

## Montgomery County Forest Conservancy District Board



### Minutes for the Montgomery County Forestry Board Meeting – 12 September, 2023

Chairman Jim Harris called this meeting to order at 1:40 PM.

The meeting commenced with personal introductions offered by board members for two guest attendees: Natasha Shangold, Forestry Inspector for the City of Rockville, and Shayda Musavi, Principal Planner and Landscape Architect for the City of Rockville.

#### Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Joli McCathran noted that she had written two checks over the summer to pay for two students accepted to attend the Natural Resources Career Camp (NRCC). The money to fund attendance was provided by Ashton Manor Environmental, and the Rockville Chapter of the Izaak Walton League of America. One student, Brendan Lewis, deferred attendance for the 2024 session due to an injury. Accordingly, only one check in the amount of \$500 has been processed. The current unrestricted account balance is \$3,650.52, and the restricted account (Tolson Fund) balance is \$1,850.00, yielding a total account balance of \$5,500.52.

The board approved the minutes drafted by Lee Derby for the corresponding meeting that occurred on 13 June, 2023.

#### Chair's Report

Chairman Jim Harris reflected upon this year's NRCC. He mentioned that six students were accepted to attend, with five having attended (since Brendan Lewis deferred to attending the 2024 session). Jim expressed gratitude and offered thanks to board members Lee Derby and Dan Landry for their work in recruiting and interviewing students for this year's session. Jim read aloud thank-you letters written by the students, and he thereafter read aloud their biographies in abridged fashion.

Jim Harris mentioned that he received two grant applications over the summer. One application came from the Maryland Department of Transportation's Urban Tree Program. This application corresponds to the City of Takoma Park's request for \$14,875 to plant 15 street trees. The other application came from Nature Forward (previously known as the Audubon Society), requesting an amount of \$997. Both applications had been approved by Jim. Grant money is provided by the Maryland Urban and Community Forestry Committee.

#### Legislative Report

No legislative news nor report were presented during this meeting.

#### DNR Report

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources Forest Service's Howard/Montgomery Project has filled its Forest Ranger position that had been vacant for 266 days. Mark Dykes has been working in this position since June 28, 2023 (76 days).

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### New Business

Treasurer Joli McCathran announced the induction of four new Montgomery County Champion Trees including a willow oak, a persimmon, a buttonbush, and a saucer magnolia tree. Joli mentioned that Joe Howard will be leading a tree tour in concurrence with the county's 12<sup>th</sup> annual Urban Tree Summit presented by Montgomery Parks and Casey Trees. A sum of \$300 will be allocated to the board for Joe's service.

Treasurer Joli McCathran noted that the logo for the Maryland Big Tree Program (state forestry board) will soon be chosen. Joli also voiced matters of seed collection to support stock for the John S. Ayton State Forest Tree Nursery, and a fall association meeting will occur on 2 November, 2023 in Baltimore. Joli further noted that American Forests has elected The University of Tennessee to maintain the national champion tree register; trees may again be nominated to this national register henceforth.

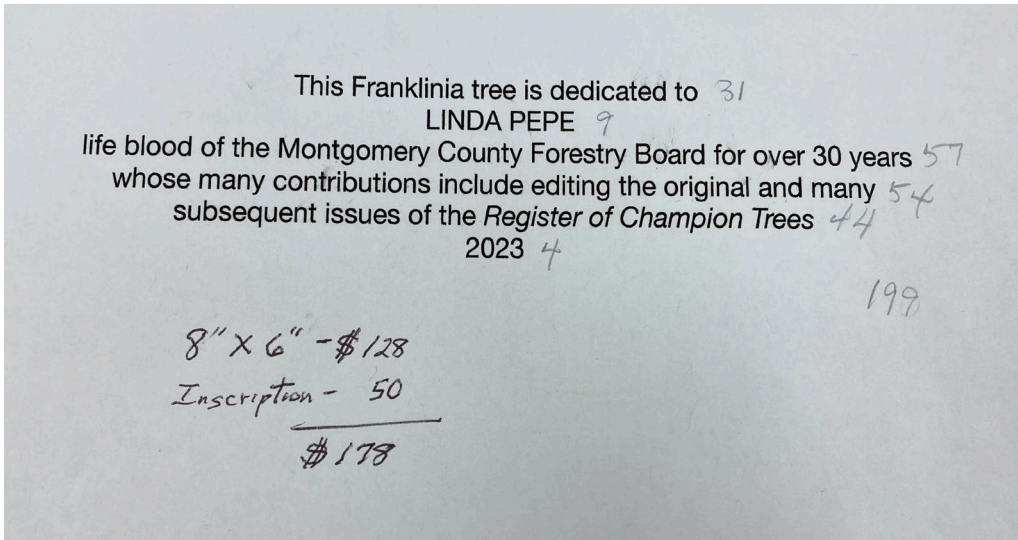
Norm King III shared with the board several marketing ideas that he conceived, including a QR-code that links to the board's champion tree website, a badge, and a reflective vest destined to bear the board's title, logo, acronym, or some related piece of unique and identifying information. Chairman Jim Harris motioned to grant Norm permission to proceed unencumbered with procuring his marketing ideas. The motion passed unanimously.

Lee Derby briefly remarked that small libraries will be established in each of the cabins at the Smith Center, and that a display to honor Joe Howard shall be established in the Smith Center's library on 14 October, 2023.

Guest attendees Natasha Shangold and Shayda Musavi introduced themselves and spoke about their professional duties with the City of Rockville. As a Forestry Inspector, Natasha heads inspections pertaining to construction projects, plantings, and forest conservation easements. As a Principal Planner and Landscape Architect, Shayda is involved with development and review of Natural Resource Inventory/Forest Stand Delineation (NRI/FSD), as well as miscellaneous plans. She added that a new forestry bill is being drafted.

Joe Howard showed the August 2023 edition of The Beacon that featured an article written about him. He then passed out hand-edited copies of the newspaper for each board member to keep. Joe proclaimed that he would sing a song about his wife, Mary. Joe then spoke about the Franklinia tree that had been planted earlier this year for Linda Pepe. Joe proposed an inscription for a commemorative plaque to honor Linda (Figure 1). A motion was introduced to discuss the verbage of the proposed inscription and plaque; particularly whether the inscription is too verbose. The motion remains open, and has not been voted upon.

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**Figure 1.** The proposed inscription for a plaque to accompany the Franklinia tree planted to commemorate Linda Pepe.

The next meeting is scheduled for 10 October, 2023 from 1:30 to 3:00 PM at the Lathrop E. Smith Environmental Education Center located at 5110 Meadows Lane in Rockville, MD 20855.

Chair Jim Harris adjourned this meeting at 3:13PM.

### Attendance:

Jim Harris, Board Chair  
Joli McCathran, Board Treasurer  
Lee Derby, Board Member  
Norman King III, Board Member  
Joe Howard, Board Member  
Chris Barger, Board Secretary  
Mary Howard, Guest  
Natasha Shangold, Guest  
Shayda Musavi, Guest