

**Morgantown Municipal Green Team**  
**Monday, May 6, 2019**  
**5:30–7:00pm**

**Minutes**

**Members:** Jim Kotcon (chair), Pam Cubberly (vice-chair), Vanessa Reaves and Karen Kalafat (RRR working group), Mark Brazaitis and Jenny Selin (City Council), Joe Kanosky (energy committee), and Dan Pan (note taker).

**Guests:** Bill Kawecki (mayor), Jonathan Rosenbaum (LWV); JoNell Strough (Green Space Coalition), and Michael Dong and Christie Zou (Morgantown High School).

After introductions, the minutes for the April Minutes were approved for submission to City.

**Updates**

1. **RRR Working Group** (Pam, Vanessa, and Jim). Vanessa briefly reviewed the two main programs in the planned RecycleRight Campaign: (1) broad general media campaign in Morgantown and (2) core Curbside Anti-Contamination Campaign for the 6,500 households paying for trash and recycling services from Republic. If won, grant would also fund five Big Belly solar compactors at \$4,000 apiece for use downtown and/or neighborhoods, depending on effectiveness.

This past month, Pam met with faculty in WVU's Communications Studies Department and Reed College of Media. It was agreed that, in Aug./Sept., the team will present the City's REAP grant proposal to Reed's student-run Martin Hall Ad Agency, supervised by Reed's Dr. Jennifer Harker.

**Action:** Pam/Jim will meet with Dr. Harker again on May 7 to continue work for Reed assistance.

Team members met with the Mon County Solid Waste Authority (SWA) board on April 25 on the RecycleRight Campaign. The City will officially present its grant proposal to SWA on May 28.

**Action:** Robyn Hess will send SWA's Barbara Bottles the PDF proposal a week before for review.

Pam has been working on budget estimates for Robyn Hess for campaign-related expenses. Vanessa will shortly withdraw from grant work for 3+ months, as she is expecting her second child in late May. After May 7, Pam will be traveling several weeks but will still review the final City proposal. Jim will take on a larger role in review of the proposal. Any team member can get involved in work this fall in preparation for implementing the grant. Karen Kalafat indicated her interest in doing so.

**Action:** Pam and Jim will help members get up to speed so they can get involved.

Then, two MHS students described their plan to expand recycling in their school and encourage the MHS kitchens to compost discarded organic materials. Their Green Initiatives Club requested financial support through the RecycleRight Campaign to develop what they hope will be a model for other schools in the city. Pam urged that a club member join the team in the fall. Mountaineer Middle and Eastwood Elementary have also submitted similar program descriptions. Total funding for materials and equipment is \$2,400 for the three schools.

Vanessa then explained results of the pilot RecycleRight campaign at two student apartments owned by WVU this past Spring Session as follows:

- Baseline audit of recycling dumpsters done before spring break; then four consecutive audits.
- Found that social media and email were best ways to get recycling info/feedback to students.
- Overall, no change in amounts recycled by weight; slight increase in #1 plastics.
- Many students have good intentions, but just a few bad recyclers can contaminate all.
- Students did not stop using or throwing in plastic bags, despite info sent.

- Recycling from dining halls was the most contaminated.
- It might have gone better if pilot had (1) focused on move-in period, (2) talked with students directly; and (3) pilot gave incentives to landlords to push proper recycling with residents.

## 2. CAP and Energy Committee

- **Volkswagen settlement** (Jonathan Rosenbaum, President, WV League of Women Voters). Jonathan described how the WVU Engineering Department discovered VW was secretly violating auto emission standards. Some of the huge fine VW paid will go to states; WV has signed on as beneficiary, mainly the Department of Highways (DOH). The State has opened a comment period ending May 23. Funding must be used for vehicle infrastructure. At this time, 70% will go to DOH, 10% to WVU (\$11M) and 20% other projects. Information on this topic can be found on [go.wv.gov/Volkswagen](http://go.wv.gov/Volkswagen).

Jim believes emission-related issues should have priority; 70% of funds should go statewide and 20% to DOH. He asked team to consider what comments to submit before May 23.

Various members also raised ideas for the funding locally, including PRT upgrading, more electric car charging stations, low-emission buses, etc. Joe suggested contacting interested parties at Mountain Line (David Bruffy), WVU, Mon General, and NIOSH, who may not be aware of this funding opportunity.

**Action:** Jim agreed to draft a team comment and submit before May 24.

## **New Business**

1. MUB reservoir pipeline in White Park (JoNell Strough, Green Space Coalition). The coalition is a 501c3 nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting green spaces in the Monongalia valley. It is currently working on planning with MUB, the City, and BOPARC for recreation at the Flegal Dam and Reservoir, as well as a city greenbelt trail system.

The former work recently raised significant concerns about MUB's plan to build a water pipeline from Flegal through White Park, the city's largest park with beautiful forest of important historic and biological value. MUB had already begun to mark a route through the park to get Flegal water to its treatment plant on Don Knotts Blvd. Costing \$48 million, its preferred route ran along the existing main trail through the park and would cut hundreds of trees in a 40- to 60-foot swathe, including historic "Witness" trees as old as 100–270 years. A number of abandoned oil pits that dot the park, if disturbed, could release oil into the soil and water.

MUB held a meeting last Friday due to concerns raised by city residents. Its website then showed various slight alternatives. The oil pits were to be tested through soil and water samples. However, the alternative paths would still destroy Cobun Creek waterfalls and caves and level and cut the tree-lined slope to the falls, including trees holding up the creek banks. The project would eliminate key habitat for migrating birds and other native plants and animals. The team discussed what it could do, including alternative routes outside White Park and complete information for review by city stakeholders. White Park is City property so the City will decide on the route. After further discussion on action, Jim requested a motion that the Green Team go on record to delay a route choice until MUB completes a full analysis of alternative routes.

**Actions:** After a vote, Jim agreed to draft and submit a statement to the City Manager and Council that the Green Team does not support the current plan and that a full analysis of alternatives must be conducted before any City action. All team members will try to email their council members on their concern for White Park.

2. **The meeting ended at 6:50pm.** The next meeting will take place at the same time and location on Monday, June 3, 5:30–7:00pm, Morgantown Public Library, 2nd Floor Conference Room.