

**Maryland Environmental Trust**  
**Board of Trustees Open Meeting Minutes**  
**November 4, 2019**

Trustees Present:

Mary Burke, Chair  
Royden Powell, Vice Chair  
Julia Jitkoff, Treasurer  
Sarah Taylor-Rogers, Secretary  
Dr. Scott Barao  
Tom McCarthy  
Thomas Lloyd  
Gregory Bowen  
Delegate Jim Gilchrist  
Phil Hager  
Gary Burnett  
Senator Addie Eckardt

Trustees Absent:

Paulette Greene  
Mark Hoffman  
Ken Montague

Others Present:

John Turgeon, Acting Director for Maryland Environmental Trust  
Wendy Hershey, Dept. of Natural Resources Liaison  
Kelly Price, Maryland Environmental Trust  
Michelle Grafton, Maryland Environmental Trust  
Erin McNally, Maryland Environmental Trust  
Jon Chapman, Maryland Environmental Trust  
Jennifer Miller-Herzog, Land Trust Alliance

**I. Call to order**

MET Board Chairwoman Mary Burke called the meeting to order at 4:13 pm at 100 Community Place, Third Floor Conference Room, Crownsville, Maryland 21032.

## **II. Board Work Plan & Governance Topics**

### **A. Adopting the Minutes**

Ms. Burke moved for approval of the minutes for the September 9, 2019, and October 7, 2019 Board Meetings. Ms. Burke motioned to accept the minutes. Ms. Taylor-Rogers seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

### **B. Other Business**

Mr. Powell addressed the Board regarding MET's liaison to the Forever Maryland Foundation (FMF) Board of Trustees as well as the two new members MET is allowed to nominate for the FMF Board. The liaison position is a non-voting position and more of a communication role for MET to the FMF Board. Mr. Powell stated that Ann Jones has agreed to serve on the FMF Board as MET's nominee. The MET Board needs to nominate one more candidate to serve on the FMF Board.

Ms. Taylor-Rogers motioned to nominate Ann Jones as a new FMF Board member. Senator Eckardt seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Senator Eckardt motioned for Ms. Burke to serve as MET's Liaison to the FMF Board. Mr. Hager seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Bowen presented an overview of Maryland's History of Farming and Land Use. His presentation tracked important changes including area growth, urban sprawl, transportation impacts, dietary changes, advertising, marketing etc. and their impact on agriculture, land use and our economy.

After the presentation, an open discussion took place regarding agriculture and different programs.

### **C. Chairwoman Report**

Ms. Burke advised the Board that the MET Director search is underway. Nine interviews are taking place between 11/4 and 11/8.

Ms. Burke stated that she and Mr. Turgeon are working on scheduling the MET Board retreat for March 6, 2020. They are hoping to be able to discuss restructuring the Board meetings and possibly having fewer Board meetings throughout the calendar year.

Ms. Burke informed the Board that she would not be present at the next Board meeting on December 2, 2019, and that Mr. Powell will be leading that meeting. However, Ms. Burke said she will be calling into the December meeting.

### **III. Acting Director Report**

Mr. Turgeon reported that in October, the easement program closed on one easement in Kent County. This easement is co-held with Eastern Shore Land Conservancy protecting 153 acres along Still Pond Creek. Mr. Turgeon informed the Board that 12 new easements had been recorded, protecting 1,174 acres so far for the calendar year. MET easement team is anticipating completing another five easements and one amended and restated easement by the end of December 2019 that would protect an additional 800+ acres for the calendar year.

Mr. Turgeon highlighted to the Board that Jon Chapman, Erin McNally, and Wendy Hershey conducted an easement monitor training event for Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust Board members and volunteer recruits on 10/12/19.

Mr. Turgeon updated the Board on the land trust roundtable that took place in October at the Patuxent National Wildlife Visitor Center. The session involved individuals from 28 organizations, learning lessons from recent federal tax cases involving conservation easement donations.

Mr. Turgeon informed the Board that FMF is working on organizing the Annual Maryland Land Conservation Conference, which is to take place in the spring of 2020, and has convened a conference planning committee that held its first meeting at MET on 10/29/19.

Mr. Turgeon reminded the Board that the Keep Maryland Beautiful grant application process would be ending on 11/14/19. FMF is working on this project with MET, DHCD, and SHA.

