

Draft

Town of Boonsboro

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
TUESDAY, May 10, 2022**

PRESENT: *Commission Members:* Chairperson Cassandra Ladino, Kristen Disbennett, Amy Jones, Laura Schnackenberg, Janeen Solberg, Kathy Vesely, Andy Watson, Barb Wetzell, Town Council Liaison Terri Hollingshead

ABSENT: Kim Pruitt

Guest: Rodney Tissue, Director of Parks and Engineering, City of Hagerstown

PRESIDING: Chairperson Ladino called the regular meeting to order at 7:58 PM.

Prior to the regular meeting, the BEC enjoyed a presentation about the Hagerstown Community Garden by Rodney Tissue, Director of Parks and Engineering, City of Hagerstown.

The Hagerstown Community Garden was established in 2014 and is supported financially by the City of Hagerstown. Critical infrastructure needs for a community garden include parking, access to water, visibility, fencing/security, sunshine, and storage facilities.

Hagerstown's garden consists of 26 plots, two of which are ADA compliant. Plot sizes are 8x12 or 16x12. The ADA plots are about 30" high, 13-14' long, and are accessible from all sides. Path width ranges from 6'-10'; wide enough so that there's room for vines to grow out. The minimum for ADA compliance is 5'. The fence was paid for by Program Open Space. The Hagerstown garden has compost bins available in the form of large rubbish totes that are sent to the county landfill from time to time to be shredded and composted there.

The Hagerstown garden includes a Monarch waystation and some bee boxes to attract pollinators. There is also a little grove of eight fruit trees located outside the garden fence and are available to the public. They don't spray the trees but do prune them annually.

Rodney manages the application process and estimates that between eight and ten people don't return each year. The community garden members meet in March and November. March is idea-sharing and introductions while November is more of a recap meeting. Returning gardeners need to submit their applications by end of calendar year, and then an announcement is made for potential new gardeners to submit an application. Applications are due by the end of February. The Hagerstown garden charges \$10 and \$20 for the small and large plots respectively.

We can find additional information including bylaws, garden rules, and operating committee at www.diginhagerstown.org. Other things we should consider include governance model, fees, location, plot sizes, budget, ways to engage the community and groups, grant sources, insurance issues, ADA compliance, and logo. Would it be worthwhile for a couple of BEC members to attend the November 2022 wrap up meeting and learn additional best practices?

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The April 2022 minutes were reviewed and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA): No funding update expected until July with respect to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) submission.

Community Garden: No update on funding expected until the June BEC meeting.

Swap and Recycle event: \$210 for flyers was reimbursed to Commission Member Wetzel from the BEC budget.

Trees: The new trees planted by Kinsey Heights trees were the result of a DNR/Healthy Forests Healthy Waters proposal coordinated by the Town.

Butterfly Waystation: Commission Member Vesely contacted the boy scouts about planting more milkweed. Apparently, the existing milkweed plants were pulled out because they grew too large. The Scouts will have a workday soon to mulch the garden and Vesely will give them some new milkweed to plant. In addition, Sunny Meadows Nursery has a plant sale June 4th and they always have lots of milkweed available. Vice Chairperson Schnackenberg suggested that the BEC purchase and donate some milkweed plants. Donations received at the Green Fest Swap and Recycle event will cover the cost of the plants and not impact the BEC budget.

NEW BUSINESS

Community Garden: We received one response to our advertisement in the April Town Newsletter for the community garden management committee (Chase Watters).

Meeting location: The BEC unanimously agreed to move the BEC meetings to Shafer Park, Pavilion 2, for the summer (June through October). We will also be starting the meetings at 7:30 during Farmers Market season.

Arbor Day Tree Dedication: The Tree Board approved the dedication of the Arbor Day tree to Bruce Schmidt, however the BEC will need to purchase the plaque. Commission Members Wetzel and Pruitt volunteered to research and provide information on the style and cost of the plaque. Wetzel will reach out to Brigitte Schmidt to ensure that the family is okay with the tree dedication. The BEC will be in charge of planning the dedication ceremony.

July Newsletter: Ideas for the July Town Newsletter article? Suggestions include tree watering tips and information about Fire Flies. Commission Member Vesely will draft something for the newsletter.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Solid Waste Reduction: Don't forget, the Swap and Recycle event will be held from 9-2 on Saturday 5/14. We have a number of volunteers, but might need additional help in the recycling zone. Please meet in Pavilion 1 Friday afternoon for clothing swap sorting if available. A sign has been ordered for the "Monument" at the Main Street entrance to the park. Traffic will be one-way through the park during the event. Some of the lot behind Alex's will be available for parking.

Strategic Plan/Grants: No update.

Beautification (Trees/Green Spaces/Gardening): The Tree Board met and discussed tree plantings, the GIS initiative, and the possibility of getting a consultant to get the tree database up and running. In addition, dedicating the Arbor Day tree to Bruce Schmidt was approved.

Public Education/Outreach/Speakers: Commission Member Pruitt is trying to line up another speaker – more to come at the next meeting. Commission Member Wetzel learned of a science teacher at Greencastle-

Antrim High School who recently attended an International Teachers Environmental Conference in Prague, Czech Republic. Wetzel is trying to contact her to see if she would do a Zoom presentation for us. Vice Chair Schnackenberg is attempting to get updated contact info for Entsorga to learn of any updates.

SMC Green Team: Commission Member Pruitt sent an email to the BEC members about University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center water infrastructure funding: What Federal Infrastructure Act means for small systems in Maryland. This will be held on May 12th at 10:00 am. Commission Member Vesely suggested that we ask Pruitt to take the lead on the Green Team since she's on top of things!

Nominating Committee: Nominating Committee inactive until September.

Community Garden: Should the BEC consider looking at some of the auctions that are advertised from time to time to procure tools for the Community Garden at reduced rates? Tools are normally readily available at farm auctions. Might have to pay for any purchases out of pocket and get reimbursed. We might consider purchasing power tools new for reliability. Another thought is to advertise on social media (i.e.: Facebook marketplace) for tools in good working order. Finally, we could collect equipment/tools at the October bulk trash drop-off.

Energy: No update.

TOWN UPDATE: The Town approved a new Town Clerk, Brian Wachtel. The Town is trying to get additional funding for reservoir repairs. May 21st is bulk trash pickup and May 22nd is the Wagon Train in Shafer Park.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS: Commission Member Vesely thanked everyone who attended the Farmer's Market. There were an estimated 600 people on opening day, and close to 400 today. The food trucks are very popular. Vesely expressed that she would like to increase the stipend paid to the market manager and the social medial coordinator (from \$500 to \$600 and from \$250 to \$300, respectively), and asked if there were any BEC comments or objections. All BEC members were supportive of this idea.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:53 PM

Respectfully submitted by
Amy Jones, BEC Secretary

***Next meeting: TUESDAY June 14, 2022 - Regular meeting at 7:30 at Shafer Park Pavilion 2**

Any person desiring a transcript of tonight's meeting shall be responsible for a competent stenographer. Items on this agenda are subject to change at the discretion of the Chairman.

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