

Memorandum

TO: Hart-Miller Island Citizens Oversight Committee

FROM: Rebecca Kreatschman – MES

DATE: May 20, 2019

SUBJECT: Next meeting – May 21, 2019

The next meeting of the Hart-Miller Island Citizens Oversight Committee (HMI COC) will be held **ON SITE** on Tuesday, May 21, 2019. **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 summary from the March 19, 2019 meeting.

**HART-MILLER ISLAND
CITIZENS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING
6:30 PM
March 19, 2019**

ATTENDEES:

Francis Taylor	NPPCCC
Paul Brylske	Seventh District
Larry Lee	Essex-Middle River CC
Karen Wynn	Sixth District
Sam Weaver	BRRC
Dave Bibo	MDOT MPA
Holly Miller	MDOT MPA
Chris Correale	MDOT MPA
Kristen Keene	MDOT MPA
Kristen Fidler	MDOT MPA
Bruce Michael	DNR
Jeremy Hulse	DNR
Lincoln Tracy	MES
Rebecca Kreatschman	MES
David Riter	Baltimore County EPS
Devin Crum	The Peake

ACTION ITEMS

- HMI COC members will bring guests interested in the HMI friends group to the May HMI COC meeting.
- Ms. Wynn will provide Mr. Hulse contacts for upcoming BSA partnerships.
- MES will arrange a brief birding tour for members with Mr. Carney during the facility ride around.

1. OPENING REMARKS

Paul Brylske-Chairman

- Ms. Correale announced her retirement effective at the end of the month. Ms. Kristen Fiddler will be her successor as the Director of Harbor Development.
- Mr. Brylske asked the HMI COC members for approval of the meeting minutes from the January 15, 2019 HMI COC meeting. All members approved.

2. FRIENDS GROUP DISCUSSION

- Mr. Brylske suggested devoting a future HMI COC meeting to planning and development of the HMI friends group.
- Mr. Taylor explained the difficulty in getting information to the general public and suggested creating a Facebook page for HMI. Ms. Keene agreed that creating the account would be a good idea, but suggested making it specifically for the friends group. Mr. Hulse added that a social media account cannot be run by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff and would have to be controlled by a friends group volunteer. The Facebook page would advertise upcoming events and allow interested members to share ideas. Mr. Hulse suggested following the Facebook page of Friends of Rocky Gap State Park as a model for a HMI friends group page. Mr. Taylor suggested posting a calendar of events on the page to keep members of the group updated.
- Mr. Taylor asked members to bring interested guests to the next HMI COC meeting.
- Mr. Brylske recommended adding an online survey to the HMI webpage on the DNR state parks site to gather information from interested visitors. This would allow people unable to get to HMI to give their input. Mr. Hulse added that HMI park staff gathered information from guests in the previous years which can be shared with the COC.
- Mr. Taylor asked for DNR's input on the direction of the friends group and the role DNR would take. Mr. Michael explained the future of HMI development will be decided this spring in a meeting with MPA, MES, and DNR. Mr. Brylske asked Mr. Michael when the best time to form the friends group would be. Mr. Michael explained that Chuck Heckler of the North Point friends group may be a good source of information when forming the friends group. He added that if interest is present, the friends group could be created. Mr. Taylor asked if a member could sit in on these meetings in order to include the citizens interest. Mr. Michael explained that inviting a member to future planning meetings is possible.
- Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Weaver if HMI would be featured in this year's Baltimore County Waterfront Guide. Mr. Weaver confirmed that HMI would be featured in the upcoming issue. Ms. Wynn added that HMI events are posted to Back River Restoration Facebook pages as well as the fueling pier at Weaver's Marina. Mr. Taylor asked Mr. Weaver if email distribution lists of Marina members could be obtained to be used as another resource for outreach. Mr. Weaver explained the email list includes Yacht Club members and has over 2,000 emails.
- Mr. Taylor announced two upcoming tours at HMI. The first will be on May 20th for the community organization, and the second on May 21st for the senior center. There will be an open house

weekend at Todd's Inheritance on August 17-18 and suggested using this time for an outreach opportunity for the HMI friends group.

