

**MINUTES OF THE ST. MARY'S COUNTY COMMISSION OF THE ENVIRONMENT  
SECOND FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM \* GOVERNMENTAL CENTER \* LEONARDTOWN,  
MARYLAND  
Wednesday, April 4, 2007**

Present: Frank Allen, Susan Blake, Marta Kelsey, William Shreve, Sr., John Wheeler, Sue Veith.

The Meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m.

The minutes of February 7, 2007 were approved.

**Continuing Business**

**Update on postings to web site**

Mr. Wheeler asked about the getting meeting minutes on the website. Ms. Veith explained the meeting minutes can be uploaded by the Recording Secretary with out going through IT. Mr. Wheeler asked if it has to go through Ms. Delores Gray to review them. Ms. Veith explained the Commission Minutes do not have to be if LUGM does them. Mr. Wheeler explained the website really needs to be updated but the website guy is only in for a half-day. Mr. Wheeler explained the minutes get put into a queue for posting that Delores Lacey looks at for form. Mr. Wheeler explained he wanted the water policy minutes on the web because they have important information in them. He was informed that as long as the COE was engaged on the Water Policy Task Force they could go on the web. Ms. Veith explained if you make the water policy minutes part of the record they can be posted on the website.

Mr. Wheeler explained he has a hard time posting minutes on the web site. Mr. Wheeler wants to get good information on the web so that citizens can be informed. Mr. Wheeler is looking for a better mechanism to get things on the website. Mr. Wheeler said he would coordinate with Ms. Lacey and LUGM to host the minutes if the Commission agrees on the content. Ms. Veith explained Mr. Wheeler should speak with Amber Guy about this issue. Mr. Wheeler asked if Ms. Veith could do that. Ms. Veith agreed to speak to Ms. Guy. Ms. Blake wants to make sure that any content that goes on the website is accurate and accredited if they are not just hosting minutes on the website.

**Update on disposition of funds for the Forum.**

Mr. Wheeler announced the Commission does not have any outstanding debt but there is no money in the pot.

**Nancy Smith's Passing**

Mr. Alan asked if there is a donation to be made for Nancy Smith. Mr. Wheeler explained he could find and does the Commission want the Board of County Commissioners to do something for Nancy Smith. Mr. Alan asked for a possible Proclamation to be done. Ms. Veith explained it might be a good idea. Mr. Wheeler asked does he need to find out. Do Ms. Smith's children need to be informed? Ms. Kelsey asked how the proclamation process starts. Ms. Veith explained you need to draft a letter to the BOCC. Mr. Allen explained there should be contributions tot the Nancy Smith Memorial fund. Ms. Veith explained it can't be done as an official COE function but as individuals. Mr. Wheeler suggested having Ms. Neville collect the funds for the donation. These would be private contributions from the Commission members. Ms. Veith explained that would be fine. Mr. Allen explained it should be the Nancy Smith Memorial Fund and the Commission should ask if Ms. Neville could oversee it.

**Notes and after action thoughts and further actions required (if any) on the Forum**

Mr. Wheeler asked what need to be done for the after action on the forum that the COE had. Ms. Veith explained thank you notes should be sent out to the participants. Mr. Wheeler explained would be the speakers, presenters, and the vendors. Ms. Kelsey asked if these will be postal mail or email. Ms. Veith explained LUGM will mail them out. Mr. Wheeler explained that Ms. Blake can draft the letters to all of the vendors and suppliers and Ms. Neville can write to the presenters. Ms. Blake asked if there should be board approval before it goes out. Mr. Wheeler suggested one circulation for any problems before they are printed.

