

Minutes for Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting – Thursday, June 26, 2014 at Calvary Methodist Church

The meeting was **called to order** at 2:13 PM by President Lee Meadows. All Board Members were present except Rusty Gowland and Miriam Mellin. Mike Robinson has resigned and was not present. 3 of the 4 Officers were also present – only John Wright was unable to attend..

The **Minutes** from the 4/10 meeting were Approved (Lynne moved, Lisa seconded) with one correction – Matt McGherin's name is misspelled on page 2 in the first line of the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph of "**Clean Stream...**"

### **Annual Meeting Report**

Lee reported that Rusty Gowland was elected a Director to replace Steve Barry who resigned. Bob Whitcomb, Tom Guay, Kurt Riegel and Sally Hornor were re-elected to new 3-year terms. Charlotte complimented the table arrangements and the Oyster presentation, but noted that the acoustics were bad. If we meet again at the Maritime Museum we should close the drapes behind the speaker to prevent backlighting. Lee felt that 1 hour free time wasn't enough for the silent auction or other fundraising efforts. All agreed with Charlotte and Lee. We are still waiting for a few bills and checks, but the financial results look good so far – we received \$1,500 in general donations and about 15 Oyster floats were purchased, close to our \$10,000 target. 116 people registered, 108-110 came, 108 paid.

Reservations were the biggest work. Fred Kelly (Severn Riverkeeper) asked for a list of attendees. He did pay for his table, and did not grab the mike, and he is working with Mike Robinson on the SHA erosion problem at I-97 and MD 32, so there has been some cooperation. Nonetheless, Kurt R & Bob W said we should NOT give Fred the list - keep it proprietary. Lee suggested we add Fred's ad to our website. All agreed with this course. Fred has proposed working together on several projects.

**Resignations** – Mike Robinson and Miriam Mellin have resigned as Directors. The Nominating Committee, chaired by Bob Whitcomb and including Miriam + Don, will try to find replacements.

### **Financial Report - Lynne Rockenbauch**

There were no comments on the Report distributed earlier.

### **Clean Stream & Oyster updates - Bob Whitcomb**

The June 7 planting was very successful. We had a large banner on our boat making a good photo-op. An article was published in Oyster News. Sherwood now has 120 cages. Lee M & Bob W said one grower has reported seeing a halo of clean water around their pier. We have 1400 cages growing 750,000 oysters per year.

The Army Corps of Engineers has recommended to the EPA that Oysters be accepted as a BMP for storm water, saying they remove Nitrates, toxics and plankton. Each acre of oyster bed removes 650 Lb/year of nitrogen and releases it to the atmosphere. The science is still ongoing – Growers get N2 tradeoff credits because of harvesting but unharvested oysters may be a standoff. Sally said microbes on oysters remove N2 even though oyster excretions are neutral. This could make grant money available.

One study showed no difference between slag & other substrates. We still need donation money to plant direct spat – we have coverage for about half, but the cost is \$3,500 / million spat, and there is a 70% mortality.

Bob W is updating our flyer and wants to double the number of cages this September. Last year we got the Annapolis Yacht Club to take 100 cages. We need at least one distributor on the east side of the river. Lisa will enlist support of GSPC to recruit volunteers. Tom Guay of Winchester said that community may be a good location.

We load our pallets 18" under water to spread out the time of collection without increasing mortality. Security is a concern – we don't want spat or oysters to disappear. The new (larger) cages are being distributed by boat. Maureen's community may be able to help – they have an informal launch ramp.

Charlotte Lubbert reported that Ted & David Silverstein took 4 loads to the reef from Herald Harbor – this was much bigger than last year.

### **SHA Restoration – Charlotte Lubbert**

Jabez 3 is one subwatershed. The SHA recognizes the seriousness of the problem, but not the urgency. There is much interest in the communities above Morris Tongue - Mike is still taking people on hikes. The SHA is trying to ramp up the project – applying for permits and sending letters to property owners. All 3 studies (SHA, DNR & AACo property) are being done together in one \$500k study. Fred Kelly has been applying pressure on Mike Busch to get some action. Charlotte's contact in the Governor's office has been replaced, so she needs to make a new contact.

