

Middle James Roundtable Steering Committee Meeting

MINUTES

MARCH 29, 2022

9 AM – 10:45 AM STEERING

VIRTUAL MEETINGS

MEETING CALLED BY	Nancy Lily, Chairperson (Lynchburg)
TYPE OF MEETING	Steering Committee Meeting
NOTE TAKER	Sharon Conner (Hanover-Caroline SWCD)
ATTENDEES	Betty McCracken (Monacan SWCD), Jennifer Clark (RVA DPU), Olivia Hall (Henrico), Jennifer Palmore (DEQ), Lorne Field (Chesterfield), Lindy Durham (Henricopolis SWCD), Julie Buchanan (CVWMA)

Agenda topics

2022 GRANT

NANCY LILY

DISCUSSION	<p>Given the delay in funding, the deliverables for the 2022 grant must be completed in 9 months</p> <p>Olivia asked Jennifer Palmore about 1st quarter expenditures. As long as the money spent in the 1st quarter is part of overall 2022 deliverables, there is no problem in submitting them.</p> <p>Grant Deliverable Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Activity 1: MJRT Fiscal Agent – No report from Lindy yet B. Activity 2: Website Hosting and Domain Name – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The bill is paid at end of year o Will need to pay attention in June to both Google hosting and Weebly to make sure that licenses are renewed o Lindy has passwords on both accounts. Nancy will reach out to Lindy for the passwords. C. Activity 3: Quarterly Steering Committee Meetings – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Nancy suggested getting together an in-person paddle in Lynchburg for the summer quarterly steering committee meeting o She will reach out to Rob with JRA to organize the opportunity o A doodle poll will be sent out to everyone to determine a date for the next meeting D. Activity 4: Executive Committee Meetings – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Will plan on meeting after the steering committee meetings o Unfortunately there were not enough executive members remaining on the call to have that meeting today E. Activity 5: Regional Watershed Workshop – The Annual Meeting discussion is captured in the next section of the minutes. F. Activity 6: Web-based Electronic Outreach – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Being accomplished with Facebook and bi-monthly newsletters o Olivia has been updating/running those and asked for anyone with job postings to send them to her o Olivia had trouble adding Julie Buchanan to Facebook account and Lorne is not administrator. Julie will sent Olivia friend request o It was suggested that the Facebook page should highlight uplifting stories regarding the work being done on septic G. Activity 7: Soil Test Vouchers – No report from Lindy H. Activity 8: Septic Pump-out Cost Share Vouchers/Environmental Justice – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Olivia will get up with Betty and Sherry Ragland on numbers of vouchers and report something on social media o Sherry Ragland will submit a quarterly invoice for pumping to Lindy o In the grant deliverables for Septic vouchers, the information must be entered into VAST. Olivia is willing to do that. She will need clarification from Sherry Ragland on the numbers. I. Activity 9: Rain Barrel Purchase, Installation and Homeowner Education – Sharon needs to get breakdown on funds between HSWCD and HCSWCD; will start purchasing soon. 	
	CONCLUSIONS	<p>The grant is 3-months behind in being issued by DEQ, so only 9 months remaining to achieve deliverables.</p>
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

Passwords shared by Henricopolis SWCD for Google hosting and Weebly	Nancy Lily	
Organization of paddle on James for next steering committee	Nancy Lily	
Doodle poll for next meeting	Nancy Lily	
Assistance with Facebook access for Julie Buchanan	Olivia Hall	
Septic numbers entered into VAST	Olivia Hall	
Send job postings/stories for Newsletter/Facebook to Olivia Hall	Everyone	

