

Minutes - Board of Directors Quarterly Meeting – Thursday, October 23, 2014 at Calvary Methodist Church

The meeting was **called to order** at 2:11 PM by President Lee Meadows. All Officers and Board Members were present except Charlotte Lubbert.

The **Minutes** from the 6-26-2014 meeting (Draft 2) were Approved,– Lynne moved, Tom seconded with one correction – in the “**Annual Meeting Report**” on page 1, only Rusty Gowland was elected to fill the Director’s vacancy. The terms shown on the attendance sheet are wrong – each term actually begins in 2014 so the 2013-14 should be 2014-17 and no re-elections were required or held.

**Treasurer’s Report - Lynne Rockenbauch**

There were no comments on the Report distributed earlier. Cash reserves remain about \$71,000. Rusty asked if those reserves are earmarked – Lynne answered no, but we hope to use them for endowment of paid staff when we merge with the Severn RiverKeeper. That still seems about 2 years away. Fred Kelly now takes a salary of about \$100k, while the norm is \$40-50k, so the merger should be revenue neutral or positive. SRK now has several large regular donors.

**Proposed 2014 budget increase for Storm Water Action Grants – Lynne Rockenbauch**

Lynne moved to increase this budget by \$2295 mostly covered by shifting funds from the Annual Dinner Fundraising budget (which was not spent) to the SAG budget. Lisa seconded the motion.

Ken noted that 2 assessment grants have now been approved. Herald Harbor is donating some of their grant back to the Watershed Stewards. \$5705 is now budgeted, of which \$5500 has already been awarded. Hawkins Cove’s application has been approved but not funded, and needs \$795. Herald Harbor has just submitted another application, which will probably be approved also. The additional funds requested are to cover these two grants. Tom G asked for notices of grant awards, so he can put out a press release for each. Lee noted that there is no connection between Board representation and grant approval.

**Nominating committee board nominees – Bob Whitcomb.** To fill the two vacancies created by the resignations of Mike Robinson and Miriam Mellin (both 1-year terms), the Nominating Committee (Bob Whitcomb, Don Carren and Miriam Mellin) recommends Daniel Mellin (Sherwood Forest SRA Rep) and Mark Lister (President of Palisades). Bob W nominated them, seconded by Don Carren. Both were elected unanimously. Dan is a real estate lawyer; Mark is a mathematician and engineer. Resumes on file.

**Oyster updates - Bob Whitcomb**

This year’s Spat have all been distributed from 7 distribution points including Severn Heights on the east side of the River. The distribution generally went well, and we distributed 550 bags from the Oyster Recovery Project in 3 days. The bags get heavier every year. We are 1/3 of the total statewide program of ORP. We have 500 growth locations now, more should be available. Our operation grew a little this year but not as much as we had hoped. We are now more than twice as big as CBF's grower program. Dick Spencer is experimenting with growing oysters and mussels together in Severn Heights, using mussels from Wye Creek. They eat different types of plankton so they are symbiotic. Mark Lister said he switched from CBF to SRA because of easier distribution. CBF put 20mm direct spat on shell over the last 6 yrs, giving a total of about 30mm oysters planted including ORP and Maryland Grpws Oysters. CBF has about 70% mortality, we have 10%. Rusty asked about growth areas – Bob replied that Herald Harbor is the approximate upper limit to grow in cages. Lisa added that beds are only sustainable from Sherwood Forest down to the Bay. The Severn River has better survival than the South River, but less reproduction because of lower salinity. Our spat is distributed by MGO, who get their spat from ORP’s Horn Point Lab. This year we installed 7 new revolving cages, model “Revolution II”. ORP provided a waterman and his workboat to distribute spat to these cages. Each installation has 2 drums, which take 1 bag each, for a total equivalent to 2x3 = 6 traditional cages..

