

Middle James Roundtable Steering Committee Meeting

MINUTES

MAY 8, 2024

MEETING CALLED BY	Lorne Field, Chair
TYPE OF MEETING	Steering Committee Meeting
NOTE TAKER	Julie Buchanan
ATTENDEES	Lorne Field (Chesterfield County Env Engineering), Kathleen Ogilvy (VDOF), Sharon Conner (Hanover-Caroline SWCD), Michael Daniel (Lynchburg Water Resources), Catherine McCarthy (Henrico County DPW) Matt Scott Stone (JRA), Isbella O'Brien (TJPDC), Julie Buchanan (CVWMA), Courtney Harlow-Humphries (TJSWCD), Maura Christian (DEQ), Madison Whitehurst (DEQ), Nat Draper (JRA)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

FISCAL UPDATE

DISCUSSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. A fiscal report was shared with all partners via email on 5/7/24 and discussed during the meeting. A total of \$2,303.20 has been spent, which includes payments to Henricopolis for the Constant Contact account; Virginia Tech for soil test vouchers and Peter Francisco SWCD for remaining septic pump-outs from last year, plus the first two months of pump-outs for this year. B. A revised budget was sent to DEQ for approval; MJRT does not yet have an approved grant agreement for this year. C. Chesterfield County Environmental Engineering still needs to spend money on interpretive signs. 		
CONCLUSIONS			
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	

DEQ GRANT

DISCUSSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Sharon shared the MJRT Milestone Table which will be helpful for roundtable members who have obligations in the grant agreement. The table shows each activity, deliverable and progress to date. Sharon will share this ahead of every meeting. B. The group discussed web-based outreach. In lieu of a monthly newsletter, it was decided MJRT will post more on Facebook and use Constant Contact for announcement blasts when appropriate. C. Sharon mentioned difficulties she and Julie have encountered with Weebly and inability to share account info. 		
CONCLUSIONS	MJRT may need to look at a better solution for its website.		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE	
Concentrate on sharing more Facebook posts and email blasts vs. regular e-newsletter.	Julie		

JAMES RIVER REGIONAL CLEANUP

DISCUSSION	A. The group discussed the possibility of taking on the 25 th James River Regional Cleanup in a grassroots fashion. The cleanup is typically the second Saturday of September, which is also the kickoff for James River Week. For 24 years, the cleanup has been the project of the James River Advisory Council; however, JRAC hasn't formally met in two years. For the cleanup to continue, it will need some other organization to spearhead it. Lorne has been cleanup chair for several years. Various orgs manage each cleanup site. There is a JRAC website that has been used to promote the cleanup in the past.
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	<p>B. Sharon proposed that if MJRT took on this project, perhaps focus on one site, rather than multiple sites. Sites have typically been in Lynchburg, Hampton Roads, Richmond, Petersburg (Belle Isle section of the James has always been a popular site).</p> <p>C. The group agreed that MJRT partners could possibly coordinate site cleanups on the same day (Sept. 14) and times could vary from location to location. Sharon mentioned Virginia Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts might have willing volunteers through the Youth Conservation Leadership Institute.</p>	
CONCLUSIONS	Lorne will follow up with the group after speaking with former JRAC executive director about any leftover funding, supplies.	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Speak with former JRAC executive director.	Lorne	By next meeting

ANNUAL MEETING PLANNING

DISCUSSION	<p>Matt – There is a possibility that JRA’s new site may not be able to accommodate the annual meeting. Matt has a meeting on Monday 5/13 about this and will update the group with more info. Matt has secured Giles Garrison (James River Park) and Amber Ellis (JRA) as meeting speakers.</p> <p>Lorne suggested we have a backup meeting location such as Rockwood Nature Center or Rosslyn.</p> <p>The Schuyler Quarry Gardens and Virginia Farm Bureau were also suggested.</p> <p>MJRT has \$800 available in budget for facility and speaker fees.</p> <p>The meeting date will still be Sept. 4.</p> <p>At least two more speakers are needed to round out the program agenda.</p> <p>Lorne: Ashley Moulton is not available to speak; she recommended another speaker about native plants/Flora of Virginia. Sharon will look up the name of the William and Mary professor who has been involved with the Flora project.</p> <p>Isabella suggested inviting Blue Ridge PRISM as a speaker.</p> <p>Lorne reminded everyone to give speaker invitees the option to attend, even if they aren’t able to be a speaker.</p> <p>Lorne will contact someone with Maymont to speak about invasive species management.</p> <p>General Session in AM Giles (James River Park Superintendent) - keynote Amber Ellis (JRA Restoration Director) 1-2 more speakers are needed for morning session.</p> <p>Lunch</p> <p>After lunch: Table sessions / walking tour of Chapel Island</p>	
CONCLUSIONS	Matt will update the group about river center availability following JRA’s meeting on Monday May 13.	
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Contact Lisa Wittenborn w/ Rivanna Conservation Alliance about speaking	Isabella	
Contact Richmond Tree Stewards – tabling event	Matt	
Food vendors for catering/social	Catie	
Look into fee for attendance	Sharon/Julie	

DISCUSSION			
CONCLUSIONS			
ACTION ITEMS		PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

ROUND ROBIN

EVERYONE

	<p>Lorne: Chesterfield County Environmental Engineering hosted two sold-out rain barrel workshops (they are always in high demand) and conducted school field trips at Dutch Gap Conservation Area. The department has several job openings, including plan reviewer.</p> <p>Madison: DEQ's Nonpoint Source program will open its request for applications in June. This will be for 319 funding for entities to do work in completed Implementation Plan areas that addresses nonpoint source pollution.</p> <p>Maura: Virginia has achieved 80% of its 2009-2025 reduction goal for nitrogen, 62% of its reduction goal for phosphorus and 100% of its reduction goal for sediment. The Commonwealth did not meet its 2023 pollution reducing targets for nitrogen and phosphorus.</p> <p>Sharon: Echo Lorne – April was extremely busy. Hanover-Caroline SWCD allocated over \$5 million in Virginia Agricultural BMP Cost-Share funding. While this is a record for Hanover-Caroline, allocation doesn't always equate to implementation of all projects. The district reached every 6th grader with a meaningful watershed experience in April.</p> <p>Matt: New JRA river center should be read for move-in June 10; ribbon cutting on July 10; open house planned for September.</p> <p>Catie: The Henrico County Earth Day Festival at Deep Run Park was successful. Lots of children attended. Dept. of Public Works hosted a table with kids crafts. The department also participated in outreach during the Stony Point Fashion Park paper shredding event. DPW is waiting for its Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant to be approved. The HEART Water Resources Sub-Committee is working with high schoolers in a county externship to build rain barrels. The finished barrels would be distributed to Henrico high schools.</p> <p>Michael: Lynchburg Water Resources tabled at several Earth day and gardening events in April and handed out soil test vouchers. This Thursday there is a Barrel Brush event, which is a paint night for rain barrels that the participants get to take home. Virginia Save Our Streams Trainings will be held the next two Saturdays to get people certified as Benthic Macroinvertebrate Stream Monitors. A stream cleanup is planned June 1 on Percival's Island.</p> <p>Isabella: TJPDC has a rain barrel workshop coming up May 16 in Nelson County for up to 25 community members. This Saturday, May 18th, Isabella will table at the Rivanna Riverfest to share information about rain barrels and the PDC's Homeowner's Guide for Stormwater and Water Quality Management.</p>
CONCLUSIONS	N/A

Next Meeting – June 11, 10 a.m.-noon, location TBD

Meeting Adjourned!