### **Communications**

Kurt R always needs articles. Lynne suggested putting a note in the Log that email is the norm unless paper is requested. Tom G is still trying to expand Facebook Likes. He is setting up a photo gallery from the annual meeting - slideshows are easy, but we need Likes to stay viable. Herb McMillan was very glad we gave credit to him for help with Koch homes. Bob W - State Archives received our boxes the day after our last meeting. Charlotte - Maritime museum has several concerts - Eastport Oyster Boys (Tom G) tonight.

### **Educational Meetings – John Wright**

The July meeting will feature Arborist Tyler Robertson and will be held at DNR. There is no August meeting. The 9/16 meeting will feature Scott Phillips of USGS on what BMPs work and what doesn't. Jamie Lawns cancelled. The October meeting will feature the two candidates for AACo Executive - Sally Hornor contacted the League of Women Voters - they liked the idea and initially said they would co-sponsor the meeting with us and the Magothy River Association. One venue costs \$800, but the presently proposed County Exec debate venue is only \$100 each from MRA and SRA. LWV has now stopped responding, so we will cosponsor only with MRA. It is too hard to get all 8 candidates for the 4 councilmen in the watersheds, but we may try to do each district separately. Lisa said that GSPC may host a meeting at Lido's. Sally also talked to Dan Nataf – he felt we should cosponsor because one event is all that will draw. MRA still interested. Last time we did something big and the environment was not the main focus.

County Council – Dick Ladd lost the primary – the winner is negative on the environmental issues. Charlotte suggested we need a letter to candidates explaining the importance of the stormwater fee. Kinsey Potter (South River Federation) is also interested in this idea. Scott Hymes lost a close race in the primary election. Dick Ladd may have lost because of his support for the rain tax. Bob W suggested picking one district & including them – Benoit's district is one possibility. One event for both AACo Executive and one councilman, at Woods Memorial church or SPHS. District 5 is common to MRA and SRA. Kurt suggested County Executive and 2 Council districts – Benoit's and 5. Trumbauer and Walker appear safe. Lee suggested Arlington Echo for the venue. Charlotte will help Sally, and likes Arlington Echo for Executive + Districts 4 and 5. Other groups have indicated support with just publicity, but no financial contribution. High schools are also cheap. Lisa moved to appropriate up to \$150, Kurt seconded; motion passed unanimously.

**Community outreach** - Lisa contacted Bluff Point. They complained about Severn Run sediment.

### **Board Priorities Workshop Presentation.**

Thanks to Rusty Gowland for preparing the first 5 slides.

### **Problem Statement**

The Value and Health of the Severn River is in a state of continual decline and past efforts and investment have not altered the course. This results in Loss of recreational value, Human health risks, Loss of commercial opportunities, and Loss of property value.

## **Root Causes**

- Overwhelming of Natural Healing Mechanisms (SAVs, Oysters, Menhaden) by excessive Nutrients, Sediment, Toxins, and Bacteria.
- Excessive and Irresponsible Development, causing Construction of impervious roads and buildings, Deforestation and Shoreline Hardening, Air Pollution (responsible for 40% of nitrates coming into the River), Sewage, Lawn Management Chemical runoff, and a Compromised buffer
- Too Few People contribute to positive steps, leading to Weak policies, Poor enforcement, a Perceived lack of funding, and Population Growth.
- The river's not a big part of the lives of most residents in the watershed, due to Compressed schedules, Tight family budgets, the Soft nature of the value proposition for water quality, and the large amount of Money to be made on development. Public access has disappeared because of abuse.
- The "root root" problem is that the number of people that are motivated to change the trends is too small.

## **Preventive, Corrective, and Enablement Measures**

- **Preventive:** Vigilant reporting of violations, Promote renewable energy, Increase storm water retention regs for new construction (New construction projects are only required to retain the first 1" of storm water), Load zoning /appeals commissions with our people, Stronger fertilizer laws.
- **Corrective:** Government & foundation Grants for Homeowner & Infrastructure stormwater measures, Septic Upgrades, Oyster Growing, Menhaden harvest tightening, Storm water measures on public property, Cleanup dump sites.
- **Enablement:** Recruit new people into the movement, Fundraising, Promote legislators that will lead vs. follow status quo, Provide SRA infrastructure to support efforts.

