



PATUXENT RIVER COMMISSION

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John Hartline, *Chairman*

Christopher Perry, *Vice Chairman*

We, the Patuxent River Commission, envision a Patuxent River ecosystem as vital and productive in 2050 as it was in the 1950s. We therefore commit to be stewards and advocates for the Patuxent River and to lead and inspire actions to protect, enhance, and restore living resources and the natural, cultural, economic, and recreational values of the Patuxent River and its watershed.

☀ Please call Daniel Rosen at MDP 410-767-4577 if you have any questions or comments.

MEETING SUMMARY

January 11, 2023

VIRTUAL MEETING

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Members: John Hartline, Chair; Chris Perry, Vice-Chair; Frank Allen, Alison Armocida Santoro, Rachel Dean, John Denniston, Luis Dieguez, Mary Dolan, Jason Dubow, Margaret Everson, Solange Filoso, Kim Finch, Bill Hubbard, Morgan Hall, Bill Hubbard, Scott Knoche, Ron Marney, Erik Michelsen, Diep Nguyen-van Houtte, Byron Petrauskas, Paula Proctor, Steve Shofar, Joanna Smith, Mark Symborski, Hiram Tanner, Malcolm Taylor, John Tarr, Fred Tutman, Jason Van Kirk, Tiffany Wright

Attendees: William Dennison, Ann Foo, Vanessa Vargas-Nguyen

Staff: Jason Dubow, Debbie Herr Cornwell, Daniel Rosen, Adam Snyder

Approval of November 9, 2022 Minutes, Updates and Announcements

The November 9, 2022 meeting minutes were approved.

By special vote via email on December 16, 2022, the Commission approved a letter of support for the Patuxent Research Refuge's expression of interest to Prince George's County in the preservation of county lands between the refuge and Bowie State University; and the county's consideration of the U.S. Government as a potential buyer of lands involved in Request for Expression of Interest (RFEI) #RA-10192021-A and RFP No. RA-BO-05-22-A for the Bowie State University MARC Campus Center (BSU-MCC).

PAXCON 2023 will be held on February 2, 2023 at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center.

Protocol Idea – Presentations (number, type, timing, etc.) before a Request for Vote

Margaret Everson opened the discussion for setting a protocol for timing and requests for approval. She proposed for consideration: providing enough time to review, ensuring that there is legal review of requests, allowing time to identify potential conflicts of interest and how the discussions are memorialized in the minutes.

Fred Tutman noted that there should be a special process for items that need a quick turnaround. John Tarr asked if the PRC is on the notifications list for the local Planning Commissions; so that the Commission would know when projects are being proposed. Notifications could be filtered for the Patuxent Watershed. Rachel Dean suggested items be on the agenda and distributed to the Commission one week prior to the meeting.

Based on the discussion, Margaret Everson identified four categories requiring protocols – 1) agenda items discussed at a meeting; 2) items announced at a meeting; 3) items that come up between meetings; and 4) project notifications through regulatory programs.

Chairman Hartline suggested having a standard set of questions for projects and grant requests that could be answered and distributed with the meeting agenda. Vice-chair Chris Perry agreed that protocols are needed but noted that it was important to retain flexibility and not to include this in an update to the bylaws. It was proposed that this be added to the Annual Action Plan and a workgroup organized to address the needs.

2023 PRC Annual Action Plan – review 2022 annual action plan, discuss revisions for 2023

Jason Dubow reviewed the 2022 Annual Action Plan and provided updates on the actions, noting that the Geodatabase work had been completed in 2022. The plan will be updated for 2023 to include a short term action to develop protocols for PRC review and endorsement of projects and grant applications. A protocols workgroup will be formed and the following members volunteered: John Tarr, Hiram Tanner, Margaret Everson and John Hartline.

2023 General Assembly – discuss PRC approach for bill support or opposition

Dan Rosen reviewed the introduced environmental bills that might be of interest to the Commission. The commission discussed what protocols should be in place for providing letters of support. Staff was directed to provide a list of bills by February 1 to the Commission and to include the bill review on the meeting agenda.

Patuxent River Report Card listening session summary

Bill Dennison and Vanessa Vargas-Nguyen presented a summary of the two listening sessions held on October 5, 2022 at Chesapeake Biological Laboratory and on October 8, 2022 at Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary. The feedback received at the listening sessions was summarized in a newsletter and is part of

Phase 1 in developing the report card. Phase 1 - identifying the plan for the report card is coming to an end and the project will be moving into Phase 2 – drafting the report card. Before starting Phase 2, funding needs to be attained. The timeline for the overall process is two years.

Fred Tutman commented that what was presented was not a report card, the product needs to clearly state the issues with the river focusing on water quality. The UMCES IAM staff reiterated that development of the report card occurs in Phase 2, and it will include water quality. The report card will be a comprehensive review of the watershed. Scott Knoche asked that UMCES IAN staff connect with Patuxent Environmental & Aquatic Research Laboratory (PEARL) and include them in the project.

State Sewer Overflow Database

John Hartline reported that the sewer overflow database has issues - there is no easy way to find information about spills in 2022 to current time. It was suggested a letter be drafted to Governor Moore, as an introduction to the PRC, noting that transparency is needed and that the current database system is broken. The letter should also request an opportunity for the Commission to meet with the new Governor. A draft letter will be prepared and circulated to the Commission for a special vote.