



## City of Harrisonburg Stormwater Advisory Committee *Meeting Minutes*

February 7, 2018 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

**Members in attendance:** Daniel Michael, Dale Chestnut, Eldon Kurtz, Rob Alexander, Ted Byrd (ex-officio), Greg Sachs

**Staff/Others in attendance:** Staff: Kelley Junco, Tom Hartman, Rebecca Stimson, Dan Rublee

### **Review and Adopt Minutes**

Daniel Michael called for a motion to adopt the October 2017 SWAC meeting minutes. The motion was made, seconded, and passed.

### **Public Comment**

No public comment.

Committee members introduced themselves to the new member. Greg Sachs introduced himself as the Building Automation Coordinator in the Facilities Management Department at Eastern Mennonite University. Tom Hartman gave a brief overview of the history of SWAC.

### **Stormwater Improvement Plan (SWIP)**

#### **Budget Overview**

SWAC was provided a copy of the proposed schedule and costing from the SWIP.

#### **Projects Going to Design and Construction**

Kelley Junco stated the City put out two engineering design RFPs to the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission's on-call consultants for the Thomas Harrison Middle School BMP retrofits and the Virginia Avenue (VMRC) water quality improvement (enhanced extended detention pond). Responses for both were received February 6. There will be a delay in the Virginia Ave water quality project as VMRC has asked the City to purchase the land for the project. Staff has met, and will continue to meet, with VMRC board members to discuss Stormwater Utility Fee Credits as an incentive to partner on this project. Staff will move on with the Thomas Harrison Middle School BMP retrofit designs but is now considering what other projects to pursue if the Virginia Ave water quality project is not feasible. Dan Rublee asked if purchasing the land was considered. Tom stated that staff considered that option, but there are other projects in the SWIP that staff would consider before that.

Kelley stated the Mountain View Drive Stream Restoration project request for proposal is posted online and firms should be getting back to staff within the next two months. Staff is working with stakeholders and has just sent a letter out to landowners to ask them to commit easements for the stream restoration project.

## **Projects Proposed for 2019**

Kelley asked SWAC members if there are any projects in the SWIP they feel could replace the Virginia Ave Water Quality project. Ted Byrd asked if the Thomas Harrison Middle School projects were continuing. Tom stated that they were, and funding has been allocated for those projects. Ted asked about temporary credits. Kelley and Tom clarified that staff is still pursuing that as an option and temporary credits will be a strategy used in later permit years and will be reserving money in future budgets for credit purchases. Eldon asked about potential EMU projects, Kelley stated she would provide information to Greg about the potential BMP projects as well as contact EMU staff. Dale asked about the East Market Street Regenerative Stormwater conveyance project. Tom said that because the bids came back over-budget twice, the project will not be constructed now; however, the project is still in the SWIP for future consideration.

## **Stormwater Utility Fee Credit Opportunities**

### **Easement/ROW Construction**

Kelley explained that the incentives for private property owners to partner with the City on stormwater projects are Stormwater Utility Fee Credits, so staff has developed credit methodology for providing credits to those property owners that donate easements for projects. Rebecca explained that the credit would be based on the amount of TN removed by the project. Projects with a greater TN amount would receive more credit than projects with a smaller TN removal rate. Stream restoration credits would be based on the amount of TN removed by the stream restoration as well as the length of the stream restoration running through the property. There was discussion about how large properties, such as VMRC, would be credited if there are multiple parcels associated with the property. Kelley explained that parcels with the same address are billed together, but staff would consider which parcels the credit would be applied to. Tom stated that the credit language says that the credit would be decided on the case-by-case basis by staff. Ted asked if the credit amount would ever exceed the Stormwater Utility Fee charged to the property. Kelley explained that the credit is capped at 75% for non-residential properties and 100% for residential properties with a fee less than a certain amount of billing units.

### **I&I Program and Credit Option**

Kelley stated that staff is considering using the Stormwater Utility Fee Credit application as a method to identify properties with sump pumps. The information would then be sent to the Public Utilities department, who might also provide a credit for disconnections through their water bill.

### **Septic to Sanitary Conversions and Credit Option**

Kelley said that Public Works is working to build a grant program with Public Utilities to provide both Stormwater Utility Fee Credits and incentives from Public Utilities for septic to sanitary sewer connections. The ordinance is being changed to make it more difficult to have a septic system by requiring inspections and potentially charging a monthly fee for having a septic system. The inspections and the fee would be a Public Utilities initiative. Public Utilities would also administer a program to waive the connection fee for homeowners connecting from a septic system to the sanitary sewer. Kelley clarified that staff would not be forcing anyone to connect and that the Stormwater Utility Fee credit would be retroactive, so that if a property owner could show they connected to the sanitary sewer system from a septic system previously, they would still receive the

credit. Kelley stated that Public Utilities and Public Works want to take all these changes to City Council in March or April.

Daniel Michael discussed his project for Valley Health, where they will take black water, treat it, and then re-use the water in the chiller plant. At the same time, the City of Winchester can take stormwater credit for pollutants removed by the project. There was discussion about the project as well as its applicability in Harrisonburg.

### **Grants/Environmental Specialist Update**

Wes Runion attended the last SWAC meeting and has been doing a lot of work recently, including planning Blacks Run and Downtown Clean Up Day. Dale said he would be attending the event at the Green Scene.

**Parking Meter Project:** Rebecca is working on a public education and outreach project where parking meters will be repurposed to collect funds for purchasing trees to plant along riparian areas.

**Downtown Beautification Projects:** Wes is continuing to work with Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance on some smaller-scale beautification projects downtown. There was discussion about creating an emblem to put on storm drains that remind people storm drains lead directly to streams.

**Bioreactors:** Wes has been in communication with DEQ about bioreactors, which are a low-cost method of removing nitrogen from stormwater that the NRCS has been implementing on farms. The DEQ has stated if there is a method of monitoring the nitrogen removed by the bioreactor, they would consider them as acceptable BMPs. Wes will continue to pursue this idea.

### **Next Steps**

There will potentially be a public meeting for the upcoming SWIP projects. The next meeting is scheduled for May 2, 2018.