



Maryland Water Monitoring Council
Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources
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Sandy Hertz, Maryland Dept. of Transportation
Chair

Mat Pajeroski
Vice-chair

Katherine Hanna, Maryland DNR
Executive Secretary

Directors

Andy Becker, KCI Technologies
Megan Brosh, Baltimore County DEPS
(P) Drew Budelis, Versar, Inc.
Jai Cole, M-NCPPC
(P) Lindsay DeMarzo, Howard Co. OCS
(P) Jason Dubow, MD Dept. Planning
Clark Howells, Baltimore City
(P) Bob Hilderbrand, UMCES
(P) Ken Mack, Mont. Co. DEP
Byron Madigan, Carroll Co. BRM
Richard Mitchell, US EPA

Jeff Reagan, Biohabitats, Inc.
Nancy Roth, Tetra Tech, Inc.
Ken Staver, Univ. of MD WREC
Matt Stover, Maryland Dept. of the Environment
Mark Trice, Maryland DNR
Chris Victoria, Anne Arundel DPW
(P) Alice Volpitta, Blue Water Baltimore
Michael Williams, Univ. of MD College Park

(P) = Pending

MWMC Board Meeting

February 16, 2021

In Attendance: Andy Becker, Byron Madigan, Michael Williams, Drew Budelis, Sandy Hertz, Mark Trice, Nancy Roth, Jeff Reagan, Matt Stover, Ken Staver, Bill Stack, Chris Victoria, Jason Dubow, Ken Mack, Mark Southerland, Megan Brosh, Najma Khokhar, Richard Mitchell, Rachel Gauza (for Jai Cole), Katherine Hanna

10:01 **Sandy Hertz** started the meeting.

Minutes from the October 30, 2020 Board Meeting will be sent in draft form to Board members. The Board will have an opportunity to request revisions, and a poll to approve or reject the minutes will follow.

Matt Stover shared the status of Board members who had completed their terms. Nine terms were completed at the end of 2020, including three who wished to continue and did not need a vote (Andy Becker, Lindsay DeMarzo, and Megan Brosh), three whose continuation required a vote (Jeff Reagan, Richard Mitchell, and Nancy Roth), and three who were stepping down (Joel Moore, Diana Muller, and Bill Stack) from Academia, Volunteer, and At Large roles. Candidates were suggested for these vacated positions, and Board members were asked to send any additional suggestions to Matt, who would determine the best way to arrange the vote. **Sandy** thanked Joel, Diana, and Bill for their support for the Board and their contributions.

Planning Committee: **Sandy** commended the Planning Committee for their efforts to put on the first virtual conference in MWMC's history. **Katherine Hanna** shared slides containing conference statistics, budget status, and survey feedback, which she agreed to make available to Board members. It was noted that Restoration sessions are always popular with conference attendees, particularly due to MS4 permit requirements. An overview of the Planning Committee was provided for new members by **Katherine** and **Sandy**, and the plan was made to have the Planning Committee meet in the following week or two if possible. **Jason Dubow**, **Ken Mack**, and **Lindsay DeMarzo** volunteered to join the Planning Committee. Discussion of potential COVID-related limits on the 2021 conference if held in person indicated a need for another virtual or a hybrid conference model. The decision on format would be made at the upcoming Planning Committee meeting. The bimonthly webinar idea would be readdressed at another time.

Monitoring & Assessment Committee: Chris Victoria considered a virtual webinar format for the eDNA workshop. **Sandy** brought up that any proposed webinar topics should not overlap with conference topics. **Bill Stack** floated the Roundtable idea of a discussion on the update to the protocol document, which is submitted to CPB for approval. It would be discussed at the Stream Restoration Subcommittee meeting the following day. **Sandy** thought a walkthrough of how to propose and get approval

for pollution reduction solutions from the Bay Program would make a good webinar for the series. She also saw the webinars as an opportunity to get into the subject of innovative air and water quality.

Andy Becker told the Board that the Stream Monitoring Roundtable would be in its 14th year. He said he would send the announcement for the 2021 Roundtable to Katherine Hanna, who will distribute the information to the MWMC membership.

Mark Trice mentioned the work that he and Professor Testa's grad students had done on the Maryland Ocean Acidification Action Plan that was recently finalized, which was written at the request of MDE to highlight current actions of pollution reduction in-state. It was presented to the Maryland workgroup for planning purposes. They would potentially be coordinating with groups such as MWMC.

Citizen Science & Community Stewardship Committee: **Jeff Reagan** had no recent activity to report, but expressed interest in putting together a workshop this coming spring. **Richard Mitchell** pointed out that the National Monitoring Council would have a citizen science focus for its virtual conference on April 19-23, and would include topics of environmental justice and eDNA. The conference would consist of prerecorded talks with an interactive Q+A portion.

Information Management and Communication Committee: Najma Khokhar reported that the Committee had met on November 19, 2020 and four people attended. They discussed water quality data sharing and how many groups are unaware of the data available. She will send a request for known data availability to the Board and create a post for the website to that effect.

Groundwater Committee: No representative was present to report on Committee activity.

