

**Notes from meeting of MET’s Land Committee
Wednesday May 25, 2022
1:00 pm**

Attending Committee Members: G. Burnett, M. Benjamin, J. Jitkoff, A. Jones, M. D’Arcy
Attending MET Staff: J. Chapman, A.G. Carlson, M. Mingus
Attending OAG staff: T. Kovacs

Next meeting: Wednesday, August 31, 2022, at 1 pm

Agenda Item 1:

- a) Easement Program Update: AG Carlson provided the following update:
 - Patriot Point LLC (290.741 ac in DORC) was recorded in the Land Records.
 - M. Mingus will record Masonville Cove next week

- b) Easement Pipeline Report: AG Carlson presented the pipeline.

Agenda Item 2: Stewardship Program

- a) Program Updates: J. chapman provided the following update:
Since the beginning of the Fiscal Year (July 1, 2021), a total of 785 monitoring reports have been collected and processed. They apply to 714 unique easement properties, with 71 reports having been completed both On The Ground and remotely using LENS, (as part of the LTA/TNC grant to measure efficiency and cost savings).

Co-holders	333 or 47% of reports
Volunteers	185 or 26%
Staff	132 or 18%
<u>Contractor</u>	<u>16% of all reports (8% unique)</u>
Total	714

We have exceeded our goal of 700 easements monitored and will likely achieve something closer to 750 unique properties by the end of June, between Wendy Foster, Josette, and Volunteers. 750 is approximately 57% of the entire easement portfolio, or just slightly greater than the number of easements we cohold with land trusts and local government.

Because of the robust real estate market, as well as aging population of easement donors, Josette and I continue to field a large number of inquiries from the public and donor families for copies of easements and interpretation of easement provisions.

Staff continue to work with Dept of Info Tech and its contractor on development of a new GIS-based replacement tool for field data collection. Completion is promised by the end of the FY, but it will take some months to train staff and volunteers and switch over from KOBO. It won’t come soon enough, however, because KOBO, which is based on freeware, continues to hiccup and has no dedicated tech support.

Last week, Staff joined reps from two LLTs to present a Forever MD-sponsored webinar on Introduction to Stewardship for New Board Members. Lots of good content. Copy of video should be posted on the FM website.

Staff are working with John Turgeon to develop goals and budget for FY23. We will continue to aspire to 100% annual monitoring (reports on 1300 easement interests), with a heavy dependence on Local Land Trusts and Remote Monitoring. Several coholders only monitor every three years as required by DNR's Rural Legacy Program (e.g. Frederick County) or only as enforcement issues arise (e.g. MD Historical Trust), or not at all (Caves Valley LT, Carroll Co. LT, Chesapeake Wildlife Heritage). Low frequency and non-reporting coholders add approximately 135 properties to our annual monitoring burden.

To further encourage LLT reporting, Stew Staff is requesting a marginal increase in incentives paid to LLTs for submitting monitoring reports to MET. We propose to bump from \$25 to \$30 for donated easement reports, and from \$75 to \$90 for Rural Legacy reports. There is a dedicated fund for Rural Legacy stewardship, (paid as an administrative fee when the easements were acquired), but the donated easement incentive is paid from donated private funds. The incentives are very much appreciated by LLT partners, as they are being squeezed by increased fuel, utility and labor costs.

- b) Request to Approve Multi-week, Seasonal, Temporary Commercial Event on Conservation Easement Property (0522REI00.WASH): J. Chapman presented the proposal. A. Jones moved to approve the request including the Staff's conditions as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar. M. Benjamin seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously recommended approval of this proposal including Staff's noted conditions to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**
- c) Request to Approve Series of Temporary Commercial Events on Conservation Easement Property (0274FRO94.WASH): J. Chapman presented the proposal. Consensus of the committee to pay specific attention to the mini-cabins to ensure they remain non-residential. M. D'Arcy moved to approve the request including the Staff's conditions as written in the memo for the Consent Calendar. G. Burnett seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously recommended approval of this proposal including Staff's noted conditions to the Board of Trustees on the Consent Calendar.**
- d) Request for approval of proposed ecosystem services/restoration activities on three adjacent Conservation Easement Properties (0446MOS98.FRED, 0524KEPO00.FRED, and 0287ROC94.FRED): J. Chapman presented the proposal. G. Burnett moved to approve the. M. D'Arcy seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously approved this proposal.**
- e) Request for approval of proposed ecosystem services/restoration activities on two adjacent Conservation Easement Properties (0004PEA74.FRED and 0140PEA87.FRED): J. Chapman presented the proposal. J. Jitkoff moved to approve

the request. G. Burnett seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously approved this proposal.**

- f) Request for approval of proposed ecosystem services/restoration activities on Conservation Easement Property (0275IGL94.BACO.1 and 0275IGL94.BACO): J. Chapman presented the proposal. G. Burnett moved to approve the request including the condition that the new landowner consent to the restoration. J. Jitckoff seconded the motion. **The committee unanimously approved this proposal including noted condition.**

2022 LANDS COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE 2022
August 31
October 26