

Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group
Meeting Minutes 8-7-17

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm in the auditorium of Long Branch Nature Center.

In attendance were: Caroline Haynes, Nereide Ellis, David Howell (Park and Red), Gabriel Thoumi, Claire O’Dea (E2C2), Evelio Rubiella (UFC), Alonso Abugattas (DPR), and Beth Offenbacher (Public).

Guest: Sarah Archer, Natural Resources Specialist, Invasive Plant Management Coordinator, DPR

Public Comment: Beth Offenbacher from TreeStewards suggested that all groups find ways to diversify their membership and outreach efforts.

Invasive Plant Management and CWMA Update

Sarah Archer, DPR’s Natural Resources Specialist and Invasive Plant Management Coordinator, updated NRJAG on progress and initiatives made. Arlington County has been awarded a Pulling It Together grant by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. The grant amounts to \$140,000 with matching efforts by all partners to setup a multijurisdictional Cooperative Weed Management Area along all 45 miles of the W&OD Trail. It will pay for a coordinator to oversee its formation will include a survey of the trail. It will also involve drafting an invasives management plan for the area and 3 pilot projects setting up meadows, one of which will be in Arlington. Alex Sanders has been hired as the coordinator. Work clearing and spraying, carried out mostly by one of the 9 partners Dominion Energy, has already commenced and will run through September of 2018.

Gabriel Thoumi (E2C2) volunteered to research how funding by donations might be used in Arlington County.

Arlington County Parks has a rolling 10-year plan invasives species management plan. Each year, some sites come off active management into maintenance mode as others come on, usually for 5 year’s treatment.

Staff Updates:

Alonso Abugattas provided the following updates:

- Arlington County is taking a leading role in the formation of a new citizen scientist based Early Detection Rapid Response (EDRR) pilot project to identify and manage invasives species of all taxa. This project is started by the National Invasives Species Council under the Department of Interior. If successful in the DC region, it will go nation-wide.
- Brian Keightley is the new Deputy Division Chief and Environmental Section Chief.
- Lois Barb who was in charge of the tree planting program for Arlington for years has just retired.

Member Reports:

- David Howell (Park & Rec) reported that Chris Willet (DPR Stormwater Staff) had made a PowerPoint presentation showing techniques to control water flow.
- David Howell (Park & Rec) reminded NRJAG that all 3 environmental commissions had agreed to send letters with their concerns over the Lubber Run Project.
- Claire O’Dea (E2C2) relayed concerns over lighting in Williamsburg, adding a meeting in August to talk over their concerns.
- Caroline Haynes (Park & Rec) agreed with both the Williamsburg and Lubber Run concerns, suggesting that much could be resolved if the project was taken out of the forested sections.
- Caroline Haynes (Park & Rec) also reminded all the commissioners to inform people that the comment period for POPs was open until August 11.
- NRJAG will not meet in September, commencing again October 2.