

**Neighbors of Northwest Branch
Minutes of Board Meeting
October 4, 2022**

1. Welcome

Present on Zoom: Nora Swisher, Anne Ambler, Kem Morawski, Rebecca Henson, Kristin Backert, Matt Boyer, Melissa Schweisguth, Ben Simasek, Michael Evans.

2. Treasurer's report

The treasurer's report from Larry Hush shows a balance of \$8,197.69. Melissa suggested that we go over expenditures once a year—maybe after the board elections to get people oriented.

3. Fiscal agent - Forest Knolls

No update on Forest Knolls. It is getting too late to do the project this year anyway.

Fiscal Agent - Springsong Museum

The Springsong Museum applied for a 501(c)(3) public, but they got a 501(c)(3) private instead. This means that they can accept modest donations, but not large monetary gifts. They have a couple of gifts that are large. They need access to the money now. Rebecca asked if NNWB would be a fiscal sponsor for Springsong while they work on getting the 501(c)(3) public. They have some pro bono lawyers helping with this but the IRS is very slow in responding. She has an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding). Rebecca would draw a small salary so she could spend more time on this. She would step down from the board, or recuse herself during board discussions on this subject so there would be no conflict of interest. We would get a fee for our services (3% of grants) and Rebecca thinks that the Springsong Museum is in line with our mission.

Matt commented that NNWB would have to do some work-issue 1099's, etc., but the nature of this is not a big issue and not complicated and totally mission aligned.

Nora will ask Larry Hush, treasurer, if he would be willing to take on some of the fiscal oversight/work. The committee will have to do some work on this as well—to start with, we will have to explore the best way to handle this.

4. Statewide plastic bag strategy - Anne

There have been many bills that have gone to the state over the years to either have a ban or a fee on plastic bags and none have passed. There was no attempt last year and no bill is expected this year. Localities are taking action and passing their own laws (such as Baltimore City, Easton). City of Hyattsville has proposed a ban on plastic bags and a minimum fee for stores to charge for paper. The state attorney general said that businesses could charge a fee that they could keep since Prince George's County does have the authority to tax. As more localities do this, then there will be more of a call for the state to get involved so that businesses don't have to act piecemeal.

5. Bottle deposit – Anne

Again, people have tried to get this passed at the state level for years and have not succeeded. DC is talking about this but they want Maryland and Virginia to pass this first so that people aren't bringing all their bottles to DC. Organizations such as Sierra Club, League of Conservation Voters, Chesapeake Bay Foundation should take the lead on this. NNWB should support this. In the past Montgomery County has been against this as they had a good revenue stream coming in; however, that may have changed since China has cut way back on what they will accept.

6. Salt Watch Program with Izaak Walton League (IWL).

IWL has proposed that we be listed on their website as a partner. We would be provided salt water test kits and pass any resulting data along to them. There are some rules regarding using their logo, etc. Test kits use a strip with a key and measures salt per liter. An individual is encouraged to do 3 tests each—one during “normal” conditions and the other two after snow/ice event. Nora is to sign us up and ask IWL about the shelf life of the kits. We will have to determine how many we want to request so we may ask membership who is interested.

7. Grant opportunities—exploring project ideas.

Several names of grantors were sent in by a member as a result of the listening session. We need to be aware of grant possibilities.

Everyone—think of program ideas to be held during one of our monthly meetings

8. Miscellaneous.

Nora is to get a Zoom account as the last one was in Anne's name.

Melissa brought up two items regarding bylaws; VP titles and pronouns. The VP title question was whether we wanted to change the VP titles in the Bylaws to refer to counties versus stream segments as they are now so that they match the county-based titles used in elections and on the website, or change the titles on the website. The board opted to keep the bylaws as they are for now and change the VP titles on the website to segment-based. The last time the bylaws were visited was in 2010. At some point we will need to look at them again to bring them up to date, including looking at pronouns and further discussion of VP titles.

9. Next board meeting is **November 1st**.