

WASHINGTON COUNTY FORESTRY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
October 6, 2021

Present: Don Grove, Linda Grove, Marguerite Klein, Mary Jo Bartles, Greg Bartles, Doug Inkley, and Aaron Cook. *Judy Niedzielski, was absent, Aaron chaired the meeting in her place*

Catoctin Stewardship Initiative – Aaron asked the board members present for the CSI meeting to share their thoughts about the meeting. The MFS hosted this CSI meeting in coordination with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. The goal is to establish networks of landowners to implement broader conservation practices across a landscape. These landowners would have support from conservation agencies, along with access to enhanced cost-share assistance in implementation. The general consensus was that the overall purpose of the meeting wasn't entirely clear, and while the speaker topics were interesting they seemed unrelated. Several board members mentioned it would have been nice to see the letter residents in attendance received, Aaron will work to get a copy for them. Aaron mentioned he enjoyed the landowner feedback at the end of the meeting, but did agree the collection of panel participants seemed like a free for all when the context wasn't entirely known. Aaron mentioned efforts to begin a similar network in Washington County, board members mentioned their own neighborly interactions with respect to conservation practices.

Spotted Lanternfly in Washington County – Aaron informed everyone that since Spotted Lanternfly (SLF) had been positively identified in Hagerstown City Park in 2020, it has been identified throughout the north end of the County, Greg added positive traps adjacent to Greenbrier in Boonsboro. This insect pest has rapidly spread throughout the County and the State. Aaron updated the Board on how to report a sighting using a new ESRI online tool via MDA. Discussion was had on targeting Ailanthus for control and trap trees. It will remain to be seen if this is more of an agricultural threat, or a dual threat to agriculture and forests. Aaron mentioned that he had been informed MDA may have positively identified Ailanthus wilt on a property in Frederick County. This wilt is highly effective as a biocontrol of Ailanthus, and could be helpful in removing SLF favorite host tree.

Hagerstown City Park Tree Walk/ Big Tree – Doug recently led 2 tree walks at a fall fest at Hagerstown City Park. ACWA had asked for a speaker to discuss Big Trees in the park, and Aaron reached out to Doug. The City dedicated a arboretum trail at the event and Doug led 20-30 participants on each walk along this trail area. He encouraged participation on the walk and talked about invasive plants, insects, big trees, and how trees end up in our daily lives through household goods like maple syrup. He enjoyed the chance to conduct an educational event, and reminded the board to help him find more such opportunities. Aaron will reach out to WCPS to see if there are opportunities there. Thanks to Doug for helping with this request, and for his enthusiasm to share his knowledge with others! Doug also updated the board on the Big Tree program. He contacted an owner of a "elm" tree near Devils Backbone Park, and after visiting the tree determined it was actually a boxelder, and not a champion sized specimen. This contact told him to investigate a property in Braddock Heights, and upon doing so he found a purple beech that is above the 70% threshold for recordation. He is working with the Frederick board to get that documented. Finally, he was told about a flowering dogwood in the Mt. Aetna area, this tree is the new county champion!

Other Business (Flower & Garden Show, Arbor Day, Leitersburg Ruritan) – Aaron has sent registration for the 2022 Hagerstown Flower and Garden Show, and placed tree seedling orders for this event and the Arbor Day event with Washington County Public Schools. Tree species for the flower and garden show remain the same as 2020, and he was able to get Norway spruce for Arbor

Day. If the pandemic causes the events to cancel, he can cancel the orders, if needed.

Don informed the Board about an Maryland Forests Association listening session/ introduction to economic adjustment strategy event that occurred at Rocky Gap Resort in August. He shared literature from the event and the electronic story produced to explain the importance of the Forest Industry in each region of Maryland. He also discovered that there are no participating nurseries for the Marylanders Plant Trees Coupon in Washington County. Aaron will look into what caused the nurseries that were participating to drop out.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:30 PM.

The next regular business meeting will be on November 3rd at the Maryland Conservation Agency Museum (Greg's place).