

Minutes
Educational Advisory Committee (EAC)
2 December 2019 - 1:30 - 3:30 pm

In Attendance:

Willie Lantz, Agriculture
Bruce Taliaferro, Education
Ken Fisher, Forestry
Bob Sutton, Property Owner
Gary Aronhalt, Watershed Coordinator
Debbie Carpenter, Garrett County Government
Julie Bortz, Maryland Department of Natural Resources
Jim George, Maryland Department of the Environment

Absent:

Sarah Duck, Marketing
Richard Matlick, Property Owner
Lauren McCann, Business
Greg Rouse, Recreation
Gary Shafer, Property Owner

Welcome /Opening Remarks:

Gary Aronhalt announced that Gary Shafer, Lauren McCann, Greg Rouse, and Richard Matlick had reported that they would be unable to attend the meeting. **Gary** introduced the Administrative Council. **Jim George** provided a brief biography and described his role at MDE.

Administrative Council Update

Debbie Carpenter announced that she was leaving Garrett County and had accepted a position in Charles County as the Director of Planning & Growth Management. She explained that there are four chapters of the Comprehensive Plan left to review. She anticipates that drafts for all chapters will be completed by the end of the year. **Debbie** explained that the Planning Commission would need to approve each chapter and that audio from the meetings are posted on the County's website for those who may not be able to attend. **Debbie** stated that she expects the Comprehensive Plan to be wrapped up within the next year.

Julie Bortz stated that there were no zebra mussel detections in Deep Creek Lake. She mentioned that an EDNA study had been completed to search for invasive species DNA suspended in the water. There were no "hits" for zebra mussels. There were also no "hits" for hydrilla; however, this may be correlated with the timing of the collection (late

in the year). **Julie** stated that calcium levels were still low. She also stated that the launch stewards detected zebra mussels on a boat, last launched on the Monongalia River, attempting to launch at Deep Creek Lake State Park. The incident occurred on Labor Day Weekend and the owners attempted to launch the vessel a second time after being notified that the boat was contaminated. Natural Resources Police and other DNR staff responded and were able to prevent the boat from launching. **Debbie Carpenter** asked how difficult it is to clean a contaminated boat. **Julie** stated that the cleaning requires hot pressurized water. She also stated that fishing boats are easier to clean than boats with ballast tanks. She said that she contacted all the marinas and that education is the best defense against AIS. **Julie** stated that there is less than a 5% refusal rate for the voluntary inspections. **Bob Sutton** asked if the rental agencies were providing copies of the AIS trifold. **Julie** stated that it was on her to do list and that she was considering an AM radio station for AIS information. **Ken Fisher** asked about the process for registering boats and if there might be potential to provide outreach and education at the time of renewal. The committee discussed the process for registration renewal and commented that out-of-state boaters would not receive information from this type of outreach. **Bob Sutton** stated that the rental agencies should be contacted. Brochures could be included in the rental packets. **Willie Lantz** asked if there was a list of boat cleaners. **Julie** said that there was a list. **Ken Fisher** asked if the launch stewards recorded the vessel number when collecting information from visitors. **Julie** stated that they record the zip code and where the vessel was last launched. **Julie** stated that it is not illegal to launch a “dirty” boat at a private marina. Julie referenced HB-860 (State Lakes Invasive Species Act of 2015). **Bruce Taliaferro** asked if there had been any attempt to inspect self-launched kayaks. **Julie** explained that some kayakers fill out the self-certification form, but most do not. **Jim George** asked if there were any AIS related topics during the boater safety course. **Julie Bortz** responded that Julie Brown (DNR) was involved in providing outreach for the course and that a couple of questions on the test related to AIS. She also mentioned that AIS was included in the booklet. The EAC will plan to draft recommendations regarding AIS and submit them to DNR. **Jim** also suggested fishing license purchases as a potential point of contact to educate outdoor enthusiasts about AIS. **Jim** asked if there were resource needs for AIS, and if so, Brookfield Renewable may be interested in supporting the initiative. **Julie** stated that Brookfield had provided financial support for zebra mussel monitoring in conjunction with the Deep Creek Watershed Foundation. **Bob Sutton** mentioned that he believes that the educational signs are working. He stated that all venues for outreach should be utilized. **Ken Fisher** asked about State Highway’s portable signs and if they could be loaned out for outreach. **Julie, Debbie** and **Gary** commented that they had discussed options with SHA and SHA restricts messages to those intended to warn motorists or provide public safety messages. Several locations were recognized by the EAC as potential advertising locations including the Fair Board sign and Deep Creek Volunteer Fire Department. **Bob Sutton** suggested that we need to reach boaters before they arrive.

