

Memorandum

TO: Hart-Miller Island Citizens Oversight Committee

FROM: Lien Vu – MES

DATE: August 16, 2017

SUBJECT: Next meeting – Tuesday, September 19, 2017

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The next meeting of the Hart-Miller Island Citizens Oversight Committee (HMI COC) will be held **ON SITE** on Tuesday, September 19, 2017. **The boat pick up time will be 5:00 pm at the Maryland Environmental Service's (MES) land base at 2024A Riverview Rd in Essex, MD. Please arrive a few minutes early, as the boat will leave promptly at 5:00 pm.** The Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Port Administration (MDOT MPA) will provide dinner. **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 July 18, 2017 meeting.

**HART-MILLER ISLAND  
CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING**

**6:30 PM**

**July 18, 2017**

**ATTENDEES:**

Fran Taylor	NPPCCC
Larry Lee	Essex-Middle River CC
Craig Doyle	Pleasure Boaters
Karen Wynn	Sixth District
Dave Bibo	MDOT MPA
Holly Miller	MDOT MPA
Chris Correale	MDOT MPA
Kristen Weiss Fidler	MDOT MPA
Lincoln Tracy	MES
Amanda Peñafiel	MES
Lien Vu	MES
Bruce Michael	DNR
George Harman	Phoenix Engineering
Devin Crum	East County Times
Qing Li	Mahan Rykiel Associates
Jinting Li	Mahan Rykiel Associates
Xiang Huan	Mahan Rykiel Associates
Maddie Hoagland- Hanson	Mahan Rykiel Associates
Isaac Hametz	Mahan Rykiel Associates
David Riter	Baltimore County EPS

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- MDOT MPA will review the HMI COC Statute to see if there are a required number of HMI COC meetings. The HMI COC will discuss frequency of HMI COC meetings at the September 2017 meeting.
- A discussion about the HMI Friends Group will be added to the September 2017 agenda.
- MES will send out HMI South Cell YouTube links to the videos presented and pictures of the newly installed benches around the South Cell.

### **1. OPENING REMARKS**

#### **Fran Taylor – Acting Chairman on behalf of Paul Brylske**

- Mr. Taylor asked the HMI COC members for approval of the meeting minutes from the May 16, 2017 HMI COC meeting. All members approved.

### **2. NORTH CELL UPDATE**

#### **Lincoln Tracy, Lien Vu – MES**

- The North Cell's elevation has dropped a foot since the last meeting. The cell's elevation is currently at 37.3 feet, which equates to approximately 6.5 million gallons of ponded water. At the last HMI COC meeting in May 2017, the elevation was 38.3 feet. The drop in elevation is mostly due to evaporation. Spillways 007 and 008 have been discharging infrequently, due to high concentrations of nickel and ammonia.
- The HMI operations crew is continuing to deploy quick lime in the trenches to treat the North Cell water to bring the pH up to meet permit requirements. The pH in the main pond before quick lime treatment remains in the 3's.
- The HMI operations crew has been focusing most of their effort on constructing the North Cell deep pool. Sediment liming using agricultural lime has remained at a standstill, due to sediment conditions being too water saturated for liming equipment.
- MES is looking into costs and methods for scaling up quick liming operations in order to raise the pH in the entire North Cell pond. Once the North Cell pond is quick limed, most of the water in the cell can be discharged. A long-term system will be set up to continue to treat any additional water from rainfall. Mr. Lee asked if MES is looking into something completely different or a similar method to how lime is being applied currently. Mr. Tracy answered a different method, possibly incorporating lime slurry to the entire pond, not just the trenches.
- Mr. Taylor asked if the liming process will be long term and continue into the future or will stop once the North Cell is developed. Mr. Tracy answered once the North Cell is developed lime should not be needed. Once the pond is treated and discharge occurs, the sediments can be limed at a rate of 20 tons/acre, which will help eliminate future acidification of the sediment and water. In addition, a vegetative cover will also help with sediment acidification.
- MES is looking into vegetation for the North Cell. At the beginning of May 2017, Vegetation Test Strips were established on the west side of the North Cell. Each test strip is 5 foot wide by 300 foot long and split into three sections 0-100 feet, 100-200 feet, 200-300 feet. The test strips are in both limed and unlimed areas of the cell. Each test strip is seeded with a different species that is known to be salt and pH tolerant. Currently there are eight perennial grass species and eight annual grass species planted. Along with the test strips, seven different woody vegetation species were also planted adjacent to the test strips in limed and unlimed areas. The Vegetation Test Strips and woody vegetation will be monitored monthly throughout the 2017 growing season and will help determine what vegetation to move forward with planting in the North Cell. So far, the only species that is

present in the test strips is the alkali grass growing in the limed test strip. The woody vegetation planted is doing well and all species have a high survival rate in both limed and unlimed areas. Signs of stress, such as brown leaves, have been noted on some of the red cedars and bayberries planted in the unlimed sediments. The presence of invasive and volunteer species including *Phragmites* has been noted. Mr. Harman suggested that MES look into bayberries, to see if it is a nuisance species. Ms. Hanson suggested looking into the use of plugs instead of seeds for the annual and perennial grass species.