Mr. Turgeon reported that he and Mrs. Price attended a meeting with DNR Assistant Secretary Allan Fisher's office regarding the Long Term Contractual staff position conversion that MET has been working on. Mr. Fisher advised that he will be recommending the approval of MET's "over the target" request for funding the position as part of the DNR's budget meeting in early December with the State Department of Budget and Management.

### **IV. Presentation - Major Benefits of Land Conservation**

Mr. Hager and Ms. Grafton presented to the Board on the Maryland Land Trust Census. The survey questionnaires were presented to the local land trusts early in 2019, allowing time to gather information and collect data. Approximately 71% of the land trusts participated in the survey, which was a three percent increase from the previous survey presented in 2014.

Ms. Miller-Herzog explained to the Board members what land trust accreditation is and why the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) encourages land trusts to become accredited. Mr. McCarthy told the Board why all land trusts should be accredited. Ms. Burke informed the Board of how LTA helps review best practices for land trusts or organizations that apply for accreditation.

An open discussion took place regarding accreditation.

## V. Committee Reports

### A. Agriculture Committee

Dr. Barao informed the Board that he met with Mr. Lloyd and Mr. Powell to learn and understand what the Agriculture Committee does and what his role would be as the chair of the committee. Dr. Barao mentioned there were some agriculture conferences coming next year, and he would like to have MET present to inform others what MET does and how MET can help preserve the land.

Ms. Burke requested that someone from the Farm Bureau should come to MET to present to the Board regarding Agriculture.

An open discussion took place regarding land conservation and its benefits.

### B. Governance and Nominating Committee

Mr. Lloyd informed the Board that the Executive Director interviews are taking place at MET. Nine applicants will be interviewed between 11/4/19 and 11/8/19.

Mr. Lloyd reminded the Board that new names need to be presented to the Executive and Legislative Branches of State government for new MET Board members. Mr. Lloyd is asking the Board to please submit a list of names with resumes of qualified candidates.

### C. Finance Committee

Ms. Jitkoff reported that MET had received \$5500.00 in donations to the Board managed private-side fund in the month of October. She said that overall, the projected loss for the Board managed private-side budget is projected to be approximately \$3,500 for FY20.

Ms. Jitkoff reported that the Merryman real property has sold, and MET should be collecting approximately \$600,000 from the sale proceeds as well as the final disposition of the Merryman estate at the end of the year. Therefore, the total from the Merryman estate that MET will receive is approximately \$850,000.

Ms. Jitkoff announced that 12/12/19, she will be hosting a holiday gathering at her house in Reistertown, MD for MET and FMF Board and staff. Ms. Jitkoff is requesting a \$30 donation for the party per person to cover catering expenses.

Ms. Jitkoff asked the Board if they would donate to MET for the year-end appeal by 12/31/19. She is asking all MET Board members to contribute.

#### D. Easement and Stewardship Committee

Mr. Powell advised the Board that there is nothing on the consent calendar to submit to the Board for approval.

Mr. Chapman informed the Board that the staff had 42 easement monitoring visits in October, and MET volunteers had 37 visits.

#### E. Land Trust Advisory Committee

Mr. Hager requested a vote for the Committee's new purpose statement. Mr. Hager motioned for approval. Mr. Lloyd seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Mr. Hager advised the Board that Ms. Grafton recently conducted a conference call for representatives of Maryland land trusts who attended the annual Land Trust Alliance Rally held in Raleigh, NC last month. There were 18 participants on the call who shared their experiences and thoughts on what they learned at the conference.

Mr. Hager informed the Board that on 11/19/19, the Committee is having a retreat at the Crownsville office building in the first floor conference room. He said the retreat would be from 10 am-3 pm, all interested Board members are invited to attend.

Mr. Hager mentioned that he and Ms. Grafton were involved in the FMF conference planning committee meeting that took place on 10/29/19. Mr. Hager and Ms. Grafton will be helping with the 2020 Annual Land Conservation Conference.

F. Grants Committee

Ms. Burke announced the Keep Maryland Beautiful grants application period is open until 11/14/19. She is encouraging all organizations to apply that meet the guidelines for the individual grants.

V. **Adjourned Meeting**

Adjourned open meeting at 6:11 pm