

Middle James Roundtable  
Steering Committee Meeting  
July 16, 2015  
10:00am – 2:00pm

Host: The Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay  
Manchester Pie Factory Building  
612 Hull Street, Suite 101 C  
**Richmond, Virginia 23224**

Members Present: Ashley Tucker, Anna Mathis, Kip Mumaw, Wood Hudson, Paul Davis, Gay Stokes, Amber Ellis, Blair Blanchette, Alex Foraste, Paul Davis

#### Introductions

- Everyone introduced themselves and their current projects, including new members Blair Blanchette and Ashley Tucker
  - Held discussion of structure for new members:
    - Grant committee started this year to allow MJRT to apply for grants in addition to DEQ grant as the need arises.
    - DEQ Grant Parameters: 40% of funding must go to implementation projects to reduce NPS pollution and not education. Education projects require outside funding, handled by Grants committee.
      - TASK: Need to create a comprehensive list of available grants for the Grants committee to use. Paul mentioned DM Band BAMAworks, Dominion, license plate funding
- I. Committee Updates
- a. Website:
    - i. Updated to Weebly Platform to reduce cost, per DEQ grant requirements. This platform is cheaper, simpler to update.
    - ii. Calendar of Events: TASK: Update with newsletter events and other non-MJRT events to draw in new members. TASK: Need to add Rain Garden Workshops too.
    - iii. About Us: includes Meeting Minutes and Interactive Map by HUC
    - iv. Projects: Ongoing and Past included
  - b. Pet Waste
    - i. Photo Contest: Prizes acquired: Gift Card from Doody Calls, Pet Hotel stay. Contest extended to August 15<sup>th</sup>. Contest requires a picture post AND the pledge to be completed. Winner will also be the temporary FB photo of the MJRT FB page—TASK: Determine extent of time as FB photo. Currently 10 pledges have been completed. TASK: Amber will distribute flyers.
    - ii. Pet Waste Stations: 15 installed in Chesterfield, 8 to be installed soon in Richmond, 7 installing this week in JRPS
    - iii. Misc: Lorne Field conducted a waste assessment last August to see if pet waste stations would reduce waste in Chesterfield parks. Needs interns/help to do

recount this fall now that waste stations have been installed. Was going to get bacteria level testing, but the flow is intermittent so could not be completed.

- c. Roundtable Grant
    - i. See above for website adjustments
    - ii. Annual Meeting—84 registered attendees, but more attended because presenters didn't register. Only 3 less than last year.
    - iii. Soil Test Vouchers: 216 purchased, 124 used this quarter in Henrico. Plan to expand next year. Gay Stokes comments that Richmond City VCE also provides at all libraries, so may be a good expansion point. TASK: Need to advertise more to expand the program (lawn maintenance companies or Nurserymen's Association to advertise?)
    - iv. Pet Waste Station Bags: TAsL: Need to get a count on bags. Richmond City would be willing to donate more if needed. The grant has money to buy 200 more for annual meetings. Cost at \$2 each—need to calculate how many to buy.
    - v. TASK: Inventory of education materials needed.
  - d. Rain Garden Workshops
    - i. Charlottesville's is under construction at Venable School, UVa and University of MD doing N reduction study here. Chesterfield's is being designed. Lynchburg is still undergoing site selection.
    - ii. Future Grant Funding: May be some need/desire for educational signage at these rain gardens,
- II. Committee Voting
- a. Passed: Anna Mathis as Chair, Wood Hudson as Vice Chair, Olivia Hall as Secretary, Gay Stokes at Treasurer.
  - b. Alex F: more turnout of steering committee members requested. Would require a change of by-laws, which may be discussed in the future.
  - c. Discussion of Steering Committee composition: By-laws include list of recommended sectors from which to draw committee members, including state agencies. Need to acquire a state agency member or adjust by-laws.
- III. Annual Meeting Feedback
- a. Generally accepted as being very successful. Notes from attendees and committee:
    - i. Space was good, if divided space was tight and upstairs rooms tight. Need to make more use of the outside space with a nature tour/plant presentation.
    - ii. Advertising outside the watershed might be acceptable, as the information is still relevant. Also need to invite elected officials more. MJRT can use direct invite. Could push to local universities, as that advertising route collapsed when no longer made use of their space through DCR.
    - iii. VAMSA and the Rappahannock River Basin Meeting mentioned the MJRT meeting—gaining credence.
- IV. MJRT Workplan
- a. Rain Garden Workshops: Ongoing. Need to investigate need for signage.
  - b. Pet Waste: are able to purchase more stands.
  - c. Website Updates: post soil test availabilities/locations.

- d. Education/Marketing Box: find a grant to create a marketing box for members to bring to conferences. This cannot be funded through the DEQ grant, so need alternative source.
    - i. Cannot fund K through 12 education programs, so may want to target neighborhood associations or town council meetings for education.
  - e. Next Steering Committee Meeting: Need to define grant desires, remembering that 30% must be targeting at NPS reduction, and 40% to administrative fees. We can also find grants for paying outside speakers to speak.
- V. Alliance for the Chesapeake's Bay Riverwise Communities: Nissa Dean and Anna Mathis
- a. Riverwise Communities was developed out of work with Reedy Creek Association, JRA, the city of Richmond, and other partner organizations. The process of meeting homeowners to provide information on improving their yards and impacting water quality was under way, but ACB was not tracking the BMPs for the Bay Program to count .
  - b. Partnering with MD Sea Grant, Chesapeake Stormwater Network, and others, they have developed a method to track this data and have localities verify the BMPs. This is not just for residential BMPs—houses of worship and libraries are included, as long as the property is not so large as to require E&S or SW permits.
  - c. A Manual was created out of this processing, including segments on Engaging Communities, Conducting Property Assessments (with a checklist and lessons learned), Installing BMPs, Providing Incentives, Verifying and Tracking BMPs, Delivering and Successful Program through Training.
    - i. The property assessments including pre-assessment questions, the property assessment itself and post-assessment questionnaire. Pre-Assessment questions include information on lawn practices, pet waste practices, etc.
    - ii. Assessment is conducted by trained individuals with ipads, which allows the assessor to take photos and mark the photos with descriptions of the BMPs recommended. Property outlines can be uploaded from the city parcel mapper. This also allows the assessor to display photos of plants that the homeowner could plant. Recommendations for the property can be copied and pasted from a pre-set list.
  - d. Installing BMP: BMPs are installed using Center for Watershed Protection and other residential BMP design recommendations to target contractors. This manual has been approved to match state manuals.
  - e. Incentives: Manual includes comments on incentives, and that incentives don't have to be monetary. JRA and others have recognition incentives that are effective.
  - f. Verification: No conducted by Alliance, but the manual and data is set up to allow localities to verify the BMPs. The SMART tool created by Sea Grant illustrates which BMPs have been verified by the locality. The locality can then receive credit for the BMP in the next Bay model. There are backstops in place to prevent the double-counting of the BMPs.
  - g. Other Resources: Manual compliments the Reduce Your Stormwater website, which will also include the online assessment and opportunities to apply for funding through alliance soon. This site also has planting templates and a "plug and play" tool to make the BMP creation simple for homeowners.

- h. Stormwater Sentries Game: a Facebook based game created by Timmons Group to allow educators to display to children the relevant factors to clean water and reducing stormwater.
- VI. Next meeting will be scheduled the week of September 17<sup>th</sup> determined by doodlepoll.