

COMMISSION ON THE ENVIROMENT MINUTES
Potomac Building
Minutes of May 6, 2009

COE Members present were Barne Wheeler, Chairman; Marta Kelsey, Troy Hansen, Sandy Neville, and Larry Hartwick. Susan Blake, Bill Shreve, Judy Gilman, Daryl Calvano, and Caroline Miller were excused. Others present were Sue Veith.

I) **Call to Order:** Mr. Wheeler called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

II) **Discussion & Approval of November Meeting Minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of April 1, 2009 as presented.

III) **Continuing Business:**

a. **Thank You Letter Status:** Mr. Hartwick stated he drafted two different letters, one for the donors and one for the exhibitors. Ms. Kelsey stated she would draft a letter for the Higher Education Center. Mr. Hansen stated he would draft a letter for the Girl Scouts.

Mr. Wheeler asked how to submit the addresses to Ms. Stuckert for mailing. Ms. Veith recommended an excel file broken down by letter type. Mr. Wheeler stated he would have Ms. Gilman take care of this. The Commission reviewed the draft letters for accuracy and made minor corrections.

b. **Environmental Concern Survey Summit**

1. **Posting Results to the Web:** The Commission reviewed the results and discussed where to place the results on the website. Ms. Kelsey recommended changing two of the colors and adding percentages to the table. It was also suggested to remove the word "major" from the title. Mr. Wheeler stated he would make the corrections.

2. **Summit Specifics: Location, Concept, Products, Results:** The Commission reviewed the summit information and made corrections as necessary. It was decided to hold the summit at the Higher Education Center on a Saturday during the month of October from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Ms. Veith recommended holding two sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon with a speaker in between. The Commission agreed.

Mr. Wheeler stated he is expecting a prioritized list for each of the categories be a product of this summit. Mr. Wheeler asked if a plan of action is expected to come out of this summit. Ms. Veith stated this may happen at the summit however if not; the list of concerns can be sent to the County Commissioners for their information.

Ms. Veith recommended sending the summit results to everyone involved to gain support prior to going before the County Commissioners. Mr. Hansen asked who would be facilitating this summit. Mr. Wheeler stated he could come up with one or two people from different environmental groups to help facilitate this summit.

c. **Trash & Litter:** Mr. Hansen stated he has not had time to work on this and asked it be placed on a future agenda.

d. **LUGM Critical Area Update:** Ms. Veith stated now that the Comp Plan draft is out we will begin working on the Critical Area update. Ms. Veith stated she will keep the Commission informed.

e. **Alternative Energy:** Ms. Kelsey stated she has spoken with surrounding counties regarding incentives for using alternative energy. Ms. Kelsey stated Charles County is in the process of drafting a Solar/Wind Power text amendment. Ms. Kelsey stated Calvert County has talked about it but has not taken any action to date.

Ms. Veith stated the County adopted the wind energy text amendment however the Critical Area Commission denied it. Ms. Veith stated until an approval from the Critical Area Commission is received there will be no more wind turbines within the critical area.

IV) **New Business:**

a. **COE Annual Report:** Mr. Hansen volunteered to draft the annual report. The Commission discussed topics for the annual report. Mr. Hansen stated he has the following topics; expo, survey, water and sewer plan, plumbing

work for grey water, aquifer plan, MDE letter regarding industrial uses of grey water, recycling issues, website, earth day, etc.

- b. **WPTF Meeting:** Mr. Wheeler stated he would draft a thank you letter to Mr. King for his service on the WPTF. Mr. Wheeler stated Jackie Mieser will be working with the WPTF and COE. Mr. Wheeler stated METCOM's future and structure will be studied over the next year due to friction to the County Commissioners. Mr. Wheeler stated the WPTF discussed grey water from collected rain water cisterns. Mr. Wheeler stated the WPTF would like to work with Habitat for Humanity to see if they can incorporate cisterns in their new houses.
- c. **Attorney General Meeting:** Mr. Wheeler stated he met with the Attorney General regarding the waterways. Mr. Wheeler stated there were three basic categories including violation insufficiencies, critical area enforcement procedures, and land pollution. Mr. Wheeler stated the Attorney General is more concerned with land pollution rather than improving the bay by using more menhaden and oysters.
- d. **Unitarian Universalist Church & Summit:** Ms. Kelsey stated this is a new group that wants to work on the environment and would like to be included in the summit. Mr. Wheeler stated they may be able to help out with the clerical portion of the summit. Ms. Neville agreed stating it's good to have persons available to volunteer.
- e. **SMECO Tree Cutting w/o Any Environmental Study:** Mr. Wheeler stated a member of the public brought this to his attention. Mr. Wheeler stated SMECO is not required to complete environmental studies prior to cutting down trees. Ms. Veith stated SMECO has blanket permits to cut anything within a SMECO right-of-way however if they do not own the right-of-way they must have the landowners permission. Ms. Veith stated SMECO will prune a tree on your property the way you want them to as long as you tell them. Ms. Kelsey asked if a letter should be sent to SMECO regarding this issue. Mr. Wheeler stated we can talk about this at the next meeting.
- f. **Special Acknowledgement Action:** Mr. Wheeler stated he received a certificate of appreciation from the Human Resources Department for Frank Allen which was presented to him during Earth Day. Mr. Wheeler stated he would draft the letter for Mr. King and present it at the next meeting.

V) **Announcements**

Ms. Veith passed out copies of the Comprehensive Plan and asked for comments. Ms. Veith gave a brief overview of the Comprehensive Plan revisions.

VI) **Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.