



Sustainable Monocacy Commission
Thursday, August 24, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.
Basement Conference Room
30 North Market Street, Frederick, MD

MINUTES

Members present: Gary Magnuson (Chair), Lonnie Ropp, Matt Moran, Kimberly Stewart, Bill Allen

County Staff: Kimberly Gaines, Andrew Stine

The Sustainable Monocacy Commission's August meeting was called to order at 6:42 p.m. on Thursday, August 24, 2023.

Chair Gary Magnuson opened the meeting with a review of attendance and a recognition that a quorum was present.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion of the July 27, 2023, draft meeting minutes. With no corrections noted by the Members of the Commission, Gary called for a motion to approve the July draft meeting minutes. Bill Allen made a motion for approval that was seconded by Lonnie Ropp. Unanimous approval.

The Outreach Committee's report was next on the agenda. A potential list of recipients for the 2023 Monocacy River Report was discussed as well as a means of distribution. The Commission will prepare a "cover" email describing the report that will also include a link to download a PDF copy. Gary volunteered to collect email addresses submitted by the Commission members to compile a recipient list, and he volunteered to compose the first draft of the "cover" email for the Commission to review. The Commission also discussed potential parties who might send the email, and identified Council President Young as a potential candidate due to his dual role as an Ex-Officio Member of the Commission and as a President of the Frederick County Council that approved the legislation enabling the Sustainable Monocacy Commission.

Draft language for a future Monocacy Scenic River/Watershed brochure was the next item addressed on the agenda. It was determined that edits to Gary's initial draft would be circulated by email prior to the next meeting with the intent of having a version reflective of all Member input for discussion at the September meeting.

The incorporation of the language from the brochure into a video was also discussed. Kim Stewart stated that she has an acquaintance who does voiceover work, and she will contact this individual about potential participation in the recording. An update will be provided to the Commission.

The next item on the agenda was preparation for the Frederick “In the Streets” Festival on September 9, 2023. Gary stated that staff assisted in preparation of 100 copies of the River Access Point map for distribution and indicated he would contact the Parks and Recreation Division about securing copies of the folding Scenic River Trail Map for distribution at the event. Gary described the set up for the space, and Matt Moran volunteered to assist in the design of a banner for the table that will be incorporated into the booth. Commission Members also volunteered for assignments and filled out the schedule for the Commission’s presence at the booth. The Commission noted that purpose of this effort is to promote public awareness regarding the importance and benefits of the Monocacy River/Watershed.

The Commission then moved on to Unfinished Business and a discussion of the Monocacy River Access Point inspections. Those access points still requiring inspection were reviewed, and it was decided that any remaining inspections would be conducted/concluded prior to the September meeting. Gary indicated that he had met with Frederick County Parks and Recreation prior to the Commission’s August meeting. He relayed to the Division Director and Deputy Director that the inspection results would be shared following the Commission’s completion of their work. He also reported that the Parks and Recreation Division recently secured a state waterway improvement grant of \$100,000 related to potential improvements at Pinecliff Park.

The Commission then held a brief discussion on the matter of park facilities in floodplains and of the impacts of land ownership on the river. This led to a discussion of the vacant seat for a landowner with property adjacent to the Monocacy River. Staff indicated the intent behind the adjacent property owner seats was to provide for a voice on the Commission for people who deal with the impacts of flooding and other issues related to riparian property ownership. The Commission determined that materials for the Frederick “In the Streets” Festival advertising the vacancy for a riverside property owner Commission position should be developed.

Prior to discussion of the Priorities for the FY24-25, the Commission requested an update regarding legislation associated with expansion of the Commission to allow for youth participation. Staff indicated that no updates were available at this time.

Next, Chair Gary Magnuson presented a copy of the items to be considered prior to the FY 24-25 budget/CIP process and asked that Members review and provide feedback prior to the next meeting as the process for the 2024/2025 budget/CIP will begin soon. Bill Allen shared a brief update regarding a discussion with a representative of the Farm Bureau about the creation of a nutrient management plan writer position. Bill indicated that there have been additional discussions about the creation of a new department at the County that would report directly to the County Executive and focus on farming related issues. The nutrient management plan writer position could be incorporated into that department. Bill is to summarize the results of his discussions with the representatives of the Farm Bureau in an email to Gary, that may contain language the Commission may use in its FY2024-2025 budget/CIP listing. To close this item, Gary reiterated his request for consideration of items for discussion at the September meeting.

The next topic discussed was tire removal options. Gary indicated that the Division of Parks and Recreation has offered to pick up any tires recovered from the Monocacy River by the Commission once

notified. The Commission also discussed the creation of a program like Adopt-a-Stream for the Monocacy River (i.e., Friends of the Monocacy River) and identified it as a topic for future discussion.

The final agenda item was a review of the Potomac River Report Cards released by the Potomac Conservancy and the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Sciences. Gary provided an overview of grades assigned by both evaluating entities and a brief comparison and contrast of the scopes and findings of the respective studies. The Potomac Conservancy's grade was largely influenced by the effects of expanding development within the watershed, and the University of Maryland's report was largely focused on economic and social conditions. It was noted that neither report card presented any specific findings regarding the Monocacy River or its watershed.

Prior to adjournment, the Chair and Members of the Commission provided the following updates and event notifications:

- The Frederick County Farm Bureau Smart Soil Tour will occur on September 8, 2023
- Frederick In the Streets will occur on September 9, 2023
- The Rotary Club is still seeking volunteers for recycling efforts for Alive at Five on August 31, 2023 (contact Lonnie Ropp for details)
- The Frederick County Department of Energy and the Environment is hosting a clean-up event on August 26, 2023 in Utica Park
- Monocacy Catocin Watershed Alliance meeting on September 14.

Gary and Matt also provided a brief update on the water level alert app that was noted in the electronic distribution of materials for the August 24, 2023, meeting. Gary also indicated that he had been in contact with Emergency Management personnel at Frederick County regarding potential information that the Commission might assist in sharing with the public regarding flooding along the Monocacy River.

As a final item, Chair Gary Magnuson summarized those items and actions discussed throughout the meeting as well as action items for Commission members.

With no additional business, Gary requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bill made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Kim seconded. Unanimous approval. The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.