Calvert County Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes – January 31, 2022

**Members Present:** Jim Levin (Chair), Amanda Knobloch (Vice Chair), Dave Hardy, Carys Mitchelmore, Andy Rogers, Mike Rooney, Autumn Phillips-Lewis, Neil Smith

**Members Absent:** Chad Leo

**Staff:** Paul Conover, Liaison & Jesse Clark, Moderator

**Guests:** Dr. Clifford S. Mitchell & Kiera Saleem

I. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:06 pm.

II. **Roll Call for Quorum:** Jim Levin facilitated a roll call for quorum purposes. Eight members were present, achieving a quorum for the meeting.

III. **Approval of Agenda:** Andy Rogers motioned to approve the agenda. Dave Hardy seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

IV. **Guest Speaker Program:** Dr. Clifford S. Mitchell, Director of Environmental Health, Bureau of Prevention and Health Promotion Administration in the MD Department of Health and Kiera Saleem, MD Department of Environment. *The Departments of Health and Environment work closely together on Radon-related issues. Both work under the State Indoor Radon Grant provided by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce indoor radon exposure.* Dr. Mitchell and Ms. Saleem presented information about raising awareness about radon, radon-related issues, and health and environmental impacts of exposure to radon; followed by answering questions from the Environmental Commission.

V. **Election of Officers:** Paul explained the requirements that need to be met in order to become or renew position as Chair or Vice Chair of Environmental Commission.

   a. **Chair:**
      i. Nominations: Jim Levin, *accepted*
      ii. Dave Hardy motions to re-elect Jim Levin as Chair of Environmental Commission. Andy Rogers seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

   b. **Vice Chair:**
      i. Nominations: Amanda Knobloch, *accepted*
      ii. Andy Rogers motions to re-elect Amanda Knobloch as Vice Chair of Environmental Commission. Dave Hardy seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.
VI. Old Business:

a. **Website Progress Update: Amanda**
   i. No major updates
   ii. Forwarded suggestions subcommittee made to Paul
   iii. Contacting the Web Master in the next month or so
   iv. Working with the Web Master to implement the suggestions we made and then talking with marketing at some point to talk about getting Environmental Commission’s name out there.

b. **Leaf-Burning Alternatives: Jim**
   i. Dave pointed out a couple months ago that it’s illegal in county to openly burn leaves – typically in the fall. Jim did research and state Department of Natural Resources regulates leaf burning, in Maryland Code of Regulations: Title 8, Subtitle 7, Chapter 4 on Forest Fire Protection.
   ii. Jim will send a copy of this to everyone
   iii. Jim would like to put together an FAQ recommending alternatives
   iv. Jim would also like to speak with Dept. of Public Works about any policies they have about open-burning and alternatives (i.e. composting piles, bringing leaves to the Appeal Landfill, and any other possibilities)
   v. **Request to Paul:** Could you check on an appropriate contact at Dept. of Public Works that Dave H. and Jim L. can speak to?

c. **Strategic Initiatives: Jim**
   i. One of the things discussed in November and December meetings was whether or not to adopt more than one Strategic Initiatives for emphasis in terms of FAQ’s/Public Awareness/Public Outreach/Writing Articles – Is this something the commission is interested in? Should we formally adopt more than one? (Radon Awareness; Local Flooding; Invasive Species and Native Plants; Reforestation; Stormwater Management; Sustainable Household Practices; Waste Minimization and Recycling; & General Water Quality.
   ii. First question to take into consideration: Should we adopt one or more of Strategic Initiatives to really focus on during the course of this year? For the purpose of educating the public.
      - Autumn: *Certainly not opposed to the idea; what’s involved, how much work, etc. If time allows, it’s a good idea.*
      - Dave: *It’s a good year to push radon – One topic and it be radon.*
      - Amanda: *Good idea to maybe pick 2 or 3 – not too many though.*
      - Neil: *Shouldn’t spread ourselves too thin, won’t have a concentrated message. On board with Radon, but sees Amanda’s point of not solely focused on one issue all the time. Another topic could maybe be: Invasive Species.*
• Mike: Is there a mapped out Strategic Vision of 2022? Items that we have or are seeking to address? (Wasn’t sent the “menu” of options to choose from – Jim sent it via email during the meeting for his review.) – He asked to get circled back to.

• Carys: Good idea; depends on the topics but 2 would be good.
  a. How do we pick them: Ask BOCC (Do they have anything they want us to focus on?)?; Can we do a Social Media poll and get public feedback?; or Do we something ourselves?
  b. Out of the list that was sent:
     i. Water Quality (Stormwater Management fits in with this topic, or could be combined. Waste Recycling and Plastic Pollution could as well.)
     ii. Invasive Species
     iii. Environmental Justice could be considered; it’s broad enough.
  c. Maybe we can do a workshop?

