

The Boonsboro Environmental Commission (BEC)

Eleventh Annual Report January 2023 – December 2023

Membership

- 9 members at beginning of year; 7 members at end of year

Budget (Town Fiscal Year is July 1 to June 30)

- **Approximate Annual Spending Budget**
 - FY23 (July 2022 - June 2023) - \$12,500 Special Projects
 - FY24 (July 2023 - June 2024) - \$13,500 Special Projects
 - \$500 Public Outreach and Education (Speakers are typically offered \$100)
- **FY23 Expenses**
 - Community Garden Shed \$5,664
 - Community Garden Benches \$2,959
 - Fall Tree Giveaway 22 - Milkweed \$122
 - Dog waste carriers \$11
 - Leave No Trace poster + shipping \$13
 - Community Garden Soil Test \$17
 - Greenfest fliers \$267
 - AT Advisory Committee \$500
 - 8 Raised Metal Beds \$1,463
 - Stone Pad for Garden Shed \$100
 - Community Garden Logo \$400
 - Creeping Thyme \$100
 - Lunch for Town Maintenance \$100 (estimated)
 - Towson University GIS Conference \$165
 - Key City Compost \$220
- **FY24 Expenses**
 - Key City Compost \$2,420

Special Projects

- Community Garden Project/ Community Garden Planning team
- GIS Consultant for Tree Inventory
- Key City Compost Service
- Pet Waste/ Leave No Trace Education
- Monarch Waystation Maintenance and improvement - Creeping Thyme

Grants/ Certifications

- Sustainable Maryland Certified recertification
- Community Garden Project - Fencing: Nora Roberts Foundation (\$24k) - Approved in 2022
- Tree Board/ Kim Pruitt: Tree City USA recertification and Growth Award

Guest Speakers

- 04/11/2023 - Ann Aldrich, Master Gardener
- 05/09/2023 - Phil Wescott, Key City Compost

- 07/11/2023 - Alex Reed, Washington County Watershed Specialist/MS4 permitting
- 11/14/2023 - Jason Middlekauff, Assoc. Director of Donated Goods for Horizon Goodwill Industries, Inc.

Events

- 10/14/2023 - Fall Bulk clean up and recycling event in Shafer Park with Green Fest Committee
- 06/16/2023 - Monarch Waystation weeding and mulching
- 06/03/2023 - Appalachian Trail Designation celebration
- 05/13/2023 - Green Fest committee hosted a Swap and Recycling event at Shafer Park
- 05/02 - 10/24/2023 - Farmers Market
- 04/23/2023 - Annual Shafer Park and stream cleanup. Arbor Day celebration, a new tree was planted in Shafer Park and dedication to community member, Bruce Schmidt.

Town Newsletters

- Submitted articles to 4 of 4 quarterly newsletters in 2023
 - September - Proper pet waste disposal, Registration information for the community garden, and the Fall Bulk Trash & Recycling event
 - July - Key City Compost service and Community Garden update
 - April - Community Garden, compost bins, Farmers Market opening day, and the Green Fest Swap and Recycling event
 - January - Fall 2022 Tree Giveaway and Chesapeake Bay/ Tree Educational Signs at Shafer Park

Subcommittees

Waste Reduction

- Green Fest Swap and Recycling event on May 13, 2023.
- The Fall bulk clean up and recycling event, held on October 14, 2023.
- Commission member Solberg collected plastic nursery pots of any size from BEC members at her residence.
- Celebrated Plastic Free July (plasticfreejuly.org) at Farmers Market.
- Pet Waste educational program was implemented in April 2023 to support the Town's Appalachian Trail Community designation and Leave No Trace goal.
- Key City Compost service began the week of July 1, 2023.

Green Team

- Commission Member Vesely completed submission for the Sustainable Maryland Certified recertification, recertified as of December 2023.

Beautification Subcommittee(s)

- **Monarch Waystation**
 - The Monarch Butterfly Waystation was weeded and watered by BEC members.
 - Additional creeping thyme planted.
- **Trees (+ Tree Board)**
 - Educational signs installed along the walking trail in the new section of Shafer Park.
 - Collaborated with Town on environmental Geographic Information System (GIS) Consultant. Tree Board and other commissions continue to collaborate on the design of GIS products for the Town.
- **Green Spaces (+ Garden Planning Team)**
 - Summer maintenance of the Monarch Waystation garden and bulk planting of creeping thyme.

- Presented to the Town Mayor and Council and received approval to move forward with construction of Community Garden
- Official survey of the Community Garden site was completed
- Community Garden Soil testing - sample collected and mailed to University of Delaware. Testing confirmed the proposed Community Garden location is safe for growing consumable vegetables.
- Invitation For Bids was posted for the Community Garden perimeter fence. Multiple bids received in December 2023.
- Community Garden Eagle Scout Projects
 - Will Duus - Greenhouse
 - Grant Hausler - 4 wheelchair accessible raised beds

Strategic Plan

- Last updated October 2021
- Goals Not Completed:
 - Establish a community walking program to encourage healthy living practices among town residents.

Public Education/Outreach

- 4 guest speakers presented to the BEC.

Energy

- New EV station installed at Shafer Park near pavilion 4.
- EV station at Town Hall is consistently in use.

Nominating Committee

- Election of BEC Officers November 2023: 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: Kristen Disbennett

Farmers Market

- The Farmers Market in 2023 ran for 26 weeks, from May 2 to October 24, 2023.
- In the past five years, the Farmers Market has had 21,000 customers, 8,000 of which were this year.
- There were 15 full-time vendors, 10 part-time vendors, 2 drop in vendors, 5 food trucks, and 2 musicians (food trucks and music on a rotating basis).
- The parking lot lines were repainted by Town Maintenance and the spots were numbered.
- Special Events:
 - Milkweed and Zinnia seed give away
 - July recycling event
 - 2 story times (provided by Commission Member Schnackenberg)

On the Horizon for 2024

- Construction of Community Garden in Shafer Park
- Monarch Waystation responsibility and annual maintenance
- Creation of new MS4/ Tree Inventory GIS communication products
- Continue to support the Town's priority for large scale Tree plantings
- Sustainable Maryland Certified certification
- Explore glass recycling
- Establish a community walking program to encourage healthy living practices among town residents.