

## **Montgomery County Water Quality Advisory Group Draft Meeting Summary**

**Date and Time:** April 14, 2025 (7:00 PM – 8:30 PM)

**Location:** Microsoft Teams meeting

**Staff Liaison:** Ho-Ching Fong, DEP

**Notetaker:** Phillip Mariscal

**Members present:** Bob Buglass, Ho-Ching Fong (DEP), Travis Gorleski (Co-Chair), Phillip Mariscal, Tracy Rouleau (Co-Chair), Amy Stevens (DEP), Mark Symborski

**Members absent:** Keith Brooks, Miranda Reid (DEP), Amanda Rockler, Linda Silversmith, Tim Stemmann, Allison Wright

**Others present:** Deeptaanshu Kumar [Montgomery County (MC) Boards, Committees, and Commissions (BCC), Committee Evaluation and Review Board (CERB)]

### **Meeting Summary**

#### **I. Introductions and welcome**

The Co-Chair, Tracy Rouleau, called the meeting to order, and the members introduced themselves. Deeptaanshu Kumar, a volunteer with the Montgomery County Boards, Committees, and Commissions (BCC) Committee Evaluation and Review Board (CERB), observed the meeting.

Only three voting members attended. Therefore, the meeting did not achieve quorum.

#### **II. Review of the February 10, 2025, meeting summary**

As a quorum did not attend the meeting, the members did not review the February 10, 2025, minutes.

#### **III. New Business**

##### **a. Water Quality Monitoring – Kevin Misener, SCWP**

Kevin Misener serves as President of Seneca Creek Watershed Partners (SCWP).

He previously volunteered with Nature Forward and Little Falls Watershed Alliance. He became team lead of the Great Seneca Creek macroinvertebrate sampling site for Seneca Creek Watershed Partners. He has monitored this site four times per year for several years, using the Montgomery County Habitat Assessment. His group checks water levels and speed, quality of stream banks, invasive plants, form and variation of substrate, water temperature, pH, and salt levels. SCWP also performs monitoring against the Izaak Walton League of America's Salt Watch and Nitrate Watch protocols, measuring salt and nitrate at the same time they do benthic macroinvertebrate monitoring. SCWP sends its data to the Chesapeake Bay Monitoring Cooperative.

SCWP also has created what they call a touch tank, a converted banquet table with aerators installed, and which SCWP uses to allow volunteers to see macroinvertebrates in an environment that mimics their natural one under water.

Seneca Creek is the largest watershed in Montgomery County, MD running through middle to upper Montgomery County. SCWP is exploring ways to expand monitoring in the watershed SCWP also performs trash pickups and invasive plant removals, habitat restoration (e.g., annual native tree giveaway, rainscape and sustainable landscaping promotion and support), and water quality monitoring.

## **b. Review speaker topic ranking**

Tracy Rouleau (Co-Chair) asked members if the WQAG should proceed with the Speaker Topic Ranking List as developed and without redistributing, as the list had been distributed previously. The members present decided to proceed with the list as developed.

For the May 2025 meeting, Amy Stevens, DEP will provide the budget presentation she recently provided to Stormwater Partners Network of Montgomery County.

For June 2025, members suggested scheduling Michael Sharp, Forest Conservation Inspector, Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Co-Chair, Travis Gorleski, had proposed Mr. Sharp, who is an arborist with a background in parks, and who could discuss forest density as it relates to tree planting. Co-Chair, Tracy Rouleau, recommended Mr. Sharp tie his presentation to water quality, as trees are critical to improving water quality in Montgomery County.

Members will ask Mr. Sharp to present during an in-person field trip to a Montgomery County park. Ho-Ching Fong will ask Mr. Sharp if he would provide the presentation in June 2025 (6:30pm ET) with a rain date of July 2025.

#### **IV. Reports of Officers, Boards, Standing Committees**

None currently.

#### **V. Reports of Special Committees**

None currently.

#### **VI. Special Orders**

None currently.

#### **VII. Unfinished Business and General Orders**

None currently.

#### **VIII. Adjournment**

Before conclusion of the meeting, Co-Chair, Tracy Rouleau mentioned to observer, Deeptaanshu Kumar (BCC CERB), that the WQAG has struggled to find member applicants. The committee distributes a call for members annually in May, and candidates only have a few weeks to apply. Co-Chair, Tracy Rouleau, had sent a 2018 letter to the BCC, summarizing the WQAG's challenges with member recruitment and onboarding.

The group discussed ways to perform outreach. Amy Stevens (DEP) sometimes connects with specific organizations, such as the Department of Agriculture, where the committee found Co-Chair, Travis Gorleski. Amy proposed the BCC create rolling admissions with the WQAG filing the applications for later review. Co-Chair, Travis Gorleski, proposed, under this scenario, also putting notices, advertising the WQAG, in kiosks around parks and lakes.

Travis Gorleski also proposed creating a Water Quality Advisory Group email to allow the public to contact members. Deeptaanshu Kumar (BCC CERB) will investigate the process to create a general WQAG email address.

Next meeting will occur remotely on May 12, 2025, 7:00pm – 8:30pm ET.

The meeting adjourned at 8:24pm ET.