## **Core Competencies**

- **Watershed Stewards Academy:** Private property or HOA stormwater measures
- **SRA:** Dumpsite cleanup, Severn Stewards, Public Education, Fundraising, Oyster growing, Private Stormwater Design/install, Community Stormwater Grants
- **RiverKeeper:** Fundraising, Monitoring, Securing Grants for Large Stormwater Infrastructure projects
- **DPW Stormwater Utility:** Infrastructure projects, Grants, Enforcement

## **SRA Core Assets**

- 67 community association members representing over 14,000 homes in Severn Watershed
- 200 individual members, 450 oyster gardeners, 100 clean stream volunteers
- 45 active trained master watershed stewards on the Severn. We have quarterly meetings with 42 Severn WSSs to discuss grants. About 1/3 are actively working with us or want to.
- Coalition activities with WSA, CBA, Severn Headwater coalition members, CEDS, MGO, AACC, 3 Stormwater Design firms including Keith Underwood, Ann Gillette/Mel Wilkens, and Matt Roderick. Mel has been very successful.
- Operating funds, reserves, fund raising, and grants to fund programs. Operating income \$15k/yr.
- Non profit status to help enable fund raising
- Ability to gain publicity through news media, community newsletters, and SRA online sites and email
- Ability to secure political impact through access to councilmen, state elected officials

## **Current Partnerships and Alliances and Activities**

To report law violations, we work with CEDS (Community Environmental Defense Services), AAC (Anne Arundel County), AEC (Annapolis Environmental Commission), SRK (Severn RiverKeeper), SRC (Severn River Commission), EO (Elected Officials), Reg (Regulatory bodies including MDE, EPA, DNR and ACE) (Army Corps of Engineers), the Press, the Chesapeake Legal Alliance, MLCV (MD League of Conservation Voters), and the SRLT (Scenic Rivers Land Trust)

To Add SRA members to various Commissions, we work with the WSA, SRC, and AEC (Annapolis Environmental Commission).

To Support Legislation, we work with AAC and CCW (Clean Water Coalition)

For our Educational Meetings, we work with WSA, AAC, SRK, Reg, and the Press

For School Education, we work with WSA, AEC and Parks (AACo Parks & Rec)

For HOA (HomeOwnersAssociations) stormwater management, we work with WSA, CEDS, SRK and HOAs

For stormwater management on public property, we work with AAC, SRK, SRC, EO, and Reg

For Shoreline Restorations, we work with WSA, The Press, and HOAs

For Invasive Plants, we work with WSA, The Press and HOAs

For Clean Streamups, we work with Project Clean Streams, WSA, AAC, SRK, Press, and HOAs

For Operation Clearwater, we work with AA Community College, Press, and HOAs.

For Oyster Reefs, we work with Reg, Press, MD Grows Oysters, and HOAs.

To Recruit New Members, we work with WSA, Press, and HOAs

For Joint Fund Raising and Grants, we work with Chesapeake Bay Foundation and HOAs

As part of the SHC (Severn Headwaters Coalition), we work with AAC, SRK, SRC and Reg.

We occasionally lobby AAC and EO, and help environment-friendly candidates with publicity and recruiting volunteers.

We have a weekly teleconference on TMDLs with CCW

### **2014 Project Initiatives**

- Jabez (I-97) Blowout – SHA, DNR, AAC fixes are part of a single combined \$450k design in progress
- Project Clean Stream cleaned 4 sub-sites removing 22 tons of trash.
- Oysters – 1400 cages, 10-15 floats, Initiative with CBF for 1 million D.D. Oysters
- Audits – Construction site survey is underway
- Stormwater Grants / Accounts
- Oyster Harbor project
- WSA program initiated with Severn Stewards
- New type of grant initiated from meetings with three active comm. design groups (2 are pursuing now)
- Educational meetings - Attendance up 70% over last year.
- Communities Outreach – contacted 12 communities to date

### **2014/15 Current / Proposed Programs**

Current Projects include the Severn Headwater Coalition, Clean Stream, Oyster Gardening including Oyster floats and Oyster direct deposits, and expanding Storm Water Grants.

