**Minutes from Board Meeting 8/4/20 (Zoom)**

Present: Anne Ambler, Kristin Backert, Laura Barnitz, Michael Evans, James Graham, Kem Morawski

1. Kem Morawski introduced as a new board member.
2. Anne volunteered for President, James for VP, Kem for Secretary. Anne to ask Larry if he will continue as Treasurer. [Larry agreed to continue as Treasurer.]
3. Treasurer’s report: We have $4141.11. The most recent disbursement was $162.48 for 6 months liability insurance.
4. Unanimous vote to sign onto letter requesting safe trail crossings. (We're calling on the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to implement bicycle and pedestrian crossing improvements at Riggs Road (MD-212) and East West Highway (MD-410), which intersect with Sligo Creek Trail and nearby highway corridors.)
5. Fall plans:

Anne to get Zoom for Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec. meetings for $14.99 a month. This will permit both public meetings and any additional board meetings we need, with no time limit.

Cleanups:

Clean ups will be a lot more complicated with Covid-19 restrictions. Laura talked to Henry Coppola, former volunteer coordinator at Montgomery County Parks, and thought letting them know a month in advance was ample notification. The Parks HQ is moving offices to Wheaton, so we might not be able to get supplies from them now, but maybe by Oct. People have to sign up in advance, sign waiver; there will be timed entry to spread people out. Unsure how many people will be allowed—25/30 or less? TBD. If people show up without signing up, they can’t use park supplies—can clean up on their own.

Laura plans to lead a clean-up in October or November—TBD.

James suggested a hike in November but there may be logistical problems re spacing people out.

Speakers:

Someone from Anacostia Riverkeepers was suggested as a speaker for September’s public meeting to talk about bacterial load in streams and their water monitoring. Next meeting is Sept. 1st.

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1. Activity updates:

Kem and Anne doing a water monitoring trip tomorrow with Anacostia Riverkeepers on the NWB at University Blvd.

Discussed people and dogs swimming in NWB. Kem suggested asking Park people for warning signs as people don’t seem to know about the bacterial load. James suggested putting the information on the kiosks at Burnt Mills on either side of Rt. 29. Kem to contact Lynn Vismara with Parks to ask if they will do that.

Discussed pollution levels along NWB—the NWB test site is pretty far downstream. Anne asked Anacostia Riverkeepers if they could do site sampling further up the river. (Answer: farther upstream will come later.)

1. Anne sent in our testimony re the balloon release ban (Bill 20-06) to the Montgomery County Council for the hearing. The Council has not yet voted on it.

NNWB also weighed in with the Planning Board in opposition to Foulger-Pratt’s plan to close one block of Ellsworth Drive and glue synthetic turf to the road surface.

Our opposition was not to the closure, but only to introducing microplastic particles with many associated toxins, the necessary sanitizing chemicals, and flame retardants to runoff into Sligo Creek, which flows into the NWB. Despite much scientific objection, the Planning Board approved the plan, assuming the Montgomery County Council agrees to abandon that section of the road. The Council has not yet taken up the issue.

Anne reported that the 18,000-page Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the beltway and I-270 expansion is now out for public comment. The Sierra Club, Citizens Against Beltway Expansion ([https://www.cabe495.com](https://www.cabe495.com/)/), Don’t Widen I-270 (<https://dontwiden270.org/>), and others are reviewing it.

Anne mentioned a recently created map of stormwater waivers (where you can pay $ instead of mitigating stormwater runoff). Not so many waivers along NWB, but a lot in Bethesda.

1. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.