

**Maryland Environmental Trust**  
**Board of Trustees Open Meeting Minutes**  
**September 9, 2019**

Trustees Present:

Mary Burke, Chair  
Royden Powell, Vice Chair  
Julia Jitkoff, Treasurer  
Sarah Taylor-Rogers, Secretary  
Dr. Scott Barao  
Tom McCarthy  
Martha Ann Clarke  
Thomas Lloyd  
Ken Montague  
Gary Burnett  
Gregory Bowen  
Mark Hoffman  
Phil Hager

Trustees Absent:

Senator Addie Eckardt  
Delegate Jim Gilchrist  
Paulette Greene

Others Present:

John Turgeon, Acting Director for Maryland Environmental Trust  
Wendy Hershey, Dept. of Natural Resources Liaison  
Kelly Price, Maryland Environmental Trust  
Ann Carlson, Maryland Environmental Trust  
Michelle Grafton, Maryland Environmental Trust  
Jon Chapman, Maryland Environmental Trust  
Talley Kovacs, Office of the Attorney General

**I. Call to order**

MET Board Chairwoman Mary Burke called the meeting to order at 4:09 pm at 100 Community Place, Third Floor Conference Room, Crownsville, Maryland 21032.

## **II. Board Work Plan & Governance Topics**

### **A. Adopting the Minutes**

Ms. Burke moved for approval of the minutes for the June 17, 2019 Board Meeting. Ms. Taylor-Rogers motioned to accept the minutes. Ms. Jitkoff seconded the motion. All voted in favor. \_\_\_\_

### **B. Chairwoman Report**

Ms. Burke introduced three new Board members: Ken Montague, Dr. Scott Barao, and Gregory Bowen. They were all welcomed by the MET Board.

Ms. Burke stated she has reached out to Mr. Steve Quarles, Forever Maryland Foundation's Board Chair, regarding the two Board members that MET is allowed to nominate to serve on the Foundation Board in accordance with the grant agreement between the Foundation and MET. She also inquired about appointing a MET Board member to serve as liaison to the Foundation Board. There has been no response from Mr. Quarles at this time. Ms. Burke indicated to the Board her interest in serving as the MET Board's liaison to the Foundation Board.

Ms. Burke announced plans for a joint holiday party at the end of the year for MET and Forever Maryland Foundation. Ms. Burke also recommended that a daylong MET Board retreat be held in early 2020. Topics suggested were: number of Board meetings in a calendar year, Board member roles, and working collaboratively with the Foundation.

Ms. Burke also plans to meet with MET staff to see how the Board can help assist MET.

### **C. Other Business**

Ms. Taylor-Rogers motioned to close the meeting at 4:20 pm

Ms. Jitkoff 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 Roxbury View LLC v. MET, et al.

Mr. Hager motioned to end the closed session and to open the meeting.

Mr. Bowen seconded the motion. All voted in favor and the meeting was re-opened..

#### **IV. Acting Director's Report**

Mr. Turgeon reported to the Board on MET's Annual Work Plan for Fiscal Year 2020. He advised the Board that the plan included in the Board packet is the final plan and incorporates changes resulting from the launch of the Forever Maryland Foundation. Mr. Turgeon reviewed the FY 2020 Annual Work Plan with the Board and explained different roles and responsibilities assigned to staff now that the Foundation is in operation. Mr. Turgeon asked that the Board vote to approve the MET Annual Work Plan.

Mr. Turgeon announced that Megan Benjamin, Easement Planner, has taken a new position with Baltimore County and her last day working for MET is today (9/9/19). MET currently has two vacant full-time positions, one Easement Planner position and the Director position.

Mr. McCarthy motioned to approve the FY2020 Annual Work Plan.

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

Mr. Turgeon directed the Board's attention to the completed FY 2019 Dashboard that was sent in the Board's meeting packet for review. The dashboard is to inform Board members what projects MET had been working on in FY 2019, as well as the accomplishments of the staff over the previous fiscal year.

#### **V. Committee Reports**

##### **A. Governance Committee**

Mr. Lloyd announced the Director posting for MET has officially closed, and DNR Human Resources will send a list of qualified candidates once they are vetted.

Mr. Lloyd asked the Board members to think about potential Board candidates that MET can nominate for the Forever Maryland Foundation Board. The Committee would like to get a list of names to Mr. Quarles soon for the Foundation's consideration.

Mr. Lloyd mentioned that he spoke with Ms. Burke during this summer, and they discussed the need to edit the MET bylaws. This process will involve the Office of the Attorney General.

Mr. Lloyd advised the Board that a sub-committee needs to be formed for reviewing/editing the bylaws. He is requesting some Board members volunteer, and mentioned he would be calling upon some people as well to participate on the sub-committee.

An open discussion took place about the effects that could take place for edits to the bylaws.

B. Finance Committee

Ms. Jitkoff gave an overview of MET's investment account activity for the fourth quarter of FY 2019. She advised the Board that expenditures in the MET private-side budget for FY 2019 were less than expected.

Ms. Jitkoff informed the Board that the FY 2020 private-side budget has been completed. The budget was presented to the Finance Committee for review, and the Committee recommends approval. Ms. Jitkoff provided the Board with a handout of the FY 2020 budget and reviewed the document with the Board.

Ms. Burke requested a modification to the Board events and meetings category of the budget to increase the amount from \$500 to \$5000. This will allow for necessary spending on the proposed Board retreat.

Mr. Powell motioned to approve the private-side budget with the change requested by Ms. Burke.

Ms. Burke seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Bowen requested an explanation on why MET is in a budget deficit. Ms. Jitkoff provided an explanation of the private-side budget and the recent payment made to Forever Maryland Foundation of \$425,000. Ms. Burke has offered to give additional detailed documentation to Mr. Bowen and all new Board members.

