

Approved
8/6/19

Town of North Beach
Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 4th, 2019
7 PM at Town Hall

Attendees: Jane Hagen, Karyn Molines, Guy Stone, Allan Creamer, Veronica Cristo
Lisa Garrett, Jeff Noyes

Agenda and discussion: This meeting was mainly the EC working with the new Eco-tourism director getting status of recent activities and providing guidance on grants and overall planning, with brief discussions on recycling, flooding and events committee crossover with EC concerns.

New Recycling Guidance Needed for NB Residents

- Jane is still trying to determine what materials the contractor for NB is actually recycling, so that proper guidance can be given to residents. Dawn spoke with Southern MD recycling and was going to make a new list, but the real issue is determining which recycling facility NB materials are taken to so that we can ensure the list matches the facilities capabilities. Dawn is still working the issue.

Community Conservation/Eco-Tourism Report

- Lisa Garrett reported on various topics
 - Walton Beach Signage: Lisa reported that a rules sign that she worked on with Dawn and the Mayor has been approved and is at the sign place being made. It will include a QR code that will link to more information. None of the town staff recalled anything about interpretive signage when Lisa tried to run that information down. There was also some resistance on the town's part to more signage. Lisa decided to table that issue until the new fiscal year when she might secure funding. The Resiliency Grant from SHA might also include interpretive signage for the living shoreline.
 - Horseshoe Crab Sightings: Lisa also reported she had the access road to the water at Walton Beach mowed so that she could get down there to do horseshoe crab surveys. She saw one dead, but Bud reported that he saw 6 live crabs in the morning. Allan has seen two, and will forward pics to Lisa of sightings.
 - Vandalism in the Parks: Lisa also reported that the large planter at the base of the welcome sign (on the platform) by Walton Beach was pushed into the marsh by vandals at night. Also touched by vandals was her board in the Overlook Park visitors center - she'll not leave the marker there in the future. Otherwise, the Nature Nook is working well - people are borrowing and returning books and it is

serving as a great meeting place for her hosted events.

- Tree Canopy Survey: There will be an NB tree canopy study done by the state forestry department, probably in July and August, assisted by State Foresters from Anne Arundel South and Calvert County. Lisa will be sending out an email blast to residents to get any info residents still have on the centennial trees. Karyn said there were photos and negatives in the files she provided to Lisa.
- New Koi in the Pond: Lisa said that 13 new koi were donated by an NB resident. The osprey have carried some away small feeder fish away.
- The Welcome Back Osprey Event and General Problems with Event Visibility: While the event was successful with over 40 participants, Karyn expressed frustration that the town did not advertise the event well, nor was there good signage. Lisa said Richard would not allow signage on the wooden fence where it used to be posted and was more visible. The result was that on the day of the event, from a visitor's perspective, Welcome Back Osprey looked like a private event not sponsored by the town. Lisa is continuing to post signs at the entrance to the pier (for the upcoming fishing derby), along with near what is currently the area for the dragon boats. The mayor has posted on Facebook and Twitter about her events in support of them, and this is helpful. However, the committee believes that a designated space should be allocated in a visible place at the pier for Eco-Tourism events. This space should be under the Eco-Tourism director's control. The EC as a whole recalled that the main reason a new department was created instead of adding staff to the waterfront was to ensure that Eco Tourism initiatives not be subordinate to the activities or goals of other departments. This should also be reflected in the town's website – there should be an Eco-Tourism header at the same level as the one for Beach & Boardwalk through which site visitors can access all of the information that Lisa chooses to put out on Eco-Tourism and Community Conservation, including managing a calendar of events with links to the activities and how to participate. Lisa is working on that with Dawn.
- Fishing Derby: Lisa explained that she is only allowed to have 30 participants in the upcoming fishing derby, and that because of this there was resistance on the town's part to advertise strongly (since only 30 people could participate). Karyn said that this was best approached by advertising to "sign up early, since there will be only 30 people fishing at a time." It was evident to the committee that there was an underlying problem – a lack of a good standardized approach – to handling frequent eco-tourism events sponsored by the town. Most events in town are run by outside entities that use the

town as the venue, but the events Lisa is doing are new and different – they require *more* support from the town because they supported only by the town.

