

Apr 16, 2017 Email from SIU President, Eddie Somers

Hey All

Our Apr 1 membership meeting went well. Tony Stockus from the Sanitary District and Peter Bozick, the design engineer for the new sewer plant gave membership an update. Mr. Bozick told us that as of Apr 1 the cost for users with the current funding would be- worst case \$1,500 best case \$900 per year. This is by no means final they are still looking for grants. Some of the pre-engineering and permitting processes have already started. Once the final decisions are made to proceed this will be a 2-3 year project. Mr. Stockus said that the communities will have a say in whether to proceed but that the plant is in bad condition. To someone living in New York or Baltimore I am sure that this sounds like no big deal but we have many in our community that are already struggling with cost. This is a good example of government mandates coming with no funding.

Most people at the meeting were in agreement with the placement of the picnic tables, etc. on the Ewell Fire Co property on the south side of Smith Island Rd. The Coastal Association of Realtors made a substantial donation towards this project thru the Md Dept of Planning. There will be a dedication ceremony on May 12th with the members of the realtors group in attendance. See the attachments. Thanks to Otis for delivering 30 bags of mulch at no cost to the site. Thanks to Alan, Alan Wade, and Betty Jo for providing the transportation to the Island for the group. This project was led by the Salisbury office of MD Dept of Planning, a big thank you to their staff. I will send out an itinerary as soon as everything is finalized. Please attend the ceremony if you can so we can show our appreciation.

Committee to look into Md Program Open Space funding- we have formed a 3 person committee to look into the possibility of getting Open Space funding to purchase the Pitchcroft Property at Ewell and make it a park. For those of you that are not familiar this property is on the north end of Ewell past the power plant. For those of us that remember before it became overgrown with weeds it is one of the best properties on the Island with water and sewer hookup. There is also a War of 1812 burial site for a British Soldier there. This is very early so stay tuned.

Waterman's Apprenticeship Program- Gretchen met with a group of waterman to discuss the program, ask for their input, etc. We will send out an update from that meeting soon.

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Living Shoreline Project- Due to HUD requirements the jetty and dredging project on the bayside at Rhodes Pt cannot happen. The county is now going to use the final portion of that funding to continue the living shoreline project as it was originally drawn up to stop at Frances Gut. They are in the process of working with the contractor for the dates (very soon) to proceed and finish. We would have preferred the dredging and jetty (there are serious shoaling issues at Rhodes Pt) but I for one am grateful for the shoreline protection.

Smith Island Folklore Project- One of our supporters, Brad Hierstetter, is collecting the following for a new "booklet with an audio CD" that he is preparing: blessings, customs, folk stories, jokes, legends, poems, recipes, sayings, slang, superstitions, tall tales, work songs, etc. As with his last project (a booklet called "Still the Faithful Sing" which is still available from SIU), all proceeds from the sale of this booklet/CD combo will be donated to SIU. Visit <http://www.sifolklore.com/> to see samples of folklore collected thus far **and/or to contribute folklore for this project. Brad would be glad for any input or stories.**

Website and Facebook- Our website, www.smithislandunited.com is in the process of being updated and changed around a little please check it out. We are also going to try to be more active on our Facebook page.

Recordings done by Tom Horton- We are looking into the possibility of digitizing some of the recordings Tom Horton did on cassette back in the 80's and 90's with some Smith Islanders, many who are no longer with us. If we can do this we will work with the Museum to have them available to the public. See the attachment for a list of some that we are interested in.

Happy Easter!