

Anne Arundel Waterway Restoration Alliance (AAWRA) 2011 Annual Meeting Minutes
Tuesday 25 January 2011, 7:00 PM, Edgewater Library, Edgewater, MD
Attendance: (11 people)

AAWRA Officers: Bob Whitcomb, Paul Rickett, Jay Phillips, Vern Penner, Juliet Page, Mike Geers

Members & Others: Donna O'Neill, Ronald Sweany, Mike Lofton, Bruce Walker, and Bea Poulin

AA County Community and Constituent Services Office: Bea Poulin

Matters of Discussion:

The meeting was originally scheduled for the SDPHQ location but a double booking was mistakenly made and as the smaller group we adjourned to the nearby Library. Bob Whitcomb, President AAWRA, started the meeting with around the table self introductions. Bob reported on the DPW meetings with the chief engineer, and Baylands meetings. Jay Phillips gave the Treasurer's Report that AAWRA is looking forward to 2011 Membership applications and forms are available online at the aawra.org website.

An election of officers was conducted and Vern has declined renewal of his office and new Board member Donna O'Neill of Pointfield Landing was elected. President Bob and Treasurer Jay were also reelected for another term.

Bob commented on the BOD Secretary Lisa having taken the WIF data for the past 4 years and created Excel graphics to filter the data. Her excellent bar graphs and pie charts visually convey the inequity of AA County contributions to the fund and receipts from the DNR allocations. This data was expertly woven together in a white paper written by Vice Pres. Paul to inform the electorate of the inequities of WIF distributions.

Bob described the recent AAWRA lobbying efforts with meeting Senator Ed Riley from District 33 with his constituents from AAWRA last Friday. The message was well received with the presentation of the white paper "AA County needs its fair share of the WIF allocations". The data for 2010 substantiates that 20% came from AA County but only 1.4% was allocated to it. Next meeting with State Sect. Griffin will hopefully influence how WIF spends the funds. Bob Costa was the next politician to be presented with charts and the white paper. Important for District 30 is a meeting with Mike Bush from the Duvall Creek contingent lead by Jay. Vern has already given Bush's Executive Assistant copies of the charts & white paper. District 30 Mc Millan meeting is also important to follow. In discussing the white paper Vern emphasized an Executive Summary is necessary to bring across the two key points of ethics of protecting the WIF as reserved waterway money and fair share for our county. The legislators are using the WIF to supplement the general fund in these poor economic times.

Bob elaborated on his efforts to get the Marine Trades Association to join our lobby thrust but they are hesitant to proceed. The Marine Trades doesn't want to alienate any legislator with the prospects of a new tax on their business in the air.

Bob also explained a new funding idea from Stan Milesky (who participated in several of the meetings) to put the Duvall Creek & Severn Headwaters projects on the state bonding slate since they are large \$2M projects. This would bring funding in from state financed bonds instead of WIF monies. This year's budget starts in the House and an appropriate time to introduce the idea. The Governor could public bond the two projects to move them forward. Duvall Creek as number one on the dredging list only got \$300K this year. The goal of AAWRA is a legislators push for Districts 30, 31, & 32 projects. Vern has given copies of the paper to District 30 Speaker Bush, Senator Astle, Delegates Mc Millan, & George and spent a ½ hr with Mc Millan. The meetings must be in the next 2 weeks else the legislators will be too busy. Fridays delegate session should be briefed. Since both projects are state funded it is not as important to brief Leopold. His Legislative Assistant was in attendance and has a copy of the paper & graphs. The Delegation which influences the spending is mostly Republican.

A new attendee Mr. Mike Lofton introduced the effort for support to get more public access to water thru boat ramps in the county. He solicited AAWRA to pick up the issue and lobby for it. AA County doesn't have public access to water. 300 people turned out for the Pasadena boat ramp access meeting. Beverly Beach has public waterfront land that is a prime candidate but seems to be resistance from residents to a boat ramp. There are 14K registered trailer boats in AA County. Legislators Grasso & Trumbauer seemed interested in promoting the effort. Typically construction costs \$100K for a boat ramp with a paved parking area.

The white paper & graphics will eventually be posted on the AAWRA website. It was noted an additional opportunity at Monday night political receptions affords access (~15 min.) to some of these important legislators. The Republican delegation primary job is to bring money to AA County.

The meeting was concluded @ 9pm per a request from the Library staff.