

Draft

Town of Boonsboro

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
TUESDAY, December 13, 2022**

PRESENT: *Commission Members:* Chairperson Cassandra Ladino, Amy Jones, Kim Pruitt, Laura Schnackenberg, Kathy Vesely, Andy Watson, Barbara Wetzel, Town Council Liaison Terri Hollingshead

ABSENT: Kristen Disbennett, Janeen Solberg

PRESIDING: Chairperson Ladino called the regular meeting to order at 7:40 PM.

Special Guest Presentation: Anna Twigg, MPA, Tree Planting Specialist
Frederick & Washington County
Maryland Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources

Anna Twigg from the Maryland Forest Service gave an informative presentation on Maryland's **5-Million Trees (5MT)** initiative. 5-Million Trees is part of 2021 Tree Solutions Now Act, a statewide initiative, with the goal of planting and maintaining 5 million native trees in the State by 2031. Some of the 5MT initiatives count toward Sustainable Maryland Certified. Anna also shared information about several grant and tree giveaway opportunities. More information can be found at: <https://dnr.maryland.gov/forests/Pages/5-million-trees.aspx>

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The final draft of the November 2022 Minutes will be distributed via email for review and will be discussed and approved at the January 2023 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Community Garden:

- Nora Roberts Foundation funding: The BEC applied for funding through the Nora Roberts foundation and hope to hear a decision in December. If awarded, the funding will go toward fencing for the Community Garden.
- Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBT) funding: The BEC applied for a grant from CBT and hopes to hear a decision in December.

Milkweed Plants Provided to Community Members During Tree Giveaway: Milkweed plants were provided to anyone picking up their tree at the Town Tree Giveaway. The BEC approved up to \$150 toward this expense. The receipt for \$122 was just received and will be submitted to the town for reimbursement.

Dedication: A plaque in memory of Bruce Schmidt will be dedicated on April 23, 2023 at 1:00 during the Town's Arbor Day celebration. The BEC discussed and agreed that a formal invitation should be sent on Town letterhead to members of the Schmidt family (please note that the family has already been consulted about the date).

January Town Newsletter: The BEC discussed ideas for the 2023 Town Newsletters:

- Tree inventory and statistics – Chairperson Ladino will follow up with the Tree Board.
- Solar Panels – possible topic for March or June newsletter.
- Maryland Forest and Community Forest Committee (MUCFC) Grant – New informational signage has been installed in Shafer Park, courtesy of a MUCFC grant. The BEC would like to include a short piece in the January newsletter highlighting how the funds were spent (in addition to the signage). Commission Member Pruitt will submit an article to Kim Miller.

NEW BUSINESS

No New Business was discussed.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Solid Waste Reduction: The Spring Recycling and Swap event is scheduled for Saturday, May 13th. The Solid Waste Reduction subcommittee would like to meet with Jim King of **Crushin' It** to discuss the feasibility of a glass collection system for Town residents and how it might work on an ongoing basis.

Strategic Plan/Grants: A number of grant opportunities were identified during the 5-Million Trees presentation that the Strategic Plan/Grants committee will research.

Beautification (Trees/Green Spaces/Gardening): Commission Member Pruitt will follow up with her contact at the high school about building some benches. Also, on a recent trip to Malden, MA, Pruitt noted that town's switch boxes had all been decoratively painted (<http://www.maldenarts.org/switchbox-project.html>). Is this something we might like to investigate, and would this require working with the State Highway Administration (SHA)?

Commission Member Vesely noted that she has loads of Milkweed seeds and asked Greg Huntsberry with town maintenance if we could broadcast seed them by the nature trail in the park. Vice Chairperson Schnackenberg also has some extra milkweed plants that can be planted in the same area.

Public Education/Outreach/Speakers: No report.

Sustainable Maryland Certified (SMC) Green Team: Commission Member Vesely distributed updated information for Sustainable Maryland Certified to members of the Green Team. Our SMC certification expires at the end of 2023. A SMC subcommittee meeting will be scheduled in January 2023.

Nominating Committee: Inactive until September 2023. Recently elected BEC Officers were approved by Town Council.

Community Garden: See Old Business – pending funding.

Energy: Our EV charging station sees frequent use. Chairperson Ladino asked that BEC members give some thought to potential sites for a second charging station. Any potential site would need access to power and parking. Some considerations might be near the rest rooms at the ball fields in the newer section of the park, or in the parking lot by the community center. Chairperson Ladino will ask the town for power grid options and any other restrictions that need to be considered.

TOWN UPDATE:

Town Liaison Hollingshead reported the following from the December 12th Mayor and Council meeting:

- The lot that houses the new Post Office at the south end of town has been sold, and hopefully the new owner will complete the Post Office project.
- The decommissioned well in the Crestview subdivision should be demolished by the end of the year pending permitting.
- The fire company will be updating Knox Boxes around town.

COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS:

Chairperson Ladino commented that Boonsboro Middle School (BMS) is looking for possible community partnerships that would count toward Student Service Learning (SSL) hours. BMS is developing a unit called "Boonsboro Goes Green" which will cover topics such as recycling, energy efficiency, and reducing our carbon footprint. If any BEC members would like to coordinate with BMS to assist with the planning, please reach out to Ladino for contact information. Commission members Vesely and Wetzel are interested in assisting with this. On a related note, Commission Member Vesely used to organize an end-of-semester locker cleanout at Boonsboro High School and was able to salvage usable school supplies and put them out for anyone to take.

Commission member Vesely received a call from Keedysville inquiring about compost bins. If the Town still has any in storage, would we be willing to sell them to Keedysville for a small amount (enough to recoup what the town paid for them)? Also, will there be a need for compost bins at the community garden? Vesely will Ask Greg Huntsberry if any bins remain and if so, how many.

Vesely also commented that the BEC annual report is due by the end of the year.

ADJOURN: The meeting was adjourned at 8:28PM

**Respectfully submitted by
Amy Jones, BEC Secretary**

*Next meeting: TUESDAY January 10, 2023 – Regular meeting at 7:00 at Town Annex.

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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