Ms. Jitkoff updated the Board on MET's account with Brown Advisory. She has been working on updating the financial guidelines for funding and future spending.

Mr. Turgeon advised the Board that the Merryman Estate has a contract pending for the sale of real estate in the amount of \$400,000. Mr. Turgeon reminded the Board that Delaware Nature Society and MET will share equally the proceeds when the property sells.

Mr. Powell informed the new Board members that money from the Merryman Estate is being used by MET to fund its grant to Forever Maryland Foundation.

C. Easement and Stewardship Committee

Mr. Powell gave the new Board members a brief overview of the process with accepting new easements into MET.

Ms. Carlson updated the Board on the projects MET is currently working on so far in FY 2020. MET is currently working on a total of 34 projects. MET has also partnered with two land trusts that are working on purchased easement projects with funding from the U.S. Army to conserve land in the vicinity of the Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground installation.

Still Pond Reserve LLC is an easement project in Kent County that will be closing in the next couple of months, and the Koiner Farm easement project in downtown Silver Spring closed last Friday 9/6/19. Mr. Turgeon gave a brief overview of the Koiner Farm easement and what it entailed.

Ms. Carlson informed the Board that MET completed 13 easement projects in FY 2019.

Mr. Powell informed the Board that an Easement/Stewardship Committee meeting took place on 8/28/19 where two items were reviewed and approved by the Committee and added to the consent calendar of the Board agenda. Mr. Powell requested to have the consent calendar approved by the Board.

1. Consent Calendar -- New Easements/Amendments
  - a. Salt Grass Farm, LLC, 179.41 acres, Worcester County w/Lower Shore Land Trust, Inc.
  - b. Maryland Port Administration (Masonville Cove), 46.845 acres, Baltimore City w/Baltimore Green Space, Inc.

Mr. Powell motioned for the approval.

Mr. McCarthy seconded the motion.

All voted in favor.

Mr. Powell advised the Board MET easement landowner Ball Road Venture, LLC would like to allow events on its property in Frederick County. The request is for a total of eight weekend

events a year with a maximum of 500 people in attendance per event. Mr. Powell suggested that the Board consider approving this type of activity for a two-year term and then re-evaluate. An open discussion took place regarding the property.

Mr. Powell requested to have an approval letter sent out to the landowner allowing a total of 8 events to take place on the easement property. The letter will state that the events will only be for a maximum of 500 people per event and only for 2019 and 2020. In 2020 they would have to submit another request if the party wanted to host future events.

Dr. Barao requested that if the event is allowed that a sign shows that MET is an easement owner of the property.

Mr. McCarthy motioned for approval of sending the letter to the easement owner.

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

D. Agriculture Committee

Ms. Clark announced that the Board's Agriculture Committee needs more members. She is hoping the new Board members will consider joining.

Ms. Clark informed the Board of listening sessions hosted by Maryland Dept. of Agriculture that are taking place on Sept 17, 18, 30, and Oct 1st. They are at various locations in the State of Maryland, and the sessions are pertaining to the environment and to the new strategic plan for the Department of Agriculture.

An open discussion took place on why the sessions are being presented and their benefits to the public.

E. Land Trust Advisory Committee

Mr. Hager informed the new Board members of why the Land Trust Advisory Committee exists and what the committee does to help support the local land trusts of Maryland.

Ms. Grafton reviewed the FY 2019 MET conference and roundtables with all Board members. Materials were passed out at the Board meeting referencing these numbers.

A request to approve a Cooperative Agreement Request was recently submitted by Chesapeake Conservancy. The agreement was drafted based on a model document template that was approved by the Board in 2010.

Mr. Hager motioned to approve the Cooperative Agreement with Chesapeake Conservancy.

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

Mr. Hager advised the Board that the next roundtable event is going to be held on October 8, 2019, at the Patuxent Wildlife Center in Laurel, Maryland. There will be two expert speakers at the session. The roundtable will be approximately four hours.

Mr. Hager informed the Board that the FY 2020 Committee meeting schedule and goals have been made. They are going to continue with the LTA Committee, and work with Forever Maryland Foundation on the 2020 conference as needed.

Mr. Hager requested that the Board consider allowing a Foundation Board member to serve on the LTA Committee.

Ms. Burke reminded the Board that the Land Trust Alliance Rally is October 17-19, 2019, in Raleigh NC.

#### F. Grants Committee

Mr. Burnett announced to the Board that the Keep Maryland Beautiful grant money awarded in FY 2019 was over \$215,000.00. The Keep Maryland Beautiful grant money was awarded to 71 organizations in 19 counties. The Maryland Department of Transportation has renewed the MOU for FY 2020 in the amount of \$50,000.00. MET is still waiting to hear from the Department of Housing Community Development for their MOU and their funding amount for FY 2020. FMF will be the contracted organization in charge of administering the KMB grant on behalf of MET and will continue to administer the grant in the upcoming years.

The Keep Maryland Beautiful grant application period opens on October 1 and closes on November 14, 2019.

A change to the KMB grants being made this year to enable better marketing of the program is to place the Margaret Rosch Jones and Bill James grants under the umbrella called the Citizen Stewardship Grants. The individual grant amount awarded by the Jones and James grants will be raised to \$5,000.

#### G. Other Business

Mr. Chapman informed the Board that in FY2019 the Stewardship program had increased easement monitoring by 312% from previous years. Mr. Chapman recognized Wendy Hershey and Erin McNally of MET's staff for this success.

Mr. Burnett motioned to close the open meeting.

Ms. Taylor-Rogers seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Adjourn open meeting at 5:47 pm.