



Wes Moore GOVERNOR

Aruna Miller LT. GOVERNOR

Charles Glass, Ph.D., P.E. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES**

**December 14, 2023**

**LOCATION:** Headquarters/Video Call

**TIME:** 9:30 a.m.

**DIRECTORS PRESENT:** Shelley Heller, Chair  
Judge Frederic Smalkin, Secretary  
Brendon Baatz, Treasurer (video)  
Robert Witt, II  
Moalie Jose, P.E.  
James Johnson Jr., Ph.D., P.E.  
Dereck E. Davis, State Treasurer (video)  
Charles Glass, Ph.D., P.E.

**DIRECTORS ABSENT:** None

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Joanna Kille, State Treasurer's Designee (video)	Kanishk Sharma, Administration
Sean L. Coleman, Esq.	Melissa Slatnick, Technical & Environmental Services (TES)
Ellen Frketic, Deputy Director	Luke Page, TES
Tim Barr, Water/Wastewater	Pamela Fuller, Board Clerk
Winsome Condra, Procurement	Casey Powers, IT (video)
Marni Dolinar, Env. Dredging & Restoration (EDR)	Jana Leech, Executive Office (video)
Tim Ford, Environmental Operations (OPS)	Ben Buppert, EDR
Hament Patel, Finance	Melissa Filiaggi, OPS
	Stephanie Patton, Human Resources

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Heller called the meeting to order at 9:36 a.m. Some Board members and staff were present at Maryland Environmental Service (MES) Headquarters, and other Board members and staff participated via Zoom video call. The meeting was streamed live to the public on YouTube.

### **MINUTES**

Ms. Heller requested discussion or a motion to approve the minutes from the Board meeting on November 16, 2023. No substantive corrections or objections were noted, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Dr. Glass presented the Executive Director's and Deputy Director's expense reports for the last month. Dr. Glass and Ms. Frketic attended the Water Environment Federation's Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC) in Chicago in early October. The expenses reported are from the conference.

Dr. Glass reported on several external engagements with governmental and private entities within the last month. Dr. Glass met with several of the Glen Burnie High School students whom he will be advising on their climate mitigation project. One interesting engagement during the month was with Sustainable Energy Strategies, Inc., which is working to convert diesel vehicles to biodiesel. This process would decrease carbon emissions and pollutants by 90%. Challenges include expense and keeping the biodiesel warm.

The fall recruitment season is now finished, but the Agency is gearing up for future recruitment work, including advertising for the internship program.

The Agency recently participated in numerous holiday food and gift drives. In November and December, staff collected donations for multiple Maryland food banks, Marine Toys for Tots, Frisky's Wildlife & Primate Sanctuary, and the Salvation Army Angel Tree. The Agency also has exceeded its Maryland Charity Campaign goal.

Dr. Glass welcomed Stephanie Patton, the new Chief of Human Resources, who started this week. He also thanked Shannon Bettleyon for filling in as Acting Chief for the last six months.

Ms. Jose joined the meeting at 9:48 a.m.

Dr. Glass and the Board extended their appreciation and congratulations to Don Gittings, Tara Harris, and Al Razik, each of whom is retiring after more than 35 years.

MES was awarded a Baltimore Sun Top Workplace; it is the second consecutive year MES has received this honor.

### **NEW BUSINESS REPORT**

Ms. Heller presented the New Business Report and asked if there were any questions. Ms. Heller asked about the per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) sampling opportunity for Maryland Military. Mr. Page reported that this is MES' third year conducting sampling at various military sites throughout the site.

### **FINANCIAL REPORT**

Mr. Patel reported on the Agency's preliminary financial performance as of November 30, 2023. Billable labor is \$2 million greater than this time last year. Billable labor is consistently about 12% over FY23. Billable hours are up 7%, and overhead recovery is up 9.92%. New health benefit rates go into effect in January.

Finance is working to replace as many high-mileage vehicles as possible.

Interest income continues to be higher than projected. Any interest MES earns is shared with State clients (or other clients for whom MES holds advance funds) as credits.

### **HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT**

Mr. Sharma presented the Human Resources (HR) report. As of December 13, 2023, the Agency vacancy rate is 4.41%. There are 35 vacancies, eight of which are new positions. In an effort to be more flexible, the Agency has started onboarding new employees twice a week rather than once a week. The Human Resources department will begin to review all policies and procedures.

### **PROCUREMENT ITEMS**

Ms. Condra presented Item 1. The procurement is for the supply and transportation of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel to Hart-Miller and Poplar Islands. The Vane Brothers Company will provide fuel and delivery at a cost not to exceed \$654,055. There is a 0% Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) goal. The vendor has the only Coast Guard certified fuel-delivery vessel in the State. Costs are in line with previous years' purchases and are based on fair market prices. Dr. Johnson made the motion to approve the item; Judge Smalkin seconded. No members were opposed. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board Notifications for Contracts, Purchase Orders, Amendments, and Change Orders between \$25,000 and \$200,000 were reviewed.

### **GROUP UPDATES**

Mr. Barr updated the Board on the wastewater treatment plant upgrades at the Woodstock Job Corps Center. The campus is located on State property inside Patapsco State Park. The construction project was completed in December 2022 at a cost of \$8.6 million. Since completion, discharge results have been well below permit limits.

Ms. Filiaggi presented on the waste composition studies conducted to provide baselines for understanding waste generation, aid in design of programs, and evaluate success of recycling programs. The Agency performs these studies for a variety of current and new clients. They are also done on outgoing commodities.

Mr. Buppert presented an overview of fixed-wing drone operations using a new Wingtra Generation 2 fixed-wing drone, which MES recently purchased on behalf of the Maryland Port Administration (MPA). The Poplar Island project team uses the drone to collect multispectral imagery (MSI) data for Poplar Island's completed wetland cells and to track vegetation health and density per permit requirements. Mr. Buppert provided a flight demonstration in the parking lot after today's Board meeting.

Mr. Page presented an overview of the stormwater management structures at the Agency Headquarters building. He provided a walking tour of the structures after the meeting.

### **LEGAL REPORT**

Mr. Coleman reported that the Agency is working to draft agreements with various State agencies for existing water and wastewater facilities in response to the audit report recommendations. These facilities have been operated under an executive order for many years. One agreement has been completed, and several others are currently being processed.

Mr. Coleman announced that the MES legal team received the Attorney General's award for Distinguished Service for Ensuring Government Accountability. The award was in recognition of the team's support to MES in responding to inquiries related to the former Director and its guidance in implementing the requirements of the MES Reform Act. The team consists of Assistant Attorneys General Sean Coleman, Priscilla Carroll, Eric Hartlaub, and Christy Fisher, and Paralegal Pamela Fuller.

### **OLD/NEW BUSINESS**

The next meeting of the Board is Thursday, January 25, 2024, at 9:30 a.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The business meeting adjourned at 10:43 a.m. Following the meeting, several Board members viewed a demonstration of the fixed-wing drone and toured the stormwater facilities at the Headquarters building. No official business was conducted during the demonstration and tour.

*Frederic N. Smalkin*

*Shelley Heller*

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**HONORABLE FREDERIC SMALKIN**  
**SECRETARY**

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**SHELLEY HELLER**  
**CHAIR**