

HARFORD COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY BOARD

APPROVED MEETING SUMMARY – April 15th, 2025

Members Present

Jackie Koehn, Sally LaBarre, Roland Beckman, Michael Charlton, Paul Gartelmann, Dennis Kirkwood

Ex-officio Members Present

Terry Hanley, Adam Lanphear, Matt Kropp, Jeff Shoenberger

Guests: Danielle Hankins, Harford County DPW, MS4 Program Administrator

Welcome / Introductions

Jackie Koehn welcomed the EAB.

Ms. Danielle Hankins, Harford County Watershed Protection & Restoration, 2025 Program and Project Updates

Ms. Hankins provided the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Background. The Clean Water Act of 1972 was the beginning of how water quality would be addressed. In 1994, Harford County had its first MS4 permit issued. In 2015, the “Rain Tax” was rescinded, and Harford County began dedicating a portion of recordation taxes to fund the MS4 program.

Harford County receives credit for pollution source identification, managing stormwater, erosion and sediment control, illicit discharge detection, property management, monitoring, public outreach and events.

Mr. Gartelmann asked about the impervious acres required and what that meant. Ms. Hankins explained that impervious acres are like currency in showing progress in meeting water quality standard requirements. Credits are given in impervious acres. Since 2019, the County has logged 1,019 acres of water quality credit. The County was also allowed to complete a nutrient trade with our wastewater treatment plant to technically meet the permit requirements.

Ms. Hankins went over some of the many active projects in the County. She also explained how forests, native meadows and urban tree canopies are now given MS4 credit. Projects at Magnolia Elementary and Middle, Red Pump Elementary school were discussed.

She explained how the County is also now receiving credit for low mow initiatives at school and other County properties. Mr. Kirkwood asked when the mowing usually took place. Ms. Hankins would have to investigate that answer, but thought they were mowed twice a year, first time being in March. Forest conservation and planting projects for the coming year were discussed.

Lastly, various stream restoration projects were discussed, along with a stormwater retrofit project at Hickory Vet.

Departmental Updates

Mr. Lanphear reported that the Health Department is still waiting for “wet season” perks to be opened. It has been extremely dry the last few years, and groundwater tables are low. There are approximately 70/80 applications waiting for the wet-season perk to be opened. There was some general discussion about what trigger a new perk test for existing houses and systems.

Mr. Schoenberger from the Department of Public Works reported that their compost bin/rain barrel sale sold 89 rain barrels, and 46 compost bins. There were 669 customers with 3364 CY for the “Mulch Madness” event. The Bureau of Solid Waste assisted the 755 Alliance with a community cleanup on April 12, 2025. Over 20,000 lbs was removed, along with over 4900 lbs of scrap metal recycled. The next HHW collection event is Saturday, May 10th. Earth Day is being celebrated Saturday April 26th, 2025 from 11am to 3:00pm at Poplar Grove Park. MDE has approved the County’s 2025-2034 Solid Waste Management Plan.

Mr. Hanley from Parks and Recreation reported that Arbor Day is at Chapel Park. Arbor Day begins at 10:00am and is always a well-attended event. Parks and Rec helped facilitate an April 5th Trail head clean-up for the Ma and Pa trail, removing invasive vines. The County has also won an award the Best Urban Best Management Practice Award (BUBBA) for the low mow initiatives taking place on County properties.

Mr. Kropp from Planning & Zoning reported that Comprehensive Rezoning bill was brought before the County Council on April 1st and April 8th. The County Council was introducing 9 amendments to be voted on this evening. The Council will vote on the entire rezoning maps, as amended, at their next meeting on April 22, 2025. The Department is in the beginning stages of looking at how to update the Master and Land Use Plan.

Adjourn: Meeting was adjourned at 7:00pm.