

Montgomery County Water Quality Advisory Group – Draft Meeting Summary

Date and Time: November 13, 2023 (7:00 - 8:30 p.m.)

Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Staff Liaison: Miranda Reid, DEP (Miranda.reid@montgomerycountymd.gov)

Notetaker: Bob Buglass

Members Present:, Keith Brooks, Amy Stevens, Pamela Rathbone, Linda Silversmith, , Mark Symborski, Bob Buglass

Members Absent: Tracy Rouleau, Allison Wright, Tim Stemann

Others Present: Jon Monger, Director, DEP, Ed Ohanian, Travis Gorleski, Philip Mariscal

Meeting Summary:

Introduced new members and guests

Jon Monger, Director, DEP, introduced himself and discussed DEP priorities. Jon has served with EPA and congressional committees on energy and environmental issues. He started in water during the Deepwater Horizon oil spill event in 2010, serving on the commission investigating the issue, and observed the spill firsthand. Jon is in his third month as DEP director, and has attended the MACO meeting to meet counterparts around the state. Jon's stated priorities:

- Continue to meet the MS4 permit.
- PFAS – noted that the chemicals are everywhere, local levels are not as high as many other areas.
- PCBs.
- Flood management – extreme weather is increasing, some low-lying areas are susceptible, we must use evolving science to solve future problems rather than rely on past standards and understanding which may not be applicable to future conditions.
- Obtain all available grant funding – there is a unique opportunity due to federal funding availability, due to Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, etc. This represents a generational level of funding, has and internal grants working group in DEP to identify and pursue opportunities.

Conversation/discussion with the group:

- Travis – echoes the funding opportunity, noted NRCS, agricultural BMP funding opportunities.
- Keith – asked about the director's specific priorities for his own time/activities, Jon is not sure yet, the MS4 responsibility is huge, also wants to strengthen community engagement.
- Travis – asked about Chesapeake Bay WIP goal status, specifically wastewater plant performance. Amy noted that this is a WSSC issue/responsibility rather than specific County responsibility. Bob provided general update that WSSC WRRFs typically receive Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund Operation and Maintenance Grants because they perform better than required for nitrogen and phosphorus removal, assisting with meeting overall WIP goals.

- Keith – reminded Jon and the group that the Travilah quarry has been discussed as an option for additional water supply storage (drought augmentation).
- Travis – asked about areas and population served by septic systems rather than public sewer, noted that PFAS may be an issue from septic systems.

Administrative discussion items:

- Meeting schedule, was proposed that the April and July meetings will be held on the third Monday, January meeting to stay on the second Monday, Miranda to update the schedule and present at the December meeting.
- Future speakers and focus areas – Miranda to distribute the list to the group for additions.
- New members – Miranda has submitted recommendation memo to the BCC, there are still nine vacancies, Miranda to update on timeline.
- Next meeting notetaker - Keith