- Mr. Lee asked if the rainstorm from the past week had effected HMI's cell elevations. Ms. Vu answered that MES recorded 1.5 inches of rainfall from the last storm; however, it only raised the cell elevation by a tenth of a foot. Mr. Michael added that the recent storms have been localized, so some areas have received more rain than others.

### 3. DESIGN WITH DREDGE PRESENTATION

#### **Isaac Hametz – Mahan Rykiel Associates**

- Ms. Fidler introduced the Design with Dredge presentation. This summer, MDOT MPA partnered with Mahan Rykiel Associates and Mr. Brian Davis, a professor from Cornell University's landscape architecture school, for a 10 week internship, bringing four graduate design students to Baltimore to look at conceptual designs for innovative reuse and beneficial use projects utilizing Baltimore Harbor channel dredge material. They have been presented with the question of how dredge material removed from the Port's shipping channels can be repurposed as a resource for creating public landscapes, living shorelines and urban development in and around Baltimore Harbor in order to promote ecosystem resilience, public health and economic sustainability. The students bring in various backgrounds to the project such as environmental science, landscape architecture and design, water quality and urban development. The benefit that MDOT MPA sees in this project is that although there has been a lot of headway into the technical side of innovative reuse, this work can help with widespread general public support by visualizing the possibilities of innovative reuse of dredge material. The students are looking into potential real-life projects that can serve as showcases, creating a connection with the general public, the Port of Baltimore, and the relationship between land and water. The students visited various locations around Baltimore, and met with different stakeholders and city and county government agencies to gain background for the project. The students have been focusing more on MPA owned properties that may have the most potential for implement of conceptual designs, including HMI.
- The students looked at three different scales for innovative reuse. First, at a broad scale, at how the dredge material management can be more resilient, adaptable, social, economic and ecological. Second, the students looked at innovative reuse at a site-specific scale, something that was tangible and understandable as a place. Third at a smaller scale through installation, where the public can look at dredge material in a more creative, new way, helping shed some of the baggage associated with dredge material and helping to build a connection to the Port of Baltimore.
- The students started by looking at the overall dredge material process including dredging, transportation, placement, processing, and potential end use scenarios of the dredge material. As a result, they looked into ways the cycle could be more resilient and adaptable to support a more intimate relationship between people, the land and the water.
- There were three main factors that the students focus on: volume and capacity, processing of dredge material and end uses for dredge material. For volume, the students examined the existing capacity of current Dredge Material Containment Facilities (DMCFs) including Cox Creek DMCF and Masonville DMCF and expanding capacity to hold more dredge material at potential shoreline sites and potential upland sites. However, ultimately, there will always be material being dredged in order to keep shipping channels open. As a result, how to process dredge material more efficiently was

looked into including how to make crust management and dealing with water quality more resilient. Potential end uses for dredge material were examined including how to make it into a viable soil product to use as fill for places such as parks, roadways, recreation and construction sites. Other potential end uses include seed balls, coastal resilience and art.

- The students focused on potential concepts for HMI and the North Cell and found that it was a good place to test out strategies and projects, because it is an island, and far away from the main land. One concept would be to create smaller cells within the North Cell, making the space easier to manage with greater precision. The cell could be split using dike roads, which could double as walking paths and be lined with trees and benches, allowing visitors to access more of the North Cell. As a result, it would allow the site to be managed more efficiently, but at the same time could serve as a public space or for wildlife habitat development. Mr. Lee asked if splitting the North Cell into smaller cells would affect the drainage of the cell and what was going to be done in the separate cells. Mr. Hametz and Ms. Li answered by splitting the North Cell into smaller cells, it allows for smaller areas of water and sediments that can be managed in different ways; however, could be connected to form an entire system. Mr. Bibo added that there has been experimentation with smaller, more manageable cells at Poplar Island and there has been discussion of phasing in managing smaller sections of the North Cell at HMI.
- Ms. Peñafiel explained the current North Cell Development design. The design was based off of rainfall data and was chosen as a way to sustain water elevation in the South Cell without the use of pumps. Development plans for the North Cell include the cell being primarily upland habitat with a deep pool in the southwest corner. Storm water that falls in the North Cell will be collected in the North Cell deep pool and will be discharged into the South Cell through an outfall to help sustain the elevation in the South Cell pond. Ms. Peñafiel suggested the students look into a way their concept of splitting the cells into smaller, manageable cells could fit in with the current North Cell Development design. Mr. Hametz stated the students will be refining their concepts as they are receiving more input and information to build upon the work that has already been done and will look into current plans for the North Cell Development.
- Mr. Harman stated that HMI would most likely have to be managed more as a wildlife benefit site compared to other DMCFs such as Masonville and Cox Creek DMCFs, which are connected more closely to residents and the public.