3. NORTH CELL OPERATIONS

Lincoln Tracy– MES

- The North Cell pond elevation is continuing to increase. The current elevation of the cell is 40.0 feet which is equivalent to 310,567,000 gallons.
- MES Operations is continuing efforts to lime the perimeter trenches for discharge. Spillways 007 and 008 have been opened intermittently for discharge since the last meeting.
- On February 12, 2019, the berm separating the deep pool excavation site and the North Cell pond was breached and flooded the work area. The excavation site is under approximately 15 feet of water. Repairing the isolation berm and dewatering the excavation site will not happen until after the North Cell elevation is reduced. No progress was lost to the excavation.

4. NORTH CELL VEGETATION TEST STRIPS

Rebecca Kreatschman– MES

- The Vegetation Working Group met on March 5, 2019 to discuss Year 2 monitoring results and a path forward for Year 3. An additional year of monitoring will occur during the growing season of 2019. Year 3 will not include reseeding. Invasive control for *Phragmites* will be continued.

5. SOUTH CELL UPDATE

Rebecca Kreatschman– MES

- Ms. Kreatschman presented information on South Cell Public Access visitors and site usage.
- Data on the total visitors to the park was presented. Total visitors for each year from 2016-2018 and the average of all three years were represented, as well as monthly trends in each year. One difference between the seasons was the change in hours of operation. In 2016 and 2017, HMI public access was open from 11 am-4 pm, Thursday through Sunday and in 2018 and 2019 the park will be open from 8 am-6 pm, Thursday through Sunday.
- South Cell visitor information per month from 2016-2018 was also presented. Visitors that entered the South Cell as either hikers or bikers were represented along with the monthly average. June, July, and August saw the highest use. Bikers were more common than hikers. Mr. Michael added that visitation was hindered at many park sites due to rainy weather.
- Popular amenities among guests included access to the South Cell and staff presence throughout the park.
- During the 2019 season, the park will host community engagement events, Boy Scouts of America (BSA) partnerships, park-operated concessions, Family Fun Days on June 1st, July 6th, and August 3rd, and water-based recreation rentals. New park benches will also be installed. The Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) and DNR are exploring the possibility of installing a wildlife observation blind. A race event is currently being planned by DNR, in coordination with MDOT MPA and MES with a tentative date of October 12th. Ms. Wynn asked if the BSA partnerships are looking for more groups and suggested the Sea Scouts and Venture Crew. Mr. Hulse asked Ms. Wynn to send him their contacts. Mr. Weaver offered barges for a kayak launch for the equipment rentals. Mr. Hulse stated that he would contact Mr. Weaver about the barges. Mr. Lee asked about a pier for the HMI beach. Mr. Tracy explained that plans were previously drawn up but were not implemented.
- Future investments include requests from visitors such as a public access pier and improved restrooms.

- The term of the 5-year Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) between MDOT MPA/DNR/MES ends on August 19, 2020. The agencies are working together extend the term through the end of the 2020 park season.

6. DNR UPDATES

Jeremy Hulse – DNR

- Four staff members were hired for the upcoming season.
- DNR staff will host nature-based activities including monarch tagging and herptile studies. Mr. Bibo asked if Monarch tagging would be open to the public. Mr. Hulse explained that the activity will be open to any visitors and will take place mid-summer.
- Kayak and paddleboard rentals will be available. Staff will be trained in small craft safety to prepare for equipment rentals. Concessions will also be expanded.
- DNR staff will perform maintenance work on the boardwalk and bathrooms.
- DNR staff will continue to monitor visitation numbers.

7. FINAL REMARKS

Dave Bibo – MDOT MPA

- Mr. Bibo reminded members to complete their financial disclosure forms. They are due April 30, 2019.
- Mr. Bibo asked about sign up issues regarding the 2018 HMI 5-Miler. Mr. Brylske suggested creating a pre-registration for HMI COC members to avoid future issues.
- Mr. Bibo suggested bringing Mr. Carney to the May HMI COC meeting to include birding in the tour. Mr. Bibo will work with MES to arrange this.
- The next HMI COC meeting will be on May 21, 2019 at 5pm onsite at HMI. All attendees must confirm this attendance as well as number of guests and mode of transportation to Margie Hamby at (410) 385-4419 by **May 14, 2019**.

Meeting adjourned-7:45pm