Jim George announced that the water appropriation permit is on schedule to be completed by the end of December. **Ken Fisher** stated that an extension was requested for 90 days response period at the public hearing. However; John Grace stated that there would not be enough time to process the permit and allowed 60 days to comment. **Jim**

stated that he thought that the response period was to end on December 16th. **Jim** also stated that a Temperature Enhancement Workgroup meeting is to be held on December 4th at Garrett College. **Jim** also stated that there were still things to consider regarding the permit. In particular, the period of excursion above the upper rule band is being discussed amongst MDE and DNR. It has been proposed to move from 21 days allowable exclusion above the upper rule band to 10 days. **Ken Fisher** asked about the lower rule band in April and October. **Gary Aronhalt** stated that there was a proposal to extend the TER releases.

Marketing:

Julie Bortz stated that the agencies are considering podcasts, videos, and radio as potential outreach mechanisms. **Debbie Carpenter** asked the committee for an evaluation of how things went during the past year. **Bob Sutton** stated that the Deep Creek Times and Republican ads were effective. He also stated that he had received comments regarding the theater slides and that he believes they are also worth continuing. **Bob** suggested that the Deep Creek Times is the preferred news outlet for visitors. **Ken Fisher** agreed with Bob adding that the theater slides need to be more general. **Ken** stated that he feels that the marketing initiative is on the right track. **Jim George** suggested outreach regarding zebra mussels and advertising where to go for assistance. **Bruce Taliaferro** asked about the Discovery Center and if any outreach was currently be conducted there. **Gary** and **Julie** stated that they are scheduling a meeting with Discovery Center staff. There was some discussion of the positive attributes of the lake and watershed. The lake as the economic engine of the County was referenced as well as the lake as an outstanding fishery. **Jim George** mentioned Outdoors Maryland and outreach regarding snakeheads in Maryland. **Bob Sutton** asked about AIS in Deep Creek Lake and referenced an ice sailing program that aired on Outdoors Maryland. **Debbie Carpenter** stated that the Administrative Council had discussed water temperature, ice thickness, videos, podcasts, and apps as mechanisms to improve stakeholder communication. **Jim George** stated that the Administrative Council also discussed the possibility of providing water quality testing kits for visitors. **Julie Bortz** suggested that grants may help to provide funding for educational outreach. **Ken Fisher** mentioned that the Deep Creek Times has lake temperatures posted. **Willie Lantz** suggested that we do not want to duplicate existing materials and stated we need to work together. **Willie** also mentioned that there was once a fishing report noting exceptional catches in the lake. **Willie** stated that a farmer gram was published in the Republican and suggested developing a dozen 1” x 2” newspaper columns. He suggested publishing a value followed by a description (Example: 6.2 – pH of Deep Creek Lake). **Julie** mentioned the Lake Observer app and asked if there would be any interest. **Jim George** mentioned YouTube videos and stated that they can be entertaining and educational at the same time. **Debbie Carpenter** suggested submitting pictures and voting for the best.

Questions:

Willie Lantz asked about the internship with Frostburg State University. **Gary** stated that it was advertised but no students applied. **Gary** said he would follow up about possibly advertising for future semesters. **Ken Fisher** asked about the wake boat study. **Gary** said he had received the final paper but had not read it yet. **Ken** asked for the paper to be distributed to the EAC. **Gary** said that he would forward the paper and that the PRB would also receive a copy of the report.

EAC Meetings:

Gary Aronhalt mentioned concerns with poor attendance and offered to adjust the schedule to accommodate the majority. He also offered to meet in person twice annually and online for the remainder of the meetings. **Willie Lantz** suggested that fewer meetings with more quality would help. He suggested that call-ins are not always effective for better participation. **Bruce Taliaferro** suggested a survey with a few choices to choose from.

Meeting Conclusion:

Gary Aronhalt asked the committee for any questions. There was a correction to the minutes: Bruce Taliaferro was incorrectly listed as both in attendance and absent. Bruce was present for the meeting on 21 October. **Ken Fisher** also mentioned an omission: It was noted that the Garrett County Department of Health has maps of septic system locations for the County. **Gary** stated that he would amend the minutes.

The meeting was adjourned.

--_END_--