#### 4. SOUTH CELL UPDATE

##### **Amanda Peñafiel – MES**

- A handout with pictures of the installed HMI COC monument in the South Cell was distributed to members.
- Ms. Peñafiel stated that two online articles about the South Cell recently came out. YouTube videos associated with the articles were shown to the HMI COC members. MES will distribute links to the videos and articles to the HMI COC members.

#### 5. DNR UPDATES

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

- South Cell Visitor Numbers:
  - Total Visitors for June: 17,369
  - Total Bikers: 170
  - Impromptu Programs: 360
  - Hikers: 24
  - Campers: 51

- Patron contacts (not included in total. This is where rangers had personal contact by talking, answering questions, explaining policies, etc): 1,124
- Tyler Kelley from Baltimore County Department of Health visited the island and took a look at the facility and inspected the well. No issues were found post inspection. Mr. Taylor asked what Baltimore County tested for. Ms. Vu, Mr. Tracy and Ms. Peñafiel answered that they were unsure of what the county tested for; however, MES conducted well monitoring for the DNR and MES operation building wells, and there was nothing found that was concerning. In addition, DNR conducts drinking water sampling at the DNR park for Total Coliform and E. Coli.
- DNR conducted maintenance around the DNR building, beach, and South Cell park including:
  - Removing trash and driftwood from the beach;
  - Painting campsite numbers;
  - Painting and repairing decking with waterproofing;
  - Applying coats of paint to the bike shed on the side facing the Bay;
  - Installing fire rings at the Hawk Cove campsites;
  - Clearing the drain on the outside water fountain;
  - Spraying and working on the tractor including replacing small mower tires;
  - Replacing 2 "Trash Free Park" signs on Beach;
  - Installing six hand soap dispensers in the men's and women's restrooms.
  - Seasonal Ranger McGrain replaced "Danger High Voltage" Signs on the South Cell MES electrical boxes;
  - HMI Staff installed benches around the HMI South Cell.
- HMI crew washed both Ranger 2 and Ranger 3 and the bilge pump on Ranger 2 was replaced.
- HMI Patrons wandered into the North Cell by accident. They were given directions on how to get back to the South Cell. Road Block/Do Not Enter signs were moved back into place and more signage may be needed in the future.
- DNR had different groups visit the facilities:
  - The Innovative Reuse Committee had lunch on the Ranger Station Deck. Approximately 24 people attended.
  - MDOT MPA brought a group from the Maryland Department of Legislative Services for a tour of the island. They stayed at the facility for about 20 minutes.
- HMI had a featured cover story titled "Top Boating Hangouts" in the Baltimore Sun.
- Assistant Manager Hughes took a Representative of Maryland State Parks and Charm City Runners to HMI for a site visit to plan for the 2018 5K run/walk event.
- Two boating incidents were reported:
  - Ranger Iman responded to a capsized boat off of Rocky Point on June 26, 2014. MES initiated the response involving MPS, NRP and Baltimore County Fire and Police. Victims hung onto their boat for 45 minutes before being rescued.
  - HMI Staff witnessed a stranded boat at the entrance of Bill's Boat's. It was drifting towards a concrete pier. Staff assisted with a 50 yard tow to get them to a safe location. Boat then waited for DNR to arrive for help.
- Steve Badger from DNR Office of Communications requested transportation to HMI for July 8, 2017 for the family fun day program scheduled at the island that day. Forty-five people attended the program.
- DNR received two reports of a beached dolphin. One at the north end of the island at HMI and another about a half mile from Pleasure Island on July 9, 201. Both times staff could not locate the dolphin.

## 6. FINAL REMARKS

**Dave Bibo – MPA**

- Mr. Bibo stated there are currently six members active on the HMI COC, and there are still two vacancies. MPA is trying to fill those vacancies. Mr. Lee stated that it is difficult to recruit people with the background knowledge of HMI. Mr. Bibo stated that HMI enters this next phase, involvement may include engaging the community in a Friends of HMI group. Mr. Michael suggested adding a HMI Friends Group discussion to the next meeting agenda.
- Mr. Bibo stated that the next meeting of the HMI COC will be held onsite on September 18, 2017. Mr. Bibo requested that members let MPA know if they would like to bring additional guests. Mr. Michael stated he will let Assistant Deputy Secretary Bill Anderson know about the meeting onsite as he was planning to attend the last onsite meeting but had a schedule conflict.
- Mr. Bibo stated that currently the HMI COC holds six meetings with two field trips to the site. One meeting is held to discuss the Exterior Monitoring report; however, Exterior Monitoring has been reduced to every other year. Mr. Bibo asked the members how they felt about the number of the meeting and if the frequency of meeting needed to change. The HMI COC will discuss the frequency of meetings at the September 2017 meeting. Mr. Taylor asked if there is a state legal requirement to meet. Mr. Bibo stated that there is a requirement that HMI COC members need to participate in 50% of meetings. MPA will look into the statute to see if there is a legal requirement for frequency of meeting.

Meeting adjourned- 8:00 pm