

MINUTES OF Environmental Sustainability Council Habitat Restoration Task Group

PURPOSE OF MEETING: To determine organizational structure of HRTG and to review and select 2020 project priorities.

DATE OF MEETING: **February 12, 2020**

PLACE OF MEETING: **Falls Church Community Center, Senior Citizens Center**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: **\_Amy Crumpton\_ AT \_7:07 pm\_**

THOSE PRESENT:

<p><b><u>Habitat Restoration Task Group:</u></b>                  Member: Sam Beatty                  Member: Ruth Ann Castillo                  Member: Amy Crumpton                  Member: Mary J. Frase                  Member: Linda Kamel                  Member: Peter Markham                  Member: Susan Matchett                  Member: Peter M. Mecca                  Member: Melissa Teates                  Member: Stacey Evers, ESC liaison</p>	<p><b><u>Staff</u></b>                  Name: Jeremy Edwards, CFC Ops                  Name: _____                  Name: _____                  Name: _____</p>
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OTHERS PRESENT: Shirley Connuck, Dennis Szymanski

The minutes from the January 22, 2020 meeting were approved.

TOPICS OF DISCUSSION:

**Organizational structure:** Attendees briefly discussed whether to establish a formal committee structure (with chair, vice chair, and secretary positions), but decided that a facilitator to call/run meetings would be sufficient. Amy Crumpton will serve as the facilitator, but other members can fill in as needed.

**2020 initiative review and selection:**

Volunteer support for habitat restoration team events: Attendees agreed that this is the top priority for the task group. City of Falls Church Green Space Manager Jeremy Edwards noted that the first of this year’s spring events has had a date change from March 28 to March 21.

- Jeremy Edwards and Melissa Teates will work on publicity for volunteer support for team events. They also will draft a standard operating procedure (SOP) on the communication process that they follow to publicize events.
- Stacey Evers offered to provide children’s activities (e.g, watershed model, invasive vine length contest) at some of the events. Task force members said they would like watershed model lessons to resume at Thomas Jefferson Elementary School, but agreed that they

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don't want to interfere with the mission of ESC's Education Task Group. Peter Mecca pointed out that Virginia requires 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade and high school students obtain a Meaningful Watershed Education Experiences (MWEE).

- Sam Beatty and Ruth Ann Castillo offered to assess and update materials made available on the literature table at events to ensure that they are relevant to the HRTG mission. Jeremy will draft a standard operating procedure for tabling responsibilities such as sign-in and glove distribution. Jeremy suggested that signs on stakes or easy to use guides (flipcards or laminated brochure) would be useful for volunteers to identify invasive plants during pull events. Jeremy will take the lead on creating signs.
- Amy Crumpton will send a follow-up email or set up SignupGenius to ask members to assist with tasks and will investigate setting up a shared Google doc folder for materials.
- Peter Mecca said the GMHS Environmental Club, of which he's a co-sponsor, is interested in supporting this initiative. Students have built 6 bat boxes and are working with Jeremy to decide which parks they'll go in. Once locations are identified, this activity could comprise the educational piece for an HRT event.

The Fellows Property planning process: Melissa gave an update on the public Master Park Plan process and encouraged members to participate in the public meetings scheduled for April and May.

- HRTG members will work with Jeremy to conduct a natural resources baseline inventory of the property in March after the house and barn are demolished and before the first Master Park Plan meeting. Jeremy prefers that data collection at this property not be part of the City Nature Challenge events. This inventory will help guide development of a protocol for conducting inventories at other parks.
- An HRTG Fellows Property subgroup will be created to monitor the Master Park Plan process and to develop usage recommendations to give to the ESC. Amy, Melissa, Ruth Ann Castillo, Sam Beatty and Stacey volunteered to serve on this team.

W&OD habitat restoration and partnership development: This initiative will be put on hold until the dual trails are completed.

Audubon at Home Wildlife Sanctuary Program certification of City Parks and Residences: Mary Frase and Amy volunteered to work on this initiative.

A date for the next HRTG meeting was left undecided as members wanted to focus on developing the tasks at hand.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT: 8:12 pm

SIGNATURE OF RECORDERS Amy Crumpton and Stacey Evers