

Middle James Roundtable

Steering Committee Meeting

April 7, 2026

Location: Virtual

Attendees: Lorne Field, Lori Schoenwiesner, Isabella O'Brien, Kathleen Ogilvy, Kate Anderson, Michael Daniel, Cody Smith, Brianna Mooring, Callie Moyers, Julie Buchanan

Notetaker: Julie Buchanan

1. **Welcome/Introductions** - Lorne began the meeting at 10:04 a.m. by welcoming the group, and each attendee introduced themselves.
2. **Grant Updates/Financial Report** – Lorne said MJRT now has an executed grant agreement with DEQ, and the group can get to work on deliverables of the year.
 - a. **Septic Pump-Out Vouchers** – Lorne said Chesterfield Environmental Engineering will distribute MJRT vouchers for septic pump-out based on the impaired waters list and on a first-come, first-served basis. Cody with Peter Francisco SWCD explained how the district prioritizes funds for septic pump-outs, and will continue to do it this way.
 - b. **Soil Test Vouchers** – This year, the cap will be at 100 vouchers, and they will be distributed through Virginia Cooperative Extension offices. Michael mentioned that Lynchburg Water will do their own voucher system. If any MJRT members get requests for soil test vouchers, they should refer people to local VCE offices.
 - c. **Rain Barrel Workshops by TJPDC** – Isabella said spring workshops funded with MJRT grant money are scheduled in Fluvanna, Nelson and Charlottesville.
 - d. **Website/Weebly** – Julie informed the group that the cost to host the website through Weebly is increasing May 1 to \$15/month for the 12-month plan. Lorne and Isabella requested to be added as users to the website.
 - e. **Annual Conference/Skyland Lodge Fees** – The Skyland Lodge at Shenandoah National Park is reserved for the MJRT annual meeting Sept. 3-4. The deadline to reserve a room is July 30. This year's theme is "Recreation in the James River Watershed." Two speakers are confirmed: Kristal McKelvey from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and Tish Robertson from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. Suggestions for outings/group activities include a hike before dinner on the

opening day, a night sky program with park staff, a bike ride the morning of day two. These will be ironed out in future committee meetings. MJRT will provide snacks and meals with be “on your own.”

3. Round Robin

- a. Lorne:** Chesterfield Earth Day Festival is coming up on Saturday, April 11 at the Chesterfield County Fairgrounds. Lorne’s table will be doing rain barrels.
- b. Matt:** JRA is hosting four teacher professional trainings this summer. Matt asked everyone to help distribute the flyers about each session.
- c. Callie and Brianna:** James River SWCD is busy with the Envirothon Competition on April 15. There are also scholarships for high school students to pursue studies in natural resources, as well as the Youth Conservation Corps scholarships. Summer camp signup is due by April 14.
- d. Julie:** CVWMA is busy promoting the “purple cart” food waste drop-off program.
- e. Lori:** DCR Environmental Education is available to support the group in any way it can.
- f. Kate:** Some LuckStone employees attended the DEQ Environment Virginia Symposium in March, where they learned about some upcoming changes to inspections and PFAS.
- g. Isabella:** TJPDC has rain barrel workshop coming up and will participate in several other events: Charlottesville RiverFest (May 9), Eco Fair and Bike Month.
- h. Michael:** Lynchburg Water participated in a local maker fair, where it debuted its augmented reality sandbox. Clean the Bay Day is May 2.
- i. Cody:** Peter Francisco SWCD is busy implementing more than 230 contracts for agricultural cost share.
- j. Kathleen:** VDOF will offer its Woods and Wildlife Camp this summer, and Kathleen’s team is busy with buffer plantings and Arbor Day and Earth Day events.

Next Meeting: