

Memorandum

TO: Hart-Miller Island Citizens Oversight Committee

FROM: Lien Vu – MES

DATE: 2/9/17

SUBJECT: Next meeting – Tuesday, 3/21/17

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The next meeting of the Hart-Miller Island Citizens Oversight Committee (HMI COC) will be held on Tuesday, March 21, 2017 at 6:30 pm at 2200 Broening Highway. Please use the door on the side of the building and the conference room will be on the left. Parking is available adjacent to the building and also across the highway. The Maryland Department of Transportation Port Administration (MPA) will provide dinner at 6:00 pm. The agenda for the next meeting will be provided the week prior to the meeting date. **Please call Ms. Margie Hamby at (410) 385-4419 if you cannot make this meeting.**

Attached for your review is a copy of the minutes from the January 17, 2016 meeting.

**HART-MILLER ISLAND CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**6:30 PM**  
**January 17, 2017**

**ATTENDEES:**

Paul Brylske	Seventh District
Fran Taylor	NPPCCC
Larry Lee	Essex-Middle River CC
Karen Wynn	Sixth District
Dave Bibo	MPA
Lincoln Tracy	MES
Amanda Peñafiel	MES
Lien Vu	MES
Bruce Michael	DNR
George Harman	Phoenix Engineering
Sam Weaver	Back River Restoration Committee
Devin Crum	East County Times

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- MES will check with DNR to confirm number of visitors during the South Cell 2016 opening season.
- Mr. Bibo will contact the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) representative responsible for the Form TR 6.2 Public Meeting Survey in order to receive clarification on questions that the HMI COC had about the survey.
- Mr. Michael will check with the new DNR Assistant Secretary to see if he would be available to tour HMI during one of the upcoming onsite HMI COC meetings in May or September. The potential new HMI COC member, Mr. Partro will also be contacted about visiting HMI.
- Mr. Taylor will check the Friends of Maryland State Parks Group to see if they are available for the March meeting to talk to the HMI COC about forming a friends group.
- Ms. Peñafiel will discuss with DNR about reaching out to local community groups such as, Boy and Girl Scout groups prior to the opening of the South Cell.
- The HMI COC will continue to discuss the role of the HMI COC and what will be established in the HMI COC Statute- *Ongoing action item.*

## 1. OPENING REMARKS

### **Paul Brylske –Chairman**

- Mr. Brylske asked the HMI COC members for approval of the meeting minutes from the November 15, 2016 HMI COC meeting.
  - Mr. Taylor had a question about the DNR updates and the total number of visitors during the South Cell 2016 opening season. Mr. Taylor said that they are impressive numbers; however, the numbers for the categories of people did not add up to total visitors. Mr. Tracy stated that DNR may have estimated people who were boating or in other categories. MES will check with Mr. Iman to confirm numbers.
  - Ms. Vu brought to attention a statement by MGS said during their Exterior Monitoring Report presentation, about the purpose of groundwater monitoring. The statement read "the purpose is to monitor the quality of groundwater flowing through the dike wall." Ms. Vu stated that another purpose of groundwater was to also determine if there was any groundwater contamination from the movement of surface water to groundwater. Members agreed to amend the minutes to add the additional statement.
  - All members approved the minutes as corrected.
- Mr. Brylske thanked Mr. Taylor for leading the November meeting.

## 2. FORM TR 6.2 PUBLIC MEETING SURVEY

### **Dave Bibo – MPA**

- Mr. Bibo explained the purpose of the survey. MDOT is reaching out to committees to see if participants' expectations were met for meetings. MES sent out the survey though email and can be filled out electronically or by hand. The survey is voluntary.
- Mr. Brylske asked what people's thoughts were of the survey. Mr. Bibo stated because the survey is voluntary it is up to the HMI COC members to whether or not they would like to fill out the survey.
- Mr. Brylske asked if MDOT wanted the Committee to fill it out as a group or should the HMI COC members fill it out individually. Mr. Bibo stated it is not quite clear, but he believed that the survey could be filled out individually or as a group.
- Mr. Brylske stated that he would like to have feedback on the meetings as chairman of the HMI COC. He would rather have feedback be face-to-face and would like to keep communication open to address

any issues then through a survey. Mr. Lee agreed, and said keeping communication open and discussing it face-to-face would allow members to elaborate more. Mr. Bibo clarified that the survey was meant for feedback to MDOT. Mr. Brylske suggested that the form be available to members and sent out with HMI COC minutes and could be used as a supplement survey in order to receive feedback. Mr. Brylske stated they could receive the most utility from the survey about presentations given during the meetings.

- Questions about the survey included:
  - If the survey is only once or after every meeting.
  - If the survey had a closing date for when it needed to be completed.
  - Mr. Bibo asked if DNR would be able to participate in the survey because they are active in the HMI COC during this transitional period with HMI where MES, DNR and MPA are working together and are also a customer. Mr. Bibo said that he did not get any clarification on his question yet. Mr. Michael stated that he could ask Nita Settina, DNR superintendent, and Bob Iman to see if DNR staff expectations are met.
  - Mr. Brylske had questions about the purpose of the survey. The survey states it is for public meetings; however, Mr. Brylske was unsure if the HMI COC meetings were different from other public meetings because they were ongoing meetings. Mr. Michael stated that one of Governor Hogan's initiatives is to receive customer feedback on all state agencies. As a result, state agencies have been conducting surveys to receive feedback.
  - Mr. Brylske asked who the customer would be in the case of HMI COC. Mr. Michael answered for the HMI COC; the State is making sure that they are receiving feedback from the community as well as other state agencies.
  - Mr. Bibo stated he would contact the person in charge of the survey and ask for clarification for the questions members discussed.

### 3. HMI NORTH CELL UPDATE

#### **Lincoln Tracy – MES**

- A map of the North Cell showing areas where the sediments have been limed to date was distributed.
- MES Operations are continuing to lime the sediments at a rate of 20 tons per acre and currently have finished a little over 11% of the 700 acres of North Cell. One of the current issues is that conditions are wet. As a result, the lime becomes clumpy and crews are unable to apply the lime to the sediment.
- Operation crews are working on the deep pool in the North Cell and were able to get down two feet across the pool.
- Current elevation of the North Cell is 38.1 feet, equivalent to 42 million gallons. Mr. Tracy provided comparisons from past elevations to give members an idea of the current elevation. Back in June when there was minimal water in the North Cell, the elevation was 36.1 feet. When the North Cell was at its highest, the elevation was 41.3 feet, equivalent to 584 million gallons.
- The North Cell spillways are currently closed due to high ammonia and nickel concentrations. MES is working on implementing a quick lime plan in the trench in order to bring up pH and decrease concentrations of ammonia and nickel.
- Mr. Lee asked if there is a deadline on when liming needs to be completed and if there is any benefit to liming in the winter. Mr. Tracy answered that the plan is to keep liming continuously until the surface is completely limed; however, conditions are currently wet. Lime would need to be tracked into the surface to be effective and cannot be applied to surfaces with standing water.

- Ms. Peñafiel stated that MES and MPA are working with University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science (UMCES) and Wye Research and Education Center (WREC) through a Vegetation Working Group in order to move forward with vegetating the North Cell. The working group has only had one meeting so far; however, sediment sampling will be conducted in order to see if the liming is effective and to evaluate which vegetation would grow best based off of soil conditions.
- Mr. Taylor asked if liming and vegetating is necessary for the master plan. Mr. Tracy stated the goal is to get the surface sediments limed and a cover crop established in order to help with acidification of the sediments. The cover crop will also help create top soil, stabilize any runoff and help fix the water quality.
- Mr. Lee asked if native vegetation would be used. Ms. Peñafiel answered yes, the working group will help figure out which native vegetation would grow best in the soil sediments. Mr. Tracy added that there was a lot of volunteer native vegetation growing as well.

#### 4. DNR UPDATES

##### **Lien Vu – MES on behalf of Bob Iman – DNR**

- DNR received three estimates from electrical contractors to install electricity, lights, outlets, and a panel box in the new shed. A purchase order was requested and approved to start the work. Staff contacted the contractor who received the bid to set up date for installing.
- The seasonal hiring process has begun and is posted on the DNR job listings webpage.
- Shop Vac parts that were ordered last fall were received.
- The third season of the Maryland 2016/2017 Waterfowl Season is underway with many hunters taking advantage of a great opportunity and season so far.
- Maryland Natural Resources Police and Baltimore County Police Department Marine Unit have been actively checking the areas, hunters and buildings.
- DNR gave a big thanks to the MES staff for starting vehicles during the off season to keep their vehicles in good running condition.

#### 5. SOUTH CELL UPDATES

##### **Amanda Peñafiel – MES**

- The Baltimore Waterfront Guide will have another article about HMI, updating readers of the South Cell opening. MES drafted the article, and will send it to DNR and MPA for approval. Mr. Taylor asked if the guide would be interested in an article for the Grand Opening of the South Cell in the spring. Mr. Weaver said that he will check with his contact.
- MES researched the stone and plaque for the COC dedication and it was ready to be procured. MES/DNR submitted the plans to the DNR Review Unit to make sure everything fits within DNR's memorial policy. DNR did not approve the memorial size and recommended another layout.
- The gator was delivered to the island and given to DNR.
- The shed was installed onsite on October 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. DNR is currently working on getting electricity in the shed.
- There was a season ending meeting in October between MPA, MES and DNR to review the first season of the South Cell public opening. Some lessons learned from the first season of opening were:
  - The public had a strong positive response to DNR presence.

- The staff's qualities combined for a good outcome (leadership, interpretive skills, etc).
- May visitation (especially early May) is slow. Opening on Memorial Day weekend is recommended/planned for 2017.
- Staff will still be brought on April/May to prepare for the season.
- It is helpful to have staff in October while public access is not open, to assist with operational/maintenance/winterizing activities. Maryland Conservation Corps came in early October and assisted staff.
- Minimal (<10) requests for access through October, mainly from birders.
- Plan to: expand concessions to provide drinks and other items per requests received.
- The new full-time staff person will:
  - o Spearhead projects/subtasks,
  - o Supervise seasonal staff, and
  - o Perform administrative duties (invoicing, status reports).
  - o DNR intends to hire this staff member around January 1, 2017.
  - o It is good to have a fourth (alternate) staff to maintain the three on-site staff during open hours.
- In 2017, DNR would like to try out operating each day in two shifts. Maintenance typically begins at 5am in other parts of the park. A 7-3:30 shift would allow for maintenance before public access and hot temperatures begin; and would overlap with a second shift. These two shifts would allow DNR to expand the open hours, as well.
- Staff did very well with visitor contacts, walking the beach, and informal impromptu interpretation.
- Other activities, such as setting up volleyball and seining at the beach, were great at drawing people onsite. More such activities will be done in 2017.
- Publicity was really helpful at bringing the public to HMI. It is recommended that in 2017 as much as possible be done to increase visibility again.
- Eventually concessions/rental of kayaks/standup paddleboards would be very beneficial.
- The bikes became very popular, and DNR had to buy more. Even after purchasing more bikes, people still waited to use them.
- Although tires popped and some pedals had problems, bike maintenance was not too bad.
- A public run/walk event is in the pre-planning stages for next year. Maryland Park Service (MPS) spoke with two organizations, which were enthusiastic about the idea. A private taxi partner may be needed to provide transportation.
- Another opportunity to host an event is the annual summer DNR lifeguard competition.
- DNR expressed that the first year of public access has exceeded expectations.
- For 2017, one portable toilet unit will be relocated next to the elevated bench (near the former SW005). A park bathroom sign will also be posted.
- Mr. Taylor stated that the councilmen should have a list of all of the general committees and organizations around the community. Mr. Taylor suggested getting in contact with them about the South Cell opening. Other suggestions of community members included Baltimore County Sailing Center from Mr. Brylske and the Boy and Girl Scout groups from Ms. Wynn. Mr. Brylske stated that it could be possible to have Boy and Girl Scouts work on projects or preparing camping sites in the South Cell. Ms. Peñafiel stated because the site is still an active construction site, visitors would only be allowed in the South Cell when there is staff onsite. Ms. Peñafiel stated that she will talk to DNR about reaching out to the community groups, and Boy and Girl Scout groups prior to the opening of the South Cell.
- Mr. Brylske, Mr. Bibo and Mr. Michael acknowledged the success of the first opening season of the South Cell Park. Mr. Bibo stated as the South Cell progresses, hopefully more amenities will be added. Mr. Michael agreed and stated there is potential for more visitors earlier in the season through the success of last season and word of mouth. Mr. Michael stated as more activities and events

happen, there will be more use of the South Cell. Mr. Bibo added what is being discussed is the evolution of the HMI COC from discussion of placement of dredge material to development of the site into public use. Mr. Michael stated that Mr. Tom Kroen would be proud of how HMI has progressed and that the South Cell Park is a testimony to the HMI COC's hard work.

## 6. FINAL REMARKS

### **Dave Bibo – MPA**

- Mr. Bibo checked with Mr. Brylske to see if his question were answered about the Year 33 Exterior Monitoring Report, specifically the MGS sediment studies and zinc enrichment. Mr. Brylske answered yes, but also wanted to discuss a broader question about the future of HMI Exterior Monitoring and looking and tracking trends of zinc and lead enrichment. Mr. Brylske said that it could be discussed at a later HMI COC meeting.
- Mr. Bibo summarized MPA's overall activities for HMI including a list of activities for North Cell Development and when they will be performed, approving amenities for the upcoming South Cell opening season, and working to fill vacancies on the HMI COC. Mr. David Partro was contacted about representing the Greater Dundalk Citizens Committee on the HMI COC. Mr. Patro submitted his application and is waiting for confirmation from the Governor's Appointment committee. Previous meeting minutes will be provided to Mr. Patro once he is approved, for him to get up to speed on HMI COC activities. Mr. Taylor suggested that the video shown to HMI visitors be shown to Mr. Patro, to get him up to speed. Mr. Brylske stated that he could contact Mr. Patro as well. In addition, Ms. Peñafiel stated a tour could be set up with the MES' outreach group. Mr. Michael added that DNR's assistant secretary is interested in visiting HMI. Mr. Michael will contact him about visiting during the next onsite HMI COC meetings in May and September.
- Mr. Bibo reiterated that one of MPA's priorities is permit compliance. Although MPA's goal is to get the cell dry in order to move forward with North Cell development, MPA and MES' operations to discharge are limited if water quality does not meet permit limits.
- The crane pier has been modified in order to be structurally sound and usable for the next 20 years. The mooring dolphins have been removed.
- Mr. Lee asked about the status of current finances to HMI. Mr. Bibo answered that although there has been a state deficit, the money allotted for HMI has not been touched.
- Mr. Bibo stated eventually the operations building will be taken down unless DNR finds a need for the building. Mr. Michael agreed and stated that this transitional period will help determine what will be needed to operate the park.
- Mr. Brylske asked how a friends group would be started for HMI. Mr. Michael suggested that it may take a few years of the opening the park to evaluate what type of visitors and what the uses would be for the park, before a friends group could be formed. Afterwards, the HMI COC could see if there would be an interest in forming a friends group and bring in resources to help with the friends group. Mr. Taylor stated that he will be attending a meeting for the Friends of Maryland State Parks and could talk to them about coming to a HMI COC meeting in order to discuss how to form a friends group. The HMI COC agreed to have representatives from the Friends of Maryland State Parks come to the March meeting.

Meeting adjourned 7:30pm.