Student Activities Committee: Lindsay DeMarzo told the Board that the Committee was looking for additional membership. A Student Professional Networking Meeting was not held at the Annual Conference this past year. Sandy suggested that the meeting be held as a standalone workshop, and mentioned that holding it as a workshop would give students a chance to get advice and a leg up in the professional world.

For the news roundtable, **Andy Becker** reported that KCI's spring sampling season was surprisingly busy. **Byron Madigan** described an RFP that would be going out and said preparations for MBSS-style sampling were underway in Carroll County. **Nancy Roth** added that Tetra Tech was currently working on spring sampling, had analyzed the vertebrate response to restoration the previous fall, and was involved in the Healthy Watershed Initiative with particular interest in Tier II waters. **Drew Budelis** recently achieved Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professional Certification, Level 1. **Jason Dubow** is working on year 2 of facilitating interagency implementation of Maryland's Plan to Adapt to Saltwater Intrusion and Salinization; last year involved developing goals for a statewide wetland adaptation plan and continued development of DNR's pilot coastal resiliency easement program. He also mentioned the inaugural Maryland Brownfields Conference coming up this fall with sessions that may be of interest to the MWMC. There is an effort underway to get word of the Plan out to local governments and work as a liaison to resource providers. **Jeff Reagan** asked for details relating to the MBSS Spring Training. **Katherine Hanna** relayed that the Spring MBSS Training was cancelled, existing certifications were extended another year if they were set to expire in 2021, and those interested in becoming certified or with other questions should contact Jay Kilian. **Ken Mack** pointed out that sampling concerns such as flooding and invasives may be worth addressing at the Annual Conference. Andy volunteered Ken M. to organize his idea as a session. **Ken Staver** shared that he was investigating how agricultural conservation policies to reduce runoff may have other nutrient effects and is writing a white paper on the subject; the agricultural BMPs were having effects on streams. He noted record rainfall in 2020 of 72" at his office. There has also been some discussion of agricultural field ditch definitions when compared to natural and ditched streams, as well as the effect of salinity on nutrient release in soils and on the arability of farm systems. Jason Dubow discussed North Carolina's work to hold back saltwater from intrusion to some degree, and Ken Staver mentioned the difference in degrees of engineering needs and scales required. **Mark Southerland** introduced us to Walter, his on-site pandemic supervisor. He also discussed a literature and case study, possibly going to Tetra Tech. He will be speaking at an upcoming birding event at the end of February. **Mark Trice** noted the rain totals on the Wye River were "phenomenal" and asked Jason about involvement in groundwater studies. Mark also told the Board that the tidal data would have data gaps in March, April, and early May 2020, but the first half of the 2020 dataset would be available soon. His office was experiencing hiring problems and freezes that were hindering seasonal hiring, leading to the possibility of needing to drop entire programs due to difficulties in fieldwork feasibility. He also gave his support for working out the Annual Conference details in the Planning

Committee in an advanced timeframe. **Matt Stover** brought up MDE's 303D list report, and that MDE is trying to make better use of citizen data from DNR, local governments, and other sources. They are also reviewing water quality standards, with new regulations proposed to take effect in summer. **Megan Brosh** stated Baltimore County was conducting fieldwork through the pandemic using modified protocols. Their office would not be hiring seasonal employees this year. **Rachel Gauza's** office was also conducting fieldwork, with concerns over program continuity. They were also piloting vernal pool protocols with emphasis on herpetofauna, invertebrates, and their use of artificial pools and wetlands. **Richard Mitchell** told of big changes at the EPA with the new administration, including emphasis on climate change and environmental justice. NARS was entering a wetland study year, and the virtual training implemented last year was unlikely to be a format that would work this time due to the nature of the wetland study. The plan for the lake study in 2022 has been started; the 2017 lake results indicate increased CO₂ exchange, with warmer streams acting as a CO₂ source with increased productivity. **Sandy Hertz** discussed legislative session bills, including CCFA2021, which proposes changes to how nutrient reductions are procured, along with changes to the credit system and tree plantings in underserved areas. She also mentioned MDOT's collaborative efforts with other states' agencies to share funding for a study on rainfall over the last 20 years, and storm pond retrofits that were done in March.

Sandy then charged the Board to find and share potential workshop topics with Board members. **Matt Stover** was in favor of creating lunch and learn talks. **Chris Victoria** suggested a late spring or summer timeframe.

12:16 **Sandy Hertz** adjourned the meeting.

Action items

- Katherine Hanna will send October minutes to Board members
- Board members will send any revisions of the minutes to Katherine Hanna
- Katherine Hanna will send a poll for Board members to accept or reject the revised minutes
- Matt Stover will determine voting procedures for the Board members whose continuation require a vote and for filling the vacated Board roles.
- Katherine Hanna will make the slides available to Board members
- Andy Becker will send the announcement for the 2021 Roundtable to Katherine Hanna
- Katherine Hanna will share Roundtable announcement with membership
- Najma Khokhar will send a request for known data availability to the Board and create a post for the website
- Board members are to find and share potential workshop topics with the Board.