**Educational Meetings – John Wright**

Average attendance is up from 25 last year to 50 this year. Both our September (USGS) and October (County Executive debate, joint with MRA) meetings were well attended, with 65 people attending the October debate. Lee said the candidates told him that 40 is the average attendance for 2-candidate debates). The debate should be sooner in the election cycle – there is too much competition that late in the cycle. The real benefit was the education of both candidates – the advance-notice opening questions forced them to research the environmental issues and formulate positions. Ken Hatch felt the results were good. Providing specific questions in advance was a unique format and very beneficial. Our next meeting 11/18 at Union Jack's will highlight stormwater treatment at the USNA, and there will be no meeting in December. The January meeting topic will be the recently released flooding study (due to sea level rise). Conowingo Dam silt will be the topic in February, Septic Systems (AACo program) in March (Health Dept, not DPW) Kurt R suggests Chris Trumbauer for the speaker at the Conowingo meeting. Other possible topics include stopping lawn runoff and Geothermal heat pumps to save energy and reduce air pollution. Woods Memorial and the Quaker Meeting House on Bestgate Road are possible new venues – DNR will be a lot tougher to meet at in the future. Rusty G suggested shoreline hardening vs Living Shoreline for topic. Tom G & Ken H agreed – there are too many Hardenings being approved now. Sally suggested Mike Naylor for the speaker for that topic. Rusty asked for an update on the State of the Severn, by Pierre or his replacement. No replacement has been found yet.

### **SHA Restoration – Erik Michelson (DPW) & Mike Robinson:**

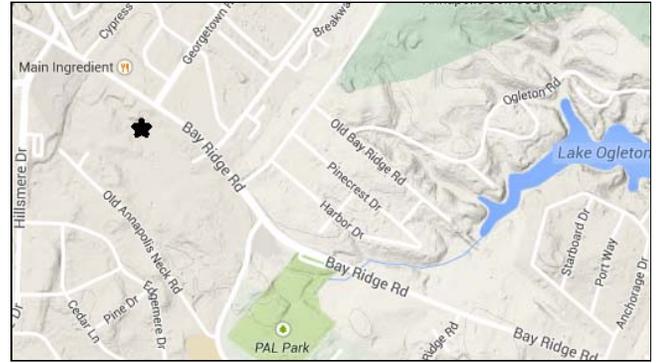
Rob Tree at SHA provided a consultant report outlining problems and solutions. The consultant, StanTech, has completed the field work, and is looking at several options. Property ownership is an issue, along with cost and sequencing to prevent upstream problems from destroying downstream solutions. They also want visibility for public education. They are looking at what areas are already served by storm water management, and what the other nearby land uses are. They will create an algorithm for selection, and hope to have that ready at the Nov meeting of the working group. SHA has a lot of high-profile projects around MD, but is putting serious effort into AACo. They have a GIS based web interface for projects in MD - [MAPS.Road.Maryland.gov/bayrestorationViewer](https://MAPS.Road.Maryland.gov/bayrestorationViewer) There are 270 sites in AACo. Projects are funded mostly by the gasoline tax which generates about \$100mm/yr. The MD State Legislature just authorized \$600mm / 5 yrs for highway projects. DNR has the Chesapeake Bay Trust Fund money available, and plans to give money to counties proportional to their fees - we are at the high end. \$17mm is expected from the AAACo fee, and the state will add \$1mm.

Andrew Muller at USNA is monitoring the Severn to replace Pierre; he was supplementing Pierre. They are more focused on the lower river.

For the Jabez project, they don't yet know what volume they plan to try to retain. This number is a balance between competing goals - holding ponds make warmer water, but at a slower rate. They hope to restore streambeds & improve infiltration - probably ending up with a mix of projects. Trout protection is the major issue. Most of the work being proposed is downstream of Jabez. Tom G asked does SHA listen to Mike? Probably not – they mostly listen to regulators and are too busy to go beyond those requirements. The rules are shortsighted and result in higher overflows. They respect Mike, but have a different perspective. We need to make SHA's life easier so they spend more here, by working with them, not on them. Permitting is also an obstacle. Mike took pictures yesterday during a drizzle. SHA had done some good and the pond is now holding more water than before with only trickle from above I-97 coming down. Rusty also noticed an improvement in the silt plume. Erik felt the work isn't all that changed. SHA probably did move the schedule up because of Mike. Bob W got sense that these projects were part of bigger program already in progress. Lee asked if nonprofits can do any more good? Erik suggested submitting a grant application to DNR to improve the ravine draining into Severn Run. We can also help interface with landowners to facilitate restoration. AACo will have grant money available for private property - still finalizing & should have guidelines out in November. They need a 501(c)3 such as SRA to manage the projects. AACo DPW will be responsible for maintenance. They are now working with MillRace to retrofit their dry pond into a storm water wetland. Bob W asked about progress on MDE approval? Erik answered “slowly.” The new administration plans to shake up MDE management, pooling money from CBF, MDE, DNR &c to streamline & standardize practices.