Mr. Wheeler asked about an after action report on the Forum. Ms Kelsey explained they were to go over the surveys. Ms. Kelsey explained she had the surveys and the sign in sheets. Mr. Wheeler asked what the overall reaction was. Ms. Kelsey explained over all the reactions were good but people wanted more on household things that can be done. Mr. Allen explained it was advertised as what homeowners can do. Mr. Wheeler explained they need to expert some control over what is being presented. Mr. Allen explained they should have workshops at the next forum that they do. Ms. Kelsey suggested roundtables. Mr. Shreve explained there should be more space for exhibits. Mr. Kelsey suggested more time for Vendors to present. Mr. Wheeler suggested maybe moving the display area so the noise doesn't interfere with presentations. Mr. Shreve wanted the notice to go out earlier. Mr. Wheeler suggested maybe not have formal presentations but use workshops for quick information. Ms. Blake suggested doing a survey for what people might be interested in and look at having a Keynote speaker. Mr. Shreve suggested do it again next year and talk to publications about it and have them set something up.

Ms. Veith suggested talking to Valerie Deptula about piggy backing on Earth Day in Leonardtown. Mr. Wheeler asked if she meant having it on Earth Day. Ms. Veith explained yes because people will be there already. Ms. Blake suggested getting a department at College of Southern Maryland to sponsor it so they would have the space with out the fees. Mr. Wheeler asked what the county owns that is big enough for this event. Ms. Veith explained the Airport could be a good space. There is a lot of unused space. Ms. Kelsey suggested someone look into locations. Mr. Wheeler explained they should have the event at roughly the same time.

Mr. Wheeler explained he needs a COE member to be on the water policy task force.

### **Update on Water Policy Task Force meeting Tuesday, March 27**

Chesapeake Ranch Estates is suing Patuxent River Business Park about the well they wish to tap. The well goes into the Aquia Aquifer. The aquifer has reached the management level that MDE doesn't allow in the Wayson's Corner area. A report found in this law suit said that the aquifer will be dewatered in 2020. The implications are the limits on the draw rates on Calvert and St. Mary's County. Mr. Wheeler explained up to know the law states that water is free to all as long as you don't denude your neighbor. There is going to be a Commissioner letter to the State Water Resources Advisory Committee to make the concerns known. Mr. Wheeler asked about the after action report on the forum. Ms. Blake explained they should go over the surveys. Ms. Kelsey explained she has the survey sheets and the sign in sheets. Mr. Shreve asked if this lawsuit has anything to due with the other lawsuit Chesapeake Ranch Estates brought up against Calvert County. Mr. Wheeler explained it does.

Mr. Allen asked if the state has passed any recent water conservation bills. Mr. Wheeler explained when they had the drought last summer. Mr. Allen explained he was thinking something more like the California Greywater Code. Mr. Wheeler explained Mr. Steve King has been in favor of that but it lends itself to new construction. Mr. Shreve explained METCOM is working with the Navy to recycle about 250,000 gallons of water. The county plumbing code doesn't allow greywater use. The state allows limited use.

Mr. Wheeler explained the Commissions stand on industrial uses is that it should not come from aquifer.

Mr. Allen explained people should be looking long term for drinking water supplies. The board suggested rainwater or desalination for the rivers and bay. Mr. Shreve explained there was a report suggesting the need for more reservoirs. Ms. Veith explained the problem with the report is that all the places that were looked at had highly erodable soils and critical habitats.

### **Discussion of Membership**

Mr. Wheeler explained he was looking for the Commissions input for new Commission Members. There are issues about attendance from some of the members. Jon Rowland has not been to any of the meetings and Mr. Wheeler wants to send a letter to Ms. Gray about this issue.

**Ms. Kessler motions that a letter be sent to Ms. Delores Gray on the attendance of John Rowland. The motion was seconded by Mr. Allan and passed by a 5-0 vote.**

Mr. Wheeler explained they need to find a Chair and Co-Chair. Mr. XXX explained Mr. Wheeler has experience that is needed. Mr. XXX volunteered to head up the nomination committee.

