

Draft

Town of Boonsboro

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

TUESDAY, June 14, 2022

PRESENT: *Commission Members:* Chairperson Cassandra Ladino, Amy Jones, Kim Pruitt, Laura Schnackenberg, Kathy Vesely, Andy Watson

ABSENT: Kristen Disbennett, Janeen Solberg, Barb Wetzel, Town Council Liaison Terri Hollingshead

PRESIDING: Chairperson Ladino called the regular meeting to order at 7:37 PM.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The May 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: We did not receive funds from the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) grant submission. Vice Chairperson Schnackenberg suggested that the BEC include a survey in the next water bill to reassess community interest in a community garden. A positive response might lend support for future grant opportunities. The survey questions will be as follows:

1. Do you see value in having a community garden located in Shafer Park?
2. If interested in having a garden plot, would you be willing to pay a small annual fee (\$10-\$20)?
3. The Community Garden is looking for volunteers! Please indicate your interest below if you would like to be on the garden committee (please include contact information).

Butterfly Waystation: Milkweed was purchased for the Monarch Butterfly Waystation in Shafer Park by Commission Member Vesely. A motion was made and passed with unanimous vote to reimburse Vesely for the plants that she purchased in the amount of \$33.88

Memorial Plaque: Commission Members Pruitt and Wetzel are continuing to research plaques. We will need to make any plaque purchases by fiscal year-end (June 30).

NEW BUSINESS

Tree Board: Big congratulations to BEC member Kim Pruitt on becoming the new Tree Board chairperson!

Meet and Greet: A reminder that there is a Boonsboro Commission meet-and-greet on June 23rd. RSVPs are requested by June 16th.

July Newsletter: Commission Member Vesely wrote an article about fireflies for the July Town Newsletter. The Tree Board, in conjunction with the Town Manager, submitted an article about this year's Fall Tree giveaway.

Community Garden: We are looking for additional funding opportunities for the Community Garden. Our first choice of fencing will cost approximately \$25,000. What are some suggestions for more modestly priced fencing, especially in light of not receiving the AARP grant funding? A community garden subcommittee meeting will be scheduled after the survey results have been received and the BEC has had the opportunity to discuss.

Budget: There is currently approximately \$2,000 in the BEC Special Projects budget. Commission Member Pruitt suggested purchasing some plaques (some new, some replacement) for various trees in the park. Purchases need to be made prior to fiscal year-end (June 30th).

We are hesitant to make investments in items for the Community Garden until at least a portion of grant funds have been secured.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Solid Waste Reduction: A reminder that Plastic Free July is right around the corner! You can sign up for the Plastic Free July challenge at plasticfreejuly.org.

Strategic Plan/Grants: There have been no recent updates from the Town's grant writer, including any information about the Sustainable Community designation. We have spoken to the grant writer about some additional funding opportunities for the community garden, however some of the funding cycles are two years out.

Beautification (Trees/Green Spaces/Gardening): Commission Member Pruitt suggested some Town beautification opportunities such as planting wild flowers at the traffic circle, installing planters on Main Street, or installing hanging baskets on the downtown lamp posts. Hanging baskets are probably not a viable idea as we recalled previous discussion about the lamp posts not being able to support the weight of a hanging flower basket.

The committee had hoped to get some ARPA funding for a GIS consultant, but suspect those funds will not be awarded. Recent information from the Town indicates that an RFP will have to be done to secure a GIS consultant, instead of sole-sourcing those services. The Town will be committing \$10k in the 2023 fiscal budget toward GIS.

Washington County planted some small "tube trees" at the library. Those trees will probably be relocated to the rear of the property in the fall, as the Tree Board had plans to plant larger five-gallon trees at that location.

Public Education/Outreach/Speakers: Vice Chair Schnackenberg has not heard back from Entserga, but has a personal contact that we can utilize to see if we can get a speaking commitment from them. Commission Member Wetzel will contact the teacher from Greencastle-Antrim High School to assess interest in providing a presentation.

SMC Green Team: Sustainable Maryland Certification is due December 2023. There are a number of new categories that we will need to research for applicability. The Green Team will be scheduling a meeting in the near future to discuss Sustainable Maryland.

Nominating Committee: Nominating Committee inactive until September.

Community Garden: We did not receive funding from the AARP grant, and will have to research other grant opportunities. Since we did not receive the AARP funding, we may have to consider an alternate (less expensive) type of fencing at least for the short term. The BEC agreed to include a short survey in the July Town Newsletter to assess community interest in a community garden. See “Old Business” for survey content.

Energy: The town’s EV station is getting more use (especially with the increase in gas prices). National Drive Electric week is September 23rd – October 2nd. The closest Drive Electric Week event to Boonsboro is Poolesville, MD, and is scheduled for September 17th. This is a great opportunity to source information from car owners and not salespeople.

TOWN UPDATE: Town Council Liaison Hollingshead was absent (attending a Maryland Municipal League (MML) convention), but sent the following update: Town Council members Terri Hollingshead, Eric Kitchen, and Rick Weaver were sworn in as council members, and Tony Nally as the new Assistant Mayor. National Night Out will be held on Tuesday, August 2nd at the park, and Kim LaBrush has offered to try and start up the Public Safety Commission again.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS: Commission Member Vesely reported that the Monarch Butterfly Waystation is a bit of a disaster at the moment. It’s in dire need of weeding and mulch. Vesely connected with the scout troop and was informed that the butterfly garden was a gift to the town, and the scouts are not in charge of maintaining it (although do so from time-to-time as a service project). The BEC planned a workday to weed the butterfly garden and plant new milkweed on Monday, June 19th at 9 am.

Commission Member Pruitt inquired if we could reimburse Rodney Tissue for his presentation at last month’s meeting. The BEC agreed that we will offer the normal stipend (\$100) which will be paid from the speaker budget.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 PM

Respectfully submitted by
Amy Jones, BEC Secretary

***Next meeting: TUESDAY July 12, 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.