## Samaras property – Kurt Riegel and Anastasia Hopkinson

Kurt serves on the Annapolis Environmental Commission and asked if we will work with developer? Anastasia Hopkinson, the Annapolis Roads representative to the Annapolis Neck Peninsula Federation (ANPF) said the ANPF hopes to move in the direction of good for all, not like Crystal Spring. The property is on Bay Ridge Road across from the Giant, near the Wells Fargo Bank, across from Georgetown Road. It was formerly C&C Liquor. The developer (Samaras family) has consolidated a dozen small parcels. It was zoned R2 in the rear, C in front.



In 2005, the developer approached the Federation asking their blessing to rezone the property in AACo, then annex into Annapolis. ANPF has opposed most other annexations, but this family is well-respected, so Hillsmere, Annapolis Roads, Fairwinds & ANPF approached developer to learn more and offer to help minimize the project's impact. This offer was initially rejected. ANPF had opposed **Bay Village (Baywoods? Bay Forest Shopping Ctr?)**, resulting in a contentious and expensive court fight. ANF won that case in Circuit Court, preventing construction of an apartment building due to traffic & deforesting issues.

The Samaras family wanted to change the whole property to commercial zoning, with no residential component. ANPF agreed because of schools. Ed Middlebrooks opposed this zoning, so the developer waited until the 2011 comprehensive rezoning, then got it all commercial. They are now asking for annexation. ANPF has asked for a Forest Conservation Plan. The property looks like dense forest from the air, but a man-made wetland actually divides it. There are now 6 or 8 houses in the rear of the property under the canopy, so there is not as much forest as it appears. ANPF wants to keep 3 or 4 large trees, but the developer wants to remove them, proposing only a 50' buffer, half reforested.

The property is in the Lake Ogleton subwatershed (of the Severn River watershed), but water actually flows east down Old Annapolis Neck Road to the South River, putting it in the South River watershed. The developers plan to retain 100% of stormwater on the property, in a holding pond. That pond replaces trees which is not a happy tradeoff. ANPF wants to work with them to make it more pedestrian friendly and also monitor construction runoff, forming a team with 5 residents and 5 developer representatives. ANPF sees this as an opportunity because the Samaras family is cooperative and the developers also are interested. ANPF hopes this will reduce Forest Drive traffic, which will help air and water pollution. The developers plan 2 or 3 commercial buildings, with parking and a road to **Bay Village (Bay Forest Shopping Ctr?)**. Need help monitoring runoff.

Ken Hatch noted there is a major issue with runoff from Bay Ridge Ave into **FairWinds (Fair View?)** & Back Creek. Anastasia said the holding pond would be combined for **Bay Village (Bay Forest Shopping Ctr?)** & the Samaras property. Storm water now crosses Bay Ridge Rd into Lake Ogleton. Most runoff is from the PAL Park. Lee Meadows asked what size storm (1" or 3") the pond will hold 100% of, and what landscape firm is designing the pond and grading? Both are unknown yet – that is the kind of technical help they need from SRA. They have a small budget to hire a consultant. Kurt probably won't be involved with the Annapolis Environmental Commission, but will help find expert help.