### **Discussion of contents and preparation of COE Annual Report to Commissioners**

Mr. Wheeler explained the annual report needs to be done. He thinks that it should be a listing of accomplishments, then a plan for the future. Mr. Wheeler explained it should cover 2005-2007 accomplishments, what has been discussed, and what needs to be done in the future. Ms. Blake suggested it should feature the water issue. Mr. Wheeler explained the Water Policy for the county should be attached to the report. Ms. Blake suggested the TDR letter should be in the report. The Development District letter needs to be included. The combing of the Commissions should be in there. Ms. Veith explained they needed to get the newspaper article back into circulation again. Mr. Wheeler asked who would be running the article. Ms. Veith explained it wouldn't be anything more than possibly three paragraphs on some topical issue.

### **New Business**

#### **Discussion of next work topics for COE e.g., refinement of goals & objectives, identification of specific areas of concern, identify member tasks**

Mr. Wheeler explained the current goals and objectives that the commission should be are:

1. Become the county's focal point of environmental matters
2. Educate the county's citizens on environmental issues
3. Publish and advertise environmental issues throughout the county
4. Create and active and effective network of environmental groups
5. Undertake environmental studies of important issues and make recommendation to the BOCC
6. Study and take positions on the county's fresh water quality and quantity
7. Take positions on the health and clean up of the Chesapeake and its tributaries and the wildlife these bodies of water support
8. Recommend actions the county can take to counter global warming

Mr. Allan asked if the Commission serves as an advisor to the BOCC. Mr. Wheeler explained as a Commission that advises the BOCC at their request. Mr. Wheeler explained they don't get many requests from the BOCC so he wishes to take a pro-active view and make studies and inform the Commissioners on their stance. Ms. Veith explained they might have gotten for the TDR program, the sludge program, and the Water Policy Program. Mr. Shreve explained the Commission needs to balance serving the BOCC and act as a sounding board for the citizens. Mr. Shreve asked if they could put topic off until the next meeting so the Commission can look it over and see what they are the most important goals. Mr. Shreve

suggested they look at increasing involvement with other like organizations. Ms. Veith explained there has been talk about doing an environmental organization summit from other organizations. The Commission suggested an environmental summit. Ms. Veith suggested they time it with the state summit in the fall.

#### **Discussion of COE participation in Earth Day**

Ms. Veith explained they have a table but there is not one to man it. Mr. Shreve explained he would man it. Mr. Wheeler asked if the stuff would be there and does it need to be set up. Ms. Veith explained she will be setting up for the St. Mary's County LUGM Environmental table and the Master Gardeners. Ms. Kelsey explained she could have a tent. Mr. Wheeler explained he has a table and some chairs he can bring. Mr. Wheeler explained he would set up and man the booth for a few hours and take down. Ms. Blake explained she would help take down.

#### **Discussion of new Chamber of Commerce 2.25% growth proposal**

Mr. Wheeler wanted to know if any think was going to be done with the 2.25% growth at the next Chamber of Commerce meeting. Ms. Veith Explained she does not know. Mr. Wheeler explained the proposal is for the county to grow at 2.25% regardless of sustainable growth initiatives. Ms. Veith explained it was a split between the growth and no growth. She explained what ever is not used in the non-growth areas gets moved into the growth areas. Mr. Wheeler explained that major developments have been stopped because of school mitigation. Mr. Wheeler explained there is a disconnect between the state growth initiative and the county's. He explained it was a phenomenal number before you can get money for school. He wanted to know if and how the board should react to that. Ms. Veith explained there should be a presentation from the people who know what is going on with it before the board should react. Mr. Wheeler asked how to go about doing that. Ms. Veith explained they Commission should contact LUGM and get someone from there. Mr. Wheeler explained he would like to make a statement form the Commission if necessary.

Ms. Veith asked if the board was going to go over the barber Letter. Mr. Wheeler explained he would like to defer it to the next meeting because of time. Ms. Blake explained she has something the board should look at soon. A co-worker of hers is being impacted by the Myrtle Point development. He got a group of neighbors together but the effort fell apart and she thinks the Commission could help him out. Mr. Wheeler wants to discuss the Ordinance wording for variances on impervious surface.

The public portion of the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.