

The Severn River Association, Inc.

The meeting was **called to order** at 3:20 PM by President Lynne Rockenbauch, when a quorum was finally achieved. All Officers and Board Members were present (Tom Guay & Kurt Riegel arrived late with prior notice) except Lee Meadows, Maureen Burt and John Wright who had been excused due to conflicts, and Andrew Muller, Mark Lister and Betsy Love who had not been excused.

The (Draft 3) **Minutes** from the 6-18-2015 Board meeting were unanimously Approved (Dan moved, Charlotte seconded) with no corrections (with quorum).

Treasurer's Report – Lee Meadows via Lynne (pre-quorum)

Treasurer's report is attached at the end of these minutes. The major concern is the drop in membership. We need a 2016 membership drive. Consensus was we need hard copy, not just emails, sent to Community Association members, oyster growers, and past members (last 3 years). Suggest we include "You make the difference", "Spread the word", "Your neighbors are doing..." Apply peer pressure. Rusty suggested a joint mailing with GSPC or GAN, and possibly a joint meeting? We can get a list of Community Association contacts from AACo. Saltworks paid SRK, thinking they paid SRA.

Lynne felt that Associations are not a problem, as their renewals are fairly constant. Individuals are the problem. Lisa asked if postcards would be less expensive. Ken said that this is less effective, as including a return envelope makes it easier and increases the chance of a response. Lisa suggested using a folded letter, but again this is not good for a check.

Rusty will draft a letter to HOAs.

Rusty suggested a member party, with attendees defraying the cost. Famous Dave's caters. Other possible venues are Round Bay or Linstead. We need to find a coordinator. Dan suggested Smith's Marina – they have lots of parking and the event would be good advertising for them. Possibly in October when normal traffic is lower. Like the SRK's Celebrate the Severn type party, with live music (Rusty, Tom). Charlotte will investigate. April may be better. Charlotte – noted that we need to give Smith's credit for their donation of launching & drydocking of our new boat. No quorum so no motion.

Strategy Presentation by Rusty Gowland (pre-quorum)

The full slide presentation is attached; the following is a summary, with some notes. Slides 1-9 were viewed and discussed before the quorum was reached.

Growth hurts the environment, so we need to have action just to stay even. SRA, WSA & SRK must work together. WSA interaction is fuzzy – they are willing but not active. SRK actively obstructs us. A small group is insufficient – we must recruit larger numbers. Recruiting takes more than a website & Facebook – it needs one-on-one from all 3 organizations.

Rusty sees 4 levels of commitment to saving the Severn:

- Level 1 – Leadership roles (SRA officers & directors, other activists).
- Level 2 – WSA Watershed Stewards, generally active only within their own communities.
- Level 3 – SRA members – smaller commitment – financial support but minimal volunteering.
- Level 4 – interested parties follow FB, grow oysters, but don't join or volunteer.

We need to move anti-rain-tax folks to become type 4, move 4 to 3, etc.

We need to convince the SRK to give us his non-responders. Lisa felt we also need to target people in the watershed who are not ON the water. Rain tax opponents don't want to pay for clean water, but they care about crabs and fish.

Our current strategy allows members to punt responsibility to SRA officers.

Dan asked what is the source of friction with SRK Fred Kelly. Rusty was very active with Fred earlier. He did a fundraiser at the Elks Club – \$3k per ticket. Fred is only interested in money, and his major supporters are developers who abuse "preserve" in development names. Fred says he knows the SRA hates him, but he doesn't care because we don't accomplish anything. Ken said that Fred takes a 10% management fees on his restoration projects. Rusty said Fred is the Saltworks Creek Keeper and ignores the rest of the Severn. Fred is disliked by grantors (Campbell Fdn &c).

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There are clear delineations between the three watershed environmental groups. WSA designs & executes projects. We recruit level 3 & 4 volunteers & sponsor small projects. SRK only sponsors large expensive projects and does some river monitoring. That can be synergistic.

Communities don't really help – Individuals are where the action is. Lisa mentioned that we have a deal with the tree suppliers, and suggested we might use that as a recruitment tool.

