

MINUTES

Advisory Commission on Environmental Quality (CEQ)

September 26, 7 PM

Jefferson Building, Chesapeake Room, 105 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Towson, MD 21204

CEQ meeting dates, membership information, and reports are available online

Here: www.baltimorecountymd.gov/Agencies/ceq/index.html

Lois Jacobs, Brian Lindley, Kui Zhao, Linda Davis, Valerie Andotsopoulos, Andy Miller, Rex Wright, Brian Fath.

Open Meeting

I. Welcome and Comments/Updates – Lois Jacobs, Chair

We need to find out when our terms are up and the protocol regarding potential reappointment. With the upcoming election there may be changes that could result in different choices in the coming year, but presumably at the time when a Commission member's appointment ends. We should have 15 members; we currently have 12. We need someone from Homebuilders Assoc. and Kathy Bevins hasn't yet found someone to replace Dan Doerfer. We should check the rules on how appointments are made.

II. Discuss and Approve minutes of May 23rd meeting.

We can look at the minutes but can't vote to approve because we don't have a quorum (partly on account of the storm in progress). Thus far there are no recommended changes.

III. Painted Tree Report and County Council Bill 67-18 (Regulation of Park Activities).

Lois was the only Commission member to attend the work session. Work sessions are now recorded and put on line. We tried hard with this bill to be nonpartisan and collegial and we appear to have succeeded; overall the members of the Council seemed positively disposed and thanked us for our work. We are also doubling the amount of money for tree replanting/forest conservation to extend the contracts for work that needs to be done including planting this fall.

The vote for the bill will be on Oct. 1. Lois and Karen plan to attend the Council Meeting.

There is nothing in the bill likely to prevent us from dealing with the deer problem. According to Valerie there is concern about the green lantern fly which is in Pennsylvania and is infesting Ailanthus trees and could possibly move over to other species such as fruit orchard trees. Linda commented that SHA is already removing some of the Ailanthus at the northern end of I-83.

IV. Status of Deer in County Parks – Brian L. and Linda

Vince put a freeze on the hunting program last year. Brian Lindley approached it again last month with Vince and Dave Likens (associate director) because the 5-

year contract for hunting runs out in January. They did agree to do the surveys for Oregon Ridge and Cromwell Valley Parks which will be done in November. He also asked about extending the contract with USDA for another three or five years – they come up from North Carolina, carry out the survey and the hunting. Permission has been granted to move ahead to renew the contracts. The hunting will probably take place in February assuming that the contract is extended.

- V. Possible Re-Purposing of County Parks for Equine Facility – update.
- Lois is not overly familiar with any of the groups that are involved in the discussion of this issue although some of them introduced themselves to her at the work session. She knows people at the Valleys Planning Council. She does know Jeffrey Budnitz who is the head of the nature council at Lake Roland and is an active environmentalist and conservationist. He is the president of MERC. Linda points out that there is concern about the secrecy of the planning and the lack of public involvement as well as the fact that an administrator in the park is also on the Council which looks like a conflict of interest. This is a public park, purchased with taxpayer money. The Valleys Planning Council director cannot get information: the meetings are closed. There appears to be a desire to take authority away from the Agricultural Council which Glenn raised as an issue with us. The question of whether the purposes of Oregon Ridge would be compromised by this plan also raises the possibility that the bill discussed above might apply. According to county attorney Mike Field, “If the county did decide to adopt the HVGEP plan, it *would* have to be reviewed by the Planning Board and approved by the County Council as an amendment to the county’s master plan.”
- [\(https://davidplymyer.com/2018/09/18/with-its-plans-for-the-hunt-valley-gateway-equine-park-baltimore-county-again-puts-the-cart-before-the-horse/\)](https://davidplymyer.com/2018/09/18/with-its-plans-for-the-hunt-valley-gateway-equine-park-baltimore-county-again-puts-the-cart-before-the-horse/)
- The issues of transparency, accountability and conflict of interest all raise concerns.

Given our role as advisors to the county, Rex suggests that since a citizen has come to us and asked about this, we could investigate on our own and bring the issue back to the Council. Linda suggests we might invite Chris McCollum or Barry Williams or Wade Kach to talk with us about this to better understand the issues. If the plan has been prepared for the county we should request a copy. Mike Field said the plan was prepared for the county as well as for Land Preservation Trust.

Lois will request a copy of the report prepared by Populous with funding from Land Preservation Trust using funds from a grant from the county. She will start with Director of Planning Andrea van Arsdale with a copy to DEPS and to Brian Lindley and Kui Zhao so that we can be clear and transparent. We will hold off on other contacts about this until we can see the report and assess this topic. Linda will resend a message to us that documents what was supposed to be in the proposal.

- VI. Ten-Year Solid Waste Report and New State Mandates.
- Lois brought to our attention the article from the Baltimore Sun describing the state’s new regulations to reduce exhaust from the Wheelabrator Baltimore incinerator (BRESO). Valerie pointed out that some things including plastics 3 and 7 and some paper can no longer be recycled in Pennsylvania, and based on

her conversations with Waste Management this is likely to occur here as well and those things will probably wind up going to the incinerator. (Yogurt cups and margarine cups as well as envelopes and junk mail may also be treated this way.)

Lois mentioned that there is much publicity accumulating about plastics that are now considered potentially hazardous in the environment and may be impossible to recycle safely. Reduction in use of these materials may be an area of future policy, following on the current move to try to stop use of plastic straws.

Valerie will go back and reread what is in the Solid Waste plan that might have bearing on this issue of recyclables that have been going to single stream and may no longer be acceptable. Part of the reason for the change is related to the fact that China is no longer accepting a lot of our recycling materials.

VII. Adjourn. 8:45 p.m.

Next regular Meetings 7 PM:

- October 24, 2018
- November 28, 2018
- January 23, 2019
- February 27, 2019
- March 27, 2019
- April 24, 2019
- May 22, 2019