

The Boonsboro Environmental Commission (BEC)

9th Annual Report

January 2021 – December 2021

Membership

- 9 members at start and end of year
- 3 members stepped down
- 3 new members gained
 - Kim Pruitt
 - Janeen Solberg
 - Kristen Disbennett

Budget

- Approximate Annual Spending Budget
 - 3 to 3.5k Special Projects
 - \$500 Public Outreach and Education (Speakers are typically offered \$100)
- Expenses
 - Chairperson Vesely reported that \$93.00 for the Swap and Recycle banner was approved and paid by the town from the BEC budget.
 - Chairperson Vesely submitted an email vote to approve payment for the reusable bags for \$383 needed for the August 3rd farmers market giveaway event.
 - Lunch for Town Maintenance Crew: The BEC voted unanimously in favor of providing lunch for the town maintenance crew in thanks for the extra work they do in support of the Farmers Market. This was funded from Farmers Market proceeds.
 - Commission member Vesely presented a bill from the EDC in the amount of \$175.00 for the Farmer's Market "Love your Local" banner. The BEC unanimously approved payment from the Farmer's Market budget.

Grants

- The Keep Maryland Beautiful grant was submitted by the November 15, 2021 deadline.
- Jeff Davidson renewed the annual Tree City USA application in coordination with the Park Board.

Guest Speakers

- May 11, 2021 - John Canan provided a presentation about Appalachian Trail Community Designation.

Events

- May 15, 2021 - Green Fest committee hosted a Swap/Drop event at Shafer Park
- April 20, 2021 - Farmers Market opening day
- April 2021 - Arbor Day celebration, a new tree planted in Shafer Park. Jeff Davidson presented a tree care seminar.
- October 9, 2021 - Fall Bulk Trash drop off in Shafer Park with Green Fest Committee
- October 9, 2021 - Fall Tree giveaway pickup/ delivery/ planting

Town Newsletters

- April Town Newsletter: Chairperson Vesely wrote an article focusing on sustainable gardening and yard maintenance tips
- July Town Newsletter: Commission member Wetzel wrote an article focusing on what Apple Valley Waste will and will not accept for curbside recycling.

- September Town Newsletter: Chairperson Vesely submitted a “help wanted” ad to the town newsletter for a Farmer’s Market Manager and additional Green Team members.
- January Town Newsletter: Commission member Ladino wrote an article focusing on recap of Fall Tree Giveaway

Subcommittees

Waste Reduction

- Spring bulk trash curbside pick-up was May 15th
- The fall bulk cleanup and recycling event was held Saturday, October 9th from 8-12. Overall, the event went very well, but was much slower than past bulk trash/recycling events.

Green Team

- EV station usage monitoring and posting on apps and other sites like Google Maps
- Flyers distributed to local business to advertise EV station to patrons
- Town Liaison Hollingshead reported that she requested at December's Mayor and Council meeting that the Town install directional signs to the EV Charging Station.
- Investigated possibility of requesting an incentive or subsidizations from Potomac Edison, and/or the Town or BEC covering all EV charges for a period of time.
- Chairperson Vesely and Commission Member Watson contributed to an article featured in the May/June 2021 issue of Maryland Municipal League (MML) Magazine entitled, “Incentives Help Innovative Maryland Municipalities Change the World Incrementally”. Vesely and Watson detailed the process of having an EV charging station installed in town.
- The EV station seems to be getting usage from a variety of cars.

Monarch Waystation

- The Monarch Butterfly Waystation was weeded and mulched by the Boy Scouts. Town provided mulch.
- During a visit to the Monarch Butterfly Garden, we discovered that there is no milkweed growing, so we need to have the scouts replant some.

Strategic Plan/Grants

- Strategic Plan updated October 2021

Trees (+ Tree Board)

- Commission members Ladino and Pruitt joined Tree Board
- Collaborated with Town on GIS
- Contributed to submission for Chesapeake Bay Trust grant of 5k for Fall Tree Giveaway
- Fall Tree Giveaway - Trees and planting maps submitted and approved by the Mayor and Council. The Public Land Plantings occurred October 7th, and private property plantings the weekend of October 9 & 10.
- Cassandra Ladino and Jeff Davidson were recognized at the December 13 Mayor & Council meeting for their efforts organizing the recent tree giveaway event.

Green Spaces (Gardening)

- Continued to investigate the process for establishing a Community Garden.
- Chairperson Vesely toured a large community garden in Frederick, MD and met the garden manager, David Muns. Vesely shared his contact information with the Public Education/Outreach subcommittee for outreach.
- The Community Garden Subcommittee will communicate potential locations with the Town Manager to ensure said sites and necessary garden resources are available before pursuing further with the Town Council. We ideally would also like to have a few community members join this committee.

Public Education/Outreach

- Continued COVID restrictions

- May 11, 2021 - Jim King of Crushin' It provided a demonstration of his glass crushing machine which turns glass to sand.
- July 13, 2021 - Mike Sokol presented information and a Q&A on his Go Green RV project. Sokol and a colleague hope to embark on a cross-country journey with their solar and electric equipment and will be reporting and doing podcasts to chronicle the adventure. Mike presented an all-electric vehicle, a hybrid truck with generator, and solar panel-equipped campers.

Nominating Committee

- Election of BEC Officers December 2021: The slate of officers was presented by the Nominating Committee and elected by unanimous vote as follows:
 - Chairperson: Cassandra Ladino
 - Vice Chair: Laura Schnackenberg
 - Secretary: Amy Jones

Farmer Market

- The season was extended April 20, 2021 to November 23rd
- New signage for Shafer Park and Historical Park
- The Market opened with 16 vendors and ended with 11 regular vendors, with 2 occasional "pop-in" vendors.
- Received a candidate interested in the Farmers Market Manager position for 2022.
- Holiday Pop-Up Farmers Market to be held December 21st at the Community Center.

On the Horizon for 2022

- Newly elected chair, Cassandra Ladino
- Newly Adopted BEC Strategic Plan
- Town priority for Sustainable Community Designation
- Reorganized subcommittees
- Community Garden priority