ANNUAL MEETING 2022

NANCY LILY

DISCUSSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Time of year – the meeting will be held in October B. Meeting Venue – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The meeting will be hybrid o After group discussion, the meeting location will be Lynchburg o Nancy volunteered to investigate meeting venues and technical capacity of venues in the Lynchburg area C. Environmental Justice Theme – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Jennifer Palmore reminded the group that the grant deliverables required an EJ theme or focus o Sharon reviewed list of speakers from the previous brainstorming session D. Topics/Speakers for Meeting – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o The main theme for annual meeting will be “Environmental Justice Funding Opportunities in the James Watershed” o The main sub-themes will be septic, urban heat islands/tree canopy, riparian buffers, livestock exclusions, and possibly combined sanitary sewer systems. o The group proposed highlighting the differences between “urban and rural” grant programs that curb TMDL bacteria loads and the different solutions available. o Another broad topic that could be integrated into the agenda is “point source vs. non-point source” with a multi-level agenda starting from the small homeowner with failing infrastructure to the larger city-level infrastructure. o The group suggested a look at septic issues through the lens of environmental justice possibly with a panel discussion. o Sharon suggested an additional EJ focus on livestock exclusion programs/Ag funding opportunities for underserved farmers. She will contact VSU for a potential speaker. o Nicole Sandburg, VDH, was suggested as a speaker for septic grant monies and how they are distributed to low income families. Olivia will reach out to VDH for a speaker. o Charles City County CBPA septic program could be highlighted. Potential speakers include James MoneyMaker, Heather Mackey or Susan Hale at DEQ. Jennifer Palmore will determine the appropriate speaker contact at DEQ. o Sherry Ragland with Peter Francisco SWCD could speak about their septic grant. Olivia will contact Sherry about speaking. o Olivia commented that there are still lots of older subdivisions in urban settings with septic issues and a need for funding opportunities. They may have failing septic systems or they may opt to connect to sanitary sewer. o Jennifer Clarke has worked with projects regarding tree canopy and green infrastructure (green alleyways) in Richmond. This could be a potential meeting topic. o City of Lynchburg could showcase different levels of conservation including septic, dog waste, combined sanitary sewer, and forestry/buffer work o Nancy suggested a field trip after the meeting such as rafting to highlight the story of river cleanup. o Jennifer Clark wanted to make sure that the meeting focus did not gravitate to just MS4 combined sewer systems. She suggested that the meeting focus on other topics and if “filler” is needed, Richmond and Lynchburg could be added. o Nancy discussed the resilience group’s work in Lynchburg that is directed at urban heat islands and tree canopy/riparian buffers. She will try to secure a teachers/professors to speak on this topic.
CONCLUSIONS	The main theme will be Environmental Justice as it relates to conservation funding opportunities in the James.

ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE
Meeting location and technical capacity for hybrid meeting	Nancy Lily	By next meeting
Speakers for Buffers and Heat Island/Resilience Group	Nancy Lily	
DEQ CBPA Program speaker	Jennifer Palmore	
Charles City County CBPA Septic Program speaker	Olivia Hall	
VDH Speaker (Nicole Sandberg)	Olivia Hall	
Peter Francisco SWCD Septic Program Speaker (Sherry Ragland)	Olivia Hall	
VSU Ag funding opportunities speaker	Sharon Conner	
JRA Rafting "Field Trip" after meeting	Nancy Lily	

ROUND ROBIN

EVERYONE

DISCUSSION	<p>Nancy Lily – Will Launch a citizen science program to go with existing water quality program in May. The program focuses on testing pH, dissolved oxygen and will piloting biological sampling opportunities. She is trying to obtain storm drain stencils from Richmond for Lynchburg's Art Storm program. She will call on area artists to make stencils in the fall. She is also running a bunch summer camps this year.</p> <p>Jenn Clarke – Senate Bill 554 would have put on tighter time line RVA's \$1.3 billion sewer project. They have received no federal funding and less state funding. The 10 projects will be used to hold storm water in place using "blue technology." They will form stakeholder group of 18 with representation from across the city. They are also partnering with JRA on greening of libraries with primarily the planting of trees.</p> <p>Betty – has been busy spending cost share funds. She continues to work with Sherry Ragland on the septic pumpout program. Because the price of gas has increased, the price of septic pumpouts is increasing. They are going to see if they are held to the 33 pumpouts referenced in the grant or if they can simply stick to the amount of funding requested and have less pumpouts.</p> <p>Jennifer – still trying to fill Katie Rangers position. This may be Jennifer's last meeting with the MJRT once position is filled.</p> <p>Olivia – Henrico County acquired part of Malverne Hill farm. The property is restricted due to environmental and historical significance. However, the property may have space available for future events. Stream restorations are ongoing in Henrico. There have been departmental changes and her division is only the Environmental Services Division now. They are hosting a native plant event at Dorey Park on April 30 and a Free Energy Fair on April 22.</p> <p>Julie – introduced herself. She started in November taking over the position previously filled by Nancy Drumheller. She is still getting feet wet in the new position but did work at DCR for past 11 years.</p> <p>Lorne – getting going with rain-barrel workshop on April 23. During earth day week, he will set up volunteers for self-guided park clean-ups. The stormwater management division in Chesterfield will be looking to hire positions.</p> <p>Sharon – Discussed increased funding for Ag cost-share and VCAP programs. Also noted HCSWCD's application for a NOAA B-wet grant towards environmental literacy capacity building.</p>	
CONCLUSIONS		
ACTION ITEMS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	DEADLINE

Meeting Adjourned!

Jennifer Palmore followed up on the speaker request from DEQ with Justin Williams, Director of the Office of Watershed & Local Government Assistance Programs. His number is 804-698-4185.