

**Neighbors of Northwest Branch  
Minutes of Board Meeting  
August 2, 2022**

**1. Welcome - 7:32pm**

Present on Zoom: Nora Swisher, Rebecca Henson, James Graham, Matt Boyer, Melissa Schweisguth, Ben Simasek, Anne Ambler, Julie Keenahan.

**2. Treasurer's report**

The treasurer's report from Larry Hush shows a balance of \$8,170.25. \$96.52 in donations was received, and \$167.35 was expended. The largest expense was the payments of our insurance premiums, totaling \$162.48 and covering a 6-month period.

**3. Suffrage Point - Nora**

Nora reported that Greg Smith from Sustainable Hyattsville has followed up to gauge NNWB's interest in different forms of involvement in the community actions taking shape around the Suffrage Point project. Nora will follow up with Greg to state that NNWB is not in a position to participate in lawsuits, but would like more information on the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) inspections and the nature of the proposed organizational letter to MDE.

**4. ANS/The Story of Streams – Nora**

Nora reported that ANS' Story of Streams Report will be issued by ANS in one week, 8/8, and Kem & Nora attended an ANS presentation on the project. Kem and Anne were involved in the project. The website (linked below) will go live 8/8, and an in-person launch event will follow 8/10. There will be a form for readers to connect to NNWB, as the community partner for the NWB, and this page will give them the ability to pick activities they'd be interested in engaging in, make a donation, or connect with other organizations. Nora will be sent the responses automatically.

NNWB will need to set up responses to interested parties, set some follow up engagements for them, and be prepared to connect with them. Nora will lead this work, as the recipient of the inquiries.

Discussion on this point included inquiring about Spanish language engagement materials, other streams included (Oxon Run & Holmes Run), being sure to set realistic engagement plans and goals for NNWB, and what

the goals of the overall project are (to help the broader watershed and engage more local residents in meaningful efforts to help).

<https://anshome.org/the-story-of-streams-coming-soon/>

## 5. **Values & Goals Discussion - Nora**

Nora led the Board in the next phase of our continued discussion around our organizational values and goals. This included sharing results from our last session (June 7), noting categories of responses, and beginning to discuss activities and measurable goals that follow from the main values identified.

Some key points noted in this discussion included:

- including a reference to advocacy as a key value/activity,
- keeping a focus on stewardship,
- stressing “locality” and local impact as critical,
- the need for increased outreach,
- the need for regular, reliable, and well-publicized engagement points and activities,
- clearer ongoing goals, roles, and activities, and
- ways to increase our profile and presence.

Nora will record the results of the discussion for Board review, and potential posting on the website.

## 6. **Next meeting/Fall Activities**

The next Board meeting will be 9/6. A speaker may be scheduled for this event, which needs to be completed and publicized soon.

It was noted that Fall activities need to be scheduled and planned asap as well. Ben Simasek volunteered to run a clean-up at Lane Manor 9/17 or 9/24, and Matt Boyer volunteered to run one or two fall cleanups at Burnt Mills, (10/15 or 10/22, and 11/12 or 11/29). Nora will follow up with Ben and Matt, and others, to solidify these plans so leaders can make needed arrangements. She will also send a calendar where Board members can record events they would like to run/help with. The meeting was adjourned at 9:01pm.