounds of attempting to hire.

### **Native Plant Festival**

The event will run from 10am-3pm at New Germany State Park. We will have a table in the Lake House and can start setting up at 8am. We will raffle off 2 mushroom logs, 2 potted trees and a bundle of red spruce seedlings with proceeds going to our NRCC fund.

### **Big Tree Logo**

Melissa shared designs for a possible new Big Tree Program logo. The state Big Tree Committee is asking each Board to vote for their favorite. Many Board members were disappointed in the lack of creativity in the designs presented and would like to see other options. Those presented were essentially the same design with different colors and fonts. It was also pointed out that the one with the MD flag had the flag upside down. Will made a motion, 2<sup>nd</sup> by John to reject all of the presented designs.

### **Scholarship**

We received 5 applications, 4 of which were complete. Melissa developed a scoring rubric based on our criteria. The Board used the rubric to score the applications. Based on scores, Siera made a motion, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Mike K. to award this year's scholarship to Annie Martin. She is a student in the Garrett College NRWT program.

### **Fair Booth**

The fair will run July 29-August 5<sup>th</sup>. We will plan on setting up on the Friday after NRCC again. Sunday will be the 4-H photo contest, Tuesday is tentatively French fries. The booth will tentatively be manned Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Mike K. and John made a motion to hold a raffle of a chainsaw (or similar power equipment) to raise money for NRCC. The motion passed. Mike M. will look into options and see if one of our local dealers can help us out.

**Bikeways Grant**

Siera is putting in for a grant through MDOT Bikeways to do a feasibility study on the possibility of connecting Oakland to Herrington Manor via trails. She is looking at similar studies and projects for other trails as well.

Melissa Nash  
Secretary

**Upcoming Dates**

May 13 – Native Plant Festival @ New Germany 10am-3pm

June 5 – Next regular meeting

June 13 – Mountain Loggers

June 15-16 – State Envirothon @ 4-H Center