Current Partnerships:

- Partner with WSA & Designers to increase number of HOA stormwater projects
- Partner with WSA to do construction site audits and HOA audits
- Partner with CBF to capture grants to fund direct deposit oyster deposits on Severn Oyster Reefs
- Fundraising
  - Raised money for oysters at 2014 annual dinner
  - Raise money for above at 2015 annual dinner with silent auctions if volunteers step forward in next three months
  - Host fun event on Severn (raft up/kayak tours proposed)
  - Join venture community member fun raiser (progressive dinners)

**Board Priorities**

Projects / Initiatives	Importance to a Clean Severn	Fits SRA Competence	# Board Members who will
	1 – 5 (5 is highest)	1 – 5 (5 is highest)	Allocate 5+ hours
Oyster Gardening	4	5	5
Severn Headwaters Coalition	5	4	5
Storm Water Grants to Communities	5	4	4
Audits	4	2	4
CleanStream/Tree Planting	4	3	6
Educational Meetings	3	5	5
Rain barrel/rain garden/conservation	1	2	2
Invasive plant removal	2	3	2

**Scales**

•Importance to clean Severn River:

5= 6-10% TMDL reduction over next 10 years

4= 1-5% TMDL reduction over next 10 years

3= <1% reduction in TMDL over next 10 years

2= Some small impact but not significant

1= No impact on TMDL to Severn Over 10 years

•Fits SRA Competence

5= SRA has done this previously and successfully

4= SRA has done this previously and can improve

3= Similar to other SRA successful programs

2= A new type of effort which we have appropriate resources or partnerships to undertake

1= A new type of effort we lack resources for

0= Something SRA has previously failed at and is unlikely to succeed at in the future

**Board Priorities – New Projects**

Projects / Initiatives	Importance to a Clean Severn	Fits SRA Competence	# Board Members who will
	1 – 5 (5 is highest)	1 – 5 (5 is highest)	Allocate 5+ hours
Septic Tank upgrades	5	1	0
Lead effort to change building code to require 3” retained On site	4	3	3
Lead effort to change City Development Approval process	3	2	3
Undertake one subwatershed cleaning restoration	4	3	

**2014/15 Key Board Priorities**

Projects / Issue	Importance to a Clean Severn	Fits SRA Competence	# Board Members who will
	1 – 5 (5 is highest)	1 – 5 (5 is highest)	Allocate 5+ hours
Severn Headwaters Coalition	5	4	5
Oyster Gardening	4	5	5
Storm Water Grants to Communities	5	4	4
CleanStream/Tree Planting	4	3	6
Educational Meetings	3	5	5

**Board Priorities (Funding/Enabling)**

Fund Raising & Enabling Activity	Importance to SRA Projects	Funding Impact	# Board Members Commit 5+ hours
Annual Dinner –Silent Auction	4	(\$15K)	6
Fun Event on Severn River	3	(\$1K)	3
Joint Community/SRA events Progressive dinner	3	(\$3k)	3
Website update	5	-\$1K	3
Health of River Report	4	?	5
HOA outreach	5		5

**Scales**

- Importance to SRA
  - 5 = Critical to current and new projects
  - 4 = Important to current and new projects
  - 3 = Important to new undertakings
  - 2 = Important to maintain current undertakings
  - 1 = Makes us feel better about SRA
  - 0 = No impact on SRA

**Other Business and Announcements**

Pierre Henkart is no longer working with the Severn Riverkeeper. He will add aerial photos of Submerged Underwater Vegetation. He Estimates the Jabez sediment contributes about 10% of the total pollution load in the Severn River.

Lisa asked how can we inform developers how to reduce impact on watershed. AACo Planning & Zoning Dept already does this.

**Next meeting** will be Thursday 10/2 at 2:00 at Calvary Methodist. Charlotte can't attend – date may change if others also cannot attend.

**Meeting adjourned** at 5:01 PM.