Our strategy & mission is to grow in number, and to clarify the boundaries between us and the two sister organizations. Slide 3: Our Mission is to “Build our impact and influence by growing our individual memberships 100% per year from 58 in 2015 to 1,856 by the end of 2020.” We can recruit with personal responsibility. We must emphasize that Nutrients are the main problem, and we must address the death by a thousand cuts.

Note – Kurt arrived at this point in the presentation, achieving a quorum, so the meeting was officially called to order.

Slide 10 – Ten Things That Members Come Together to Do for the Severn River Watershed. No change to items 1-5.

6. Floating Garden Program – Maureen volunteered to head this project.
7. Project Clean Stream Dump Sites – A DNR program is covering this so we will only participate peripherally.
8. Project Clean Stream Trees For Sacred Places (Maureen Burt?) – Betsy Love has volunteered to head this.
9. Public Access Expansion – Dick Spencer of the Severn River Commission is heading this effort with minimal support from SRA.
10. SAV Farming Program – Tom Guay is heading this. Scott Robinson, who was responsible for the clearcutting of Pines community property, would like to work on this as part of his restitution. All agreed this could be useful as long as we are careful not to get in the middle of the lawsuits and enforcement actions.

Slide 11, Item 2 – Kurt will set up a drop box on the website for educational materials and links.

5. Floating Gardens – Maureen will provide technical assistance with help from Tom Guay.

Slide 12, Item 3 – These rebates are available for conservation landscaping.

4. Native Plant Nursery Discounts – Lisa will coordinate these.
- Add 6. Grant Writing Assistance (Rusty – WSA coordinates)

Slide 14. SRA Operational Roles

- Bob vom Saal will help with 3&8 (Nominating & Audit Committees); Charlotte will help with 4&5 (Membership & Strategy). Dan and Charlotte will help with 9 (Social events).
Add 10. Coordination with SRKeeper (Ken Hatch).

We all need to look for teachable moments, one-on-one. Tom was surprised there was no mention of "pollution" in the presentation; Rusty said we don't want to be just for environmentalists or alienate the people who are the problem.

Web site upgrade – Kurt Riegel

The upgrade is complete and we are now using modern software and architecture.

Educational Meetings Update – John Wright

The September meeting, featuring Professor Mike McCormick, was excellent but the turnout was disappointing.

Tuesday, October 20, 7:00PM at Union Jack's – Geoff Rinehart, coordinator of the National Arboretum Grass Roots Initiative. Geoff will discuss Clean Lawn Care Practices to protect the river.

We still need a speaker for November. There is no December meeting.

Headwaters SHA Coalition Update – Charlotte Lubbert

The next meeting of the group is next Tuesday at the Heritage Office Complex on Riva Road.

River Rat Update – Tom Guay

We should be ready to launch later this month. We still need ideas on good uses for the boat. It will initially focus on Public Relations. Lisa suggested it should also be used to thank people who are helping the river. We need pictures of people using the river too. A Photo contest was suggested, but deemed too distracting from our main mission. Ken moved to increase the budget to reimburse Tom for the repairs. Lisa seconded and the motion carried unanimously, with many thanks to Tom for all his hard work refurbishing the boat.

Correspondence

Maryland Choose Clean Water Coalition Regional meeting:

86 Maryland Avenue, Annapolis, MD

October 6th (3:30pm)

Hosted by Maryland League of Conservation Voters. Legislative preview to follow

New Business

Update on Pines clearcut, Najoles trash dumps – no reports.

Community & Environmental Defense Services (CEDS) would like a donation to continue their work - \$200 suggested,

No action taken

SRA position on Roundup – none taken at this time. Mosquitoes - Mosquito Man sprays the whole yard, not just breeding areas. Roundup also should be condemned. Avoid chemicals to control mosquitoes. No motion

Other announcements/issues – none raised

Tom moved to Adjourn at 4:09 PM. Charlotte seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Scheduling Meetings: The next Board meeting will be on Thursday December 17 at 2:00-4:30 at the usual location

Meeting was Adjourned at 4:09 PM (Tom moved, Charlotte seconded).

Respectfully submitted



Bob vom Saal, Secretary