Town of North Beach

Environmental Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 7, 2021

7 PM via Zoom

Attendees: Stacy Milor, Guy Stone, Lisa Garrett, Jeff Noyes, Elizabeth Lawton, Allan Creamer, Sean Mansperger, Herb Wolff, Dawn Richardson

Agenda and discussion: This meeting focused on improving education about the NB Recycling Program, briefly the Environmental Awards program, and a memorial tree planting for Jane Hagen. Herb Wolff was introduced as a new EC member.

Environmental Committee Membership

* There was a discussion of the present membership of the EC. It was not clear if Veronica Cristo intended to participate in the future. Sean confirmed that he is an official member of the Tree Committee, but was not a member of the EC. Elizabeth asked what the official process was to add new members. Jeff said that he had been sworn in 6 years ago when he joined, but that was the extent of the requirements for membership. Guy and Allan were sworn in as well. Lisa added that the Tree Committee membership was also initially sworn in.
* Elizabeth invited two new people to the committee, one of whom was in attendance. Herb Wolff introduced himself and talked about his interests as they relate to the EC. He worked with the Sierra Club for more than ten years and is an avid gardener. As an engineer, he takes a systems approach to the environment, gardening, and other things. We look forward to his contributions to the committee. The rest of the committee introduced themselves to Herb, and Guy provided an overview of the EC’s recent accomplishments and general goals.

North Beach Recycling Program

* Lisa explained that North Beach’s recycling program differs from Calvert County’s in terms of requirements, and that it was important for residents to understand those differences. In the past, the NB Residential Recycling Guide was the sole tool used to educate residents of what was acceptable, but there may be additional ways to frame issues to get resident attention regarding recycling.
* Elizabeth suggested Lisa consider displaying to residents how long various materials take to biodegrade. Also, a focus on reducing single-use plastics was identified as potentially effective. The statistics for simply using a reusable water bottle and how many plastic bottles are kept out of the waste stream can be compelling.
* Elizabeth said that the town is currently having problems with residents putting the wrong items in the recycle bins, and that it is clear some new approaches to getting the right materials into the bins are necessary. Pizza boxes and plastic bags were problems. Lisa will provide some recycling links to the team for further review regarding ideas and ways to refresh the recycling program and further educate residents to keep the program working well. Stacy will talk to the town’s recycling contractor to get current information on what materials are recyclable and provide them to Lisa so any changes can be identified and shared.
* Dawn added that any changes identified by the contractor are incorporated into the recycling guide on an ongoing basis. She suggested the use of short videos to reach residents in addition to the paper guidance.

Environmental Awards Program

* Lisa talked about the University of MD Green Terps program, which is a list of green actions students can do to earn points and get green rewards such as bamboo eating utensils/reusable straws, etc. This program might be used as a reference. Lisa will share links to the program.

Memorial for Jane Hagen

* Jeff explained how he had been approached by John Hagen (Jane’s son) after Jane’s funeral service at Arlington National Cemetery. In addition to purchasing a bench for the boardwalk, John Hagen and family would like to have a memorial in Jane’s name, such as a memorial tree. John Hagen asked that the EC explore the idea or perhaps suggest others because he knew the EC worked so closely with Jane.
* Jeff suggested a tree planting in front of the NB Senior Center might be perfect as she was so involved there as well. Lisa had ideas about which species Jane liked.
* Elizabeth plans to contact the person in charge of the Senior Center as she heard the center may be planning to name a room in the center after Jane as a memorial. She will discuss both ideas with him soon.
* Jeff said he would relay back to John Hagen that the EC is working on some ideas. He also confirmed that no grants or other funding would be necessary, that John Hagen can cover the cost of the tree and related expenses (within reason, of course).
* Guy recommended that the Environmental Committee begin meeting in person again as soon as permissible. Stacy said she would let the team know when the Mayor makes a determination on in-person meetings at Town Hall.

Meeting adjourned

The next Environmental Committee meeting will be January 4th, 2022

Web links and descriptions mentioned by Lisa Garrett during the meeting are below:

Green Terps at U of MD Program:

<https://sites.google.com/umd.edu/greenterp/take-action>

<https://sites.google.com/umd.edu/greenterp/certify>

Prince William County single use plastic bottles project:

<https://marinedebris.noaa.gov/prevention/community-approach-reducing-single-use-plastic-beverage-bottles>

University of Maryland spearheading water bottle refilling stations across campus

<https://dbknews.com/0999/12/31/arc-prpsts56ofcjbmkkmcrbo65sdu/>

Refilling stations that could replace water fountains (also counts how many plastic water bottles have been saved from the landfill on the screen):

<https://www.globalindustrial.com/p/elkay-ezh2o-lzs8wslp-next-generation-water-bottle-refilling-station-wall-mount-gray?ref=5>