

Howard County Environmental Sustainability Board Meeting  
Robinson Nature Center – Columbia, MD  
March 14, 2019  
7pm-9pm

### Attendees

Leah Miller	Office of Community Sustainability (OCS)
Georgia Eacker	Environmental Sustainability Board (ESB)
Nancy McAllister	ESB
Mark Southerland	ESB
Olivia Farrow	ESB
Amber Butler	ESB
Kelly Hensing	ESB
Athena Verghis	ESB
Ann Strozyk	ESB
Kim Drake	CA Client Change & Sustainability Committee
Julie Costantino	OCS
Matthew Hoover	OCS

### Minutes

7:05 PM – Mark Southerland began the meeting and handed over the Chair duties to Olivia Farrow. Olivia introduced Amber Butler, the new board member, who gave a brief background of herself. She is a Prince Georges science teacher and a graduate from the University of Miami. She is the founder of RED Responsible & Educated Drivers. Everyone else introduced themselves and gave their affiliation.

#### 1.) **Pollinators – Presented by Julie Costantino**

Julie Costantino went over part one of the Xerces model, which has three parts. The focus of part one is why pollinators matter. One out of three bites of food result from pollinators. Most of our vitamins and minerals are the result of pollination.

Pollinators are lizards, chipmunks, bees, moths and butterflies. The main pollinators are insects and the most important are bees. Bees actively collect and transport pollen and regularly forage in an area around a nest.

Honey bees are some of the most commonly known pollinators but are non-native. Most crop pollination is done by the European Honey Bee. Honey bees are in decline and 25% of bee keeping operations in the US have shut down.

Native bee diversity is important for pollination. There are about 4000 species in the United States and about 400 species in Maryland. Native bees work longer hours and are more

productive. They also collect pollen and nectar. Native bees can supplant the honey bee and they also make honey bees more productive.

Pollination is in peril due to the loss of habitat. A couple reasons for the loss of habitat is pesticide usage and climate change. 40% of pollinator species may be at risk of extinction in the next few years. In China, because of the loss of habitat, they pollinate by hand.

We can combat the loss of habitat in a few ways. In agriculture areas, we can have meadow strips, nesting structures and create hedge rows. In residential areas, we can use conservation landscaping, sustainable landscaping and promote citizen science. On county land, we can have no mow zones, create and promote meadow habitats and we can plant native plants. The county can also try to promote native plant use and encourage local stores to sell them.

## 2.) **Climate Action Initiative – Presented by Leah Miller**

- Howard County signed on to the “We are Still In.”  
<https://www.wearestillin.com/organization/howard-county-md>
  - Will aim to reduce greenhouse emissions of County Government operations by 45% by 2030.
  - Goal of zero emissions by 2050.
- Howard County is the first county in the nation to accept the US Climate Alliance’s Natural and Working Lands Challenge.
  - Calls on jurisdictions to commit to taking actions that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
  - Increase carbon sequestration in forest farms and other land in Howard County, while improving habitat and water quality.
- Howard County named a “Maryland Smart Energy Community” by the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA).
  - Received a \$75,000 grant to meet two out of three goals.
    - Energy Efficiency Policy – Reducing energy consumption in county owned buildings by 15%.
    - Renewable Energy – 20% renewable energy use in county government buildings.
    - Transportation Petroleum Reduction – Reduce petroleum consumption in Fleet by 20%.
    - Howard County has committed to meet all three goals.
- Howard County is converting streetlights to energy-efficient LED lights.
  - Will be converting about 8,000 street lights.
- Howard County expanded curbside food scraps collections.
  - Adding 10,000 additional homes to the program.
  - Set to begin on April 1, 2019.

**Video:** <https://www.facebook.com/HoCoGovExec/videos/2368601820041162/>

**Press Release:** <https://www.howardcountymd.gov/News/ArticleID/1419/News022619b>

### 3.) **2018 ESB Annual Report – Mark Southerland**

- It characterized who the board is.
- It summarized what the board has done and what they can do in the future.
- The transition report was used as a guideline on the direction of the board.
  - It was stated that outreach needs to be a priority for the board.
- Nancy McAllister motioned to approve the 2018 ESB Annual Report and it was seconded by Georgia Eacker. All board members in attendance voted to approve the report.

### 4.) **Subcommittee Reports**

**Green Apple Award** – The award was announced in the first week of February and they have received two nominations. The deadline for the nominations is April 1, 2019. The committee will evaluate the nominations and bring the list to the board. They are going to try to award the teacher in his or her classroom.

**Plastics** – The plastics committee visited three schools in two weeks. Teachers are already making recommended changes from the committee. They are going to have an official volunteer training. Their goal is to educate schools, businesses and the community. It was mentioned, that Maryland’s House of Delegates passed a bill that would ban polystyrene (Styrofoam). It still needs to be signed by Gov. Larry Hogan for it to become a law.

**Bird Building Collisions** – The taskforce is taking a grassroots approach to making the community aware of the issue and are appearing at events. The Howard County Conservancy and the Department of Natural Resources has made changes to help prevent collisions. The Maryland bill for Energy Conserving and Bird-Safe Building Standards (Maryland Sustainable Buildings Act of 2019), SB314 2019, passed on the MD Senate floor. The bill is only for government buildings, which includes any building that receives 50% or more of government funding.

### 5.) **Meeting Minutes – February 21, 2019**

No corrections or additions. Ann Strozyk motioned to approve and Georgia Eacker seconded the motion. All members in attendance voted to approve the minutes.

### 6.) **Roundtable**

Some board members met with the Horizon Foundation and discussed “Complete Streets.” The goal is to have new developments meet the standards. Olivia asked if there was interest in starting a subcommittee. Amber Butler advised that she would be interested in the subcommittee.

Athena has been working with some groups to start an oyster shell recycling program for restaurants.

Amber asked Leah Miller about Flex fuel in Howard County. She is only aware of one gas station in Howard County that sells it. She wanted to know what actions would need to be taken to have more gas stations sell the fuel.

Mark Southerland advised, every month the Maryland Science Center has a lecture which people can attend for free or stream on Facebook. It is on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of every month.

Ann announced that Georgia was nominated to the Howard County Women's Hall of Fame.

Kim Drake advised, the Columbia Association Climate Change & Sustainability Committee is going to meet with the Howard County Office of Community Sustainability.

8:39 PM – The meeting was adjourned.