• Andy: Reservations about how it will be picked: Are people excited/willing to work on this?
  a. Better to let people pick issues they’re interested in
  b. Regroup subcommittees around issues rather than functions – Maybe pick 2-3 subcommittee to work on 2-3 topics.

  d. Radon Awareness Campaign Update: Jim
    i. Use the presentation
    ii. Request some wording for suggesting a proclamation from BOCC
    iii. Can start distributing Radon brochures
    iv. We might consider an article in one of the local newspapers or maybe Facebook or other Social Media Platforms
       • Marty Madsen covers local issues in one of the newspapers.

e. Action Items: Jim – Not going over all of them
  i. Try to recruit members
     • Knowledgeable on one or more environmental issues
     • Interested in being active on environmental issues within county
  ii. Discuss Annual Report in a little bit: If some haven’t seen it yet, we might table it to next month for discussion and approval.

VII. Sub-Committee Reports:

  a. FAQs: Jim Levin spoke on this:
     i. Drafted the FAQs for Household Hazardous Waste & Paint Waste.
ii. The one’s had approved are not on this month’s agenda, we will talk a little bit later about the Paint Waste Disposal Variation on FAQ that Mike has reformatted.

iii. Want to have full Environmental Commission review and approve household hazardous waste & Paint Waste disposal FAQs.

iv. Dave and Andy are drafting one or more FAQs on Southern Maryland wildlife.

v. Based on discussions with Dept. of Public Works, Dave and Jim will be drafting an FAQ on Leaf Burning Alternatives.

b. **Public Education and Outreach:** Amanda Knobloch spoke on this:
   i. No updates
   ii. Those in subcommittee will be emailed in February to set up a meeting to discuss 2022 plan and what we’ll be doing for Pump for the Bay, etc.
   iii. Any Pump for the Bay applications should be sent to Amanda to handle.

c. **Guest Speakers:** Neil Smith spoke on this:
   i. No updates
   ii. Have guest speakers until March – revisit at a later date: subcommittee meeting in February sometime
   iii. Speaker in February? Send email to Jim.
   iv. Jim heard a presentation from a Deputy Attorney General of Maryland on Environmental Justice:
      - Will talk to Neil more about this at a future subcommittee meeting
      - He’s somebody we should probably reach out to, to see if he’d be willing to give a presentation on Environmental Justice and some things the state is moving forward on.

v. Carys: Had a guest speaker in one of her classes who has started up an NGO on Environmental Justice – She might be a good guest speaker. *We will discuss this at the next subcommittee meeting.*

d. **Sustainability:** Jim Levin spoke on this:
   This wraps into Radon and Strategic Initiatives, so there is nothing else to report at the moment.

VIII. **New Business:**

a. **FAQ Approval: Household Paint Waste Disposal**
   i. Has everyone had a chance to look at Mike’s reformating?
   ii. Dave added a section on spray paint can disposal and was told to expand on that to spray can disposal but should have a paragraph on spray paint can disposal.
iii. Mike: There are additional federal regulations that passed a number of years ago regarding aerosol cans and how to dispose of them.

iv. Autumn: There was a sentence added to bottom in red; it should have a “.” after “...waste site...” and the rest should be its own sentence. For the entire last paragraph, “oil-based” should continue to be hyphenated like it is at the top.

v. Jim: I will send out the full-length FAQ; put the Environmental Commission logo on the upper right-hand corner; maybe use these as handouts and edit other FAQs to be one-page documents.

vi. Amanda: I will make sure FAQ side of the website looks nicer and more inviting.

vii. Jim: I will send something out to clarify what we’re doing

viii. Dave: I think I added a paragraph to one of the FAQ versions about spray paint can disposal.

ix. Jim: We should do a separate FAQ on that, in my opinion, since it’s not just spray paint can but also spray can.

x. Mike: I agree, but we should have at least one sentence on it: “For further information, look here...”

b. General Announcements:

i. 2021 Financial Disclosure Forms:
   - Has everyone received this?
     a. If they have any questions, contact Ashley Staples-Reid.
     b. It is due back by March 31st.

ii. Maryland Open Meeting Act – Email Correspondence:
   - Paul: Emails are BCC’s because it’s to protect everybody since the Open Meeting Laws extend to Email Correspondences.

c. Draft Annual Report Review:

i. General consensus was to table this until next meeting.

ii. Andy motions to hold off on reviewing the Draft Annual Report until next month. Amanda seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

d. 2022 Meeting Dates:

i. The meeting dates will typically be the last Monday of each month, starting at 6 pm.

ii. The exception is
   - May, which will be May 23rd instead of Memorial Day, and
   - December, which will be December 12th to avoid interference with the holidays.

iii. Andy: Is the December meeting necessary? (The bylaws state the Environmental Commission should hold one regular meeting per month...Which means it is not necessarily a requirement to hold one every month.)
iv. Paul: *It is good to have the date on there with the caveat that it is not necessary, and then decide a month or two before the meeting whether it is necessary to hold the meeting.*

v. Amanda motions to accept the meeting schedule of 2022 with the amendments as discussed. Andy seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

IX. **Public Comment:** There were no public comments.

X. **Adjournment:**

a. Andy Rogers motioned to adjourn, Dave Hardy seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

b. The next meeting of the Calvert County Environmental Commission will be February 28, 2022.

*Meeting Minutes for the January 2022 Environmental Commission Meeting were prepared by Caitlyn Tolomei (P&Z Administrative Support Staff).*