- Eco-Tourism Events Calendar: Lisa will be creating an events calendar that will be posted to the NB website. She explained that Dawn will be putting the calendar as a link under NB Parks. This is somewhat problematic because parks information is buried too deep in the town's website to be visible. Upcoming events include the Lunch & Learn Series once a month at Chesapeake's Bounty, the Cookies & Kids Nature Program at the pavilion at the beach (Sweet Sue's is providing cookies), a Green Talk on one of the Wednesday nights (the most recent was for Endangered Species Day), Story Time at Sunrise Garden (which Lisa will do this month, but the library will do next month in the town). She is trying to get a Healthy Planet Happy Hour going with one of the town bars; Hook & Vine wanted to do it on a Monday, but the Wheel wanted to have it on a Sunday afternoon. She is still trying to figure out a schedule. Healthy Planet Happy Hour is loosely fashioned after Green Drinks in Annapolis. First Happy Hour is at Hook and Vine on June 24th, 5-7 pm.
- Senior Center Plastic Pollution Talk: Lisa was having a "Be the Solution to Plastic Pollution" and "How to Pack an Eco-Friendly Lunch" talk the day after the EC meeting. This will be the first of 3 talks at that location for the summer.
- Lisa wanted to do a talk on Food Forest and was looking for a good POC for the talk. A couple of names were discussed. Veronica said that Chesapeake's Bounty got a \$70K grant to do a food forest. Lisa decided to look at this topic again for next year
- Lisa went to a talk by Master Gardener Jim McVeigh on Best Gardening and Maintenance Practices for Waterfront Properties. He talked about how his community is also doing oyster farming, but the state has not decided if a community can be an oyster sanctuary. Lisa wondered if NB might want to do similar activities, saying that grants can be obtained to do the work.
- Lisa talked about the MD invasive species of the month, the Yellow Flag, and how it is in Sunrise Garden despite efforts to keep it down. She is meeting with Garner to determine how to manage the problem. Lisa talked about putting a link on the NB website to inform residents about invasive species/plants to avoid/plants that are preferred.
- Karyn made a request to Jane that the town make a section on the NB web page for Eco-Tourism/Community Conservation that operates in

parallel to, not underneath of other departments so that Lisa has a visible place to post information about these topics.

- Lisa worked with Veronica Owens to apply for Rural Legacies Outdoor Community Opportunities – If selected among the 8 groups throughout the country, the EPA will do workshops on how to come up with a game plan to use existing outdoor recreational resources to support related activities and businesses.
- An important project that Lisa plans to begin in September is to create a volunteer corps of people to help out with activities – a kind of Green Team of volunteers that can assist her in accomplishing various initiatives, She may team up with new director at Senior Center.

New Eco-Tourism/Community Conservation Webpage for NB

- Karyn made a request to Jane that the town make a section for Eco-Tourism/Community Conservation that operates in parallel with, not underneath of other departments so that Lisa has a visible place to post information about Eco-Tourism and related topics.

Proposal to National Wildlife Federation for NB Flooding Technical Support

- Jane explained how the mayor had sent to the town council that he had reached out to Sustainable MD for help with NB flooding. The result was that the Environmental Finance Center submitted a \$50K proposal to the National Fish & Wildlife Federation to provide technical assistance to the town, and that they are confident the response will be positive.
- Lisa pointed out that this would be in addition to the Resiliency Grant with DNR to do a storm water management plan. Lisa will likely be assigned with putting out information to the community on both of these activities.

Grants Related to Eco/Community Conservation in NB

- Karyn talked about the County Program Open Space Plan and how the plan the county submitted didn't include the town in requests for open space funding, but the town should think about what it would want to do and communicate that to the county for next year. Lisa mentioned a 9 lot contiguous section of land just outside of town limits that she thought would make an excellent addition to the towns spaces. Karyn recommended that she explain how this would fit into the county's open space plan so that perhaps the county might acquire it and lease it back to the town.
- Karyn also mentioned the Community Parks & Playground Grants and that it was only for municipalities. Lisa will look into it.
- Veronica talked about the SEDI grants for any educational opportunities with youth. The contact is Bill Clark. The deadline is in January but there are ways to access small funds (\$100) for environmental educational activities with children. Karyn shared some experience she had with these grants partially funding

educational projects for eagle scouts. Tree plantings, home school environmental programs, signage for trees, and tools for tree plantings are all possible to fund if kids are involved with the projects.

- Lisa saw an article on Facebook called “Ocean City Got Butt Huts” which sounded like a great initiative for NB in that it could reduce cigarette butts in NB in front of town hall and elsewhere in town- they basically never decompose, ever. Keep American Beautiful has a grant program available in January 2020 that can provide butt-huts, collection units that collect cigarette butts to recycle into plastic and ultimately create park benches. If secured, the only part the town would have to pay for is the park bench. Also provides cups that collect the cigarette butts in cars to prevent them being discarded out windows.
- Karyn cautioned that grants shouldn’t drive Eco activities in NB, but rather should support a comprehensive plan that Lisa should develop with the committee’s help.

Events Committee Crossover

- Lisa talked about how she would like events in NB to be more sustainable.
- Jane and Guy will attend Events Committee meetings to bring Environmental Committee concerns to the attention of the Events Committee

The Environmental Committee will not meet in July to avoid the 4th of July holiday

Meeting adjourned