

**Committee for a Better Environment
Via Teleconferencing through Zoom
January 23, 2023
7:00 PM**

<u>Staff</u>		<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Janet McCaslin		<u>X</u>	
<u>Members</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Present</u>	<u>Absent</u>
Alexa Bely	6/30/2025	X	
Brendan Hall	6/30/2024	X	
Alan Hew	6/30/2023	X	
Wentao Guo	6/30/2024	X	
Todd Larsen	6/30/2023	X	
Alec Lynde	6/30/2024	X	
Nikki Pancho	6/30/2025	X	
Donnie Scally	6/30/2023	X	
Holly Simmons	6/30/2023		X
Stacy Teng	6/30/2025	X	
Caroline Wick (a. 7:20pm)	6/30/2023	X	

Also Present: Susan Whitney, Councilmember; Dan Behrend, College Park resident; Sheryl DeWalt, Contract Secretary

The meeting began at 7:04pm by Todd Larsen, Chair.

1. The agenda was reviewed. Ms. Bely motioned to accept. Mr. Lynde seconded. **Motion carries 9-0-0.**
2. The December 12, 2022, minutes were reviewed. Ms. Bely motioned to accept with amended changes. Mr. Hall seconded. **Motion carries 7-0-2.**
3. City activities:
 - a. There is \$4,941.23 in CBE's budget. No change from December 2022. City staff is working on FY 2024 budget. Additional monies have been requested for CBE for the Better Bag Ordinance. Additional monies have been requested for DPW for electric leaf blowers. CBE would be willing to host an educational seminar on electric leaf blowers.
 - b. Better Bag Ordinance will be heard at the City Council meeting on January 31, 2023.
 - c. The curbside food scrap program has 296 participants. The City would like to achieve 10% of residents which is approximately 400 participants.
 - d. The City is working on purchasing four electric trucks and vans. The City is also partnering with UMD on purchasing electric buses since College Park citizens are eligible to ride the UMD buses.

4. Better Bag Ordinance. This will be reviewed at the City Council work session on January 10, 2023. Michael Williams, the Economic Development Manager, spoke to quite a few businesses who seem to be supportive of the bill. The Maryland Association of Retailers are also showing support. Salisbury, Maryland shared their presentation and CBE will use it as a guide for submitting to College Park's City Council; Mr. Larsen, Ms. Bely, Mr. Lynde, and Ms. Teng will assist in creating the presentation. As previously mentioned, the bill will be voted upon at the January 31, 2023, City Council meeting.
5. The Trolley Trail. Twelve tree labeling signs have been installed and there are eight more to go. Ms. Bely is hoping to have the additional eight done within two to three weeks, weather dependent. One magnolia tree and one river birch tree need to be replaced from the June 12 storm. A suggestion was made to have a spring event of walking the trolley trail that could be co-hosted between CBE and TLB. Three of the drain murals are also along the Trolley Trail. There was also the suggestion that a broader plaque explaining the tree identification program could be installed on each end of the Trolley Trail. Ms. Bely, Mr. Lynde, and Ms. Wick agreed to research and present to CBE.
6. Ms. Wick, Ms. Simmons and Ms. McCaslin working with CPAE for spring painting of storm drains. The girl scout troop wants to help with installing medallions from Calvert Hills to Lakeland.
7. The College Park parade is set for May 6. The City would like to have representation from each committee. Mr. Hall and Mr. Larsen will discuss with TLB and Bee City for combining presence at the parade and report out at the February CBE meeting.
8. Climate Action Plan. Information is being added to the City website to help residents find resources easier and note what has already been accomplished in the City. Suggestion was made to review the Resident page of the City's website and possibly add a green badge for environmentally friendly information/resources. There are some revisions that could be done to the Sustainability page on the City's website to make it easier for residents and links added to other pages on the website for information, e.g., pollinators, pollinator gardens, bee hotels, food scrap program, green energy, etc. A suggestion was made to review the website for Takoma Park.
9. Bee City update:
 - a. The native plant list has been updated on the City website.
 - b. iNaturalist photo contest for Now Mow April. Bee City would be looking for observations of any organism seen interacting with flowers (for example, a bee, butterfly, hoverfly, hummingbird, etc. seen visiting flowers). All observations would be submitted from April 1 – April 30 through iNaturalist. Residents can submit as many photos as they would like.
 - c. There are three bee hotels in the City. City Council has given a grant for five more bee hotels to be installed throughout the City.

10. Municipal Scene:
 - a. February – Food scrap program – Mr. Larsen
 - b. March – Indoor Plants – Mr. Scally
 - c. April – Single Family Home grants/incentives – Mr. Guo

11. Green Awards. Mr. Hew nominated Girl Scout Troop 96 for planting a pollinator garden and building a bee hotel; and Sean Phelan for a beautification project at the American Legion which features a large pollinator garden and rain barrel installation. Mr. Larsen motioned to award a Green Award to Girl Scout Troop 96. Mr. Scally seconded. **Motion carries 10-0-0.** Mr. Larsen motioned to award a Green Award to Sean Phelan. Mr. Lynde seconded. **Motion carries 10-0-0.** Other potential Green Award nominees: UMS Art Students and La Pupuseria.

12. TLB Update:
 - a. Hiring a private contractor to plant trees on private property in lieu of the spring tree giveaway.
 - b. RFP on the tree canopy assessment should be completed by the end of June.
 - c. Soliciting volunteers to help clean up gardens; this will be further discussed at the February TLB meeting.
 - d. Still inquiring from MNCPPC about planting the trees at College Park airport.
 - e. Ms. Bely will be attending the February TLB meeting on behalf of CBE.

13. The updated letter, revised by Ms. Bely, on the Autoville development that threatens forested land was emailed to the committee. It encourages the State of Maryland to buy the land, but not through Open Space. The letter should also be sent to the state delegates to garner support. Mr. Larsen motioned to send the letter to City Council. Ms. Wick seconded. **Motion carries 10-0-0.**

14. Volunteers will be needed to weed the Permaculture Garden. BDCA has agreed to co-host with CBE on March 25 from 9:00am-12:00noon for weeding the garden. Mr. Lynde will create a sign-up sheet. Further updates will be given at the February CBE meeting.

15. The next CBE meeting will be on February 27, 2023, at 7:00pm. Instructions will be sent out via email prior to the meeting date. Mr. Larsen motioned to adjourn. Ms. Bely seconded. **Motion carries 10-0-0.** The meeting adjourned at 8:25pm.

Respectfully submitted by Sheryl DeWalt, contract secretary.