Rusty asked what would be SRA's objective? He feels forest retention is the major goal – ponds need maintenance. We need to raise threshold of acceptability - don't accept replacing any forest with pavement. We should oppose, not cooperate. Lee said about 25% of SRA membership is in that subwatershed, and also noted that 30-40% of the water in **???** creek comes from the Bay tidally. Kurt agreed we should maximize forest, but the property will be developed so we should try to work with them to mitigate adverse effects. Ken noted that there are multiple watersheds involved, and agreed we should be proactive and work with the developer. Tom questioned if we can have more effect as supporters or

adversaries. Rusty agreed that input is fine, but we should not be part of developer's team. We have already exceeded the development capacity of the watershed. Ken agreed with Kurt that they are allowed to develop so all we can do is mitigate unless we buy it. Anastasia felt that a major problem is a lack of engagement by residents, and this proposal will engage citizens to participate, get educated, and spread the word. They have already fought and lost the preservation battle - land rights trump preservation. Lisa said the Water Shed Academy can provide expertise. Lee asked if we should just provide experts, or also monitor development? Lisa felt we have other battles to fight with limited resources. Lee said we can provide contacts in nearby communities. Lisa said we can also educate developers. Lee asked Dan Mellin for his opinion since he has legal experience with land development. Dan agreed with Rusty we can be more effective as opposition, but there are benefits to working with developer. Supporting ANPF is a good idea.

We will give ANPF some names of experts, including names of WS Stewards in the area. Kurt will keep us abreast of developments via AEC. Eliminating residential use from the development is a major victory for roads & schools. Lee noted that **Seres?** Marina has accepted 2.5" storm water retention vs 1" required, which may be an example we could use to push other developers to follow.

### **Fund Raising – John Wright**

Charles Buckley will meet with John and may organize a tour of waterfront homes as a fundraiser. He will advertise for us. Sally & Kurt said he is trying to sell Priest Point and advocates hardening of shorelines. He has worked with other charities. Rusty asked if we could turn it into a showcase for healthy solutions? John will try to steer it in that direction.

### **Technical Advisory Committee - John Wright**

John is trying to get a group of people as resources, to meet annually with ideas. They would be a source of speakers, and also provide technical advice to the Board. Phil Favero has agreed to chair this committee, others have been approached and are receptive, including Scott Phillips of USGS and Rick Smith of Smith's Marina. Rusty noted that the WSA program put all WS Stewards on the Chesapeake Network, but it didn't really do much. John said this group would all be watershed residents, giving some automatic interest in helping us. Rusty said we need influence as well as knowledge. Rick Smith of Smith's Marina is interested. Rusty will provide some political names, e.g. the Secretary of the MD DNR.

### **Kayak event – Tom Guay**

This is intended as a fun event to get people onto the water, not a fundraiser. A raftup is also a possibility Tom has done that twice. His band gets more \$\$ than an average gig just from donations. They had 82 boats in Shaw Bay, and donated the proceeds to the Rhode RiverKeeper (Jeff Holand) to buy a boat. A Kayak event would be similar but smaller. Tom will organize a committee to organize this. The Magothy raftup went overboard. There is a limit. Rick Smith's marina is a good launch point.

### **Event Boat – Tom Guay**

Should the SRA have a small boat? Main proposed use is for publicity and patrolling the waterfront, including a catalog of "before" pictures of waterfront areas to prove Critical Area violations. River Patrol to look for illegal clearcuts? The RiverKeeper is supposed to do this, but doesn't except for Saltworks Creek. Tom has found a donor of a 9.9 Mercury 4 stroke outboard motor, and is looking for a donor of a boat. 13'-17' or less. Start with photo essay for before & after pix. We were lucky prosecuting the clearcut in Pines – we found before pictures. Kurt has already done that for the lower Severn. Tom Hawkins of AACo Inspections & Permits is very interested. A drone would also be excellent, but would cost about \$1500. Several communities would house the boat. Google has a waterview of the Bay & River, from overhead views & some sonar, not the 3d camera, so it is of limited use now. Mark knows some people in Google research & will ask if they're interested. Maureen & Rusty suggested CRAB as a boat source.

### **Other Business and Announcements**

Maureen asked what happened to the lights on the Naval Academy Bridge? Lee said it was tabled because nobody felt strongly enough about it to take action. She asked **Four Corners?** residents their opinion and all liked it – they are beautiful. It is less garish than the USNA. Lee said the new LEDs are much better than Mercury, being more focused and efficient. The improved lighting has increased the number of runners at night on the bridge.

**Next meeting** will be Thursday 1/15 at 2:00 at Calvary United Methodist Church.

**Meeting adjourned** at 4:43 PM.