



City of Harrisonburg Stormwater Advisory Committee

Meeting Summary

May 13, 2026, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Bluestone Room, 320 East Mosby

Members in attendance: Ferwerdin Barzanji, Kent O'Donohue, Wes Runion, Dany Fleming (5:26pm)

Staff in attendance: Keith Thomas, Shayna Carter, Austin Shenk, Matthew Huston

Virtual attendance: Spencer Tassone

Review and Adopt Minutes

Wes Runion motioned to approve the February 2026 meeting minutes. Ferwerdin Barzanji seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Water Sampling Updates

Spencer Tassone from the United States Geological Survey (USGS) presented the results from his water samples collected from springs throughout the City. Spencer collected the water samples throughout 2025 to identify various water quality indicators.

Austin Shenk updated the committee on his recent water sampling findings. He highlighted that the results remained consistent and the downtown locations remained high in E. coli. He noted the potential to continue to work with USGS to investigate the cause of E. coli in the downtown sampling locations.

Austin then notified the committee that he partnered with a JMU professor and their students to collect water samples and compare results. He noted the students were also measuring E. Coli. Dany Fleming asked if the students sample sites were the same as the ones Austin collected. Austin confirmed that they were. Ferwerdin asked how the E. coli is measured. Austin replied that it is grown on an agar medium and the spores are counted on the plate.

MS4 Program Updates

Keith Thomas updated the committee on the development of the Blacks Run and Cooks Creek Total Maximum Daily Load Action Plan. Keith explained the pollution reduction requirements that the City plans to achieve by 2073. He noted that there was still pollutant reductions required past 2073 but staff could not obligate the City to a plan so far in the future. Dany Fleming asked if there was a way to reassess the pollutant reduction requirements to potentially have them lowered. Keith noted that historically DEQ were not amenable to that discussion.

Keith reminded the committee that staff were still in the process of taking over maintenance for the BMPs owned by Harrisonburg City Public Schools (HCPS). Keith noted that a Memorandum of Understanding was to be signed by City representatives and HCPS representatives. He explained that City staff would take over the medium to larger scale maintenance items while HCPS staff were required to pick up litter in the BMPs and mow them.

Keith ended with an update to the Stormwater Utility Fee. He explained that the was increased to \$10 per 500 square feet, raised from \$8 per 500 square feet. This increase would fund designs and construction for approved Drainage Improvement Projects.

Austin updated the committee on the Saufley Farm Tree Planting project. He noted that the contractor planted the first round of trees. Austin said the contractor was expected to do maintenance on the planted trees throughout the summer and fall.

VESMP Updates

Matthew Huston informed the committee that Community Development had offered someone the Site Development Coordinator position. He mentioned that so far this year, staff have given 6 Notice to Comply and two Stop Work Orders. Matthew noted that Community Development requested a second Inspector position, but it was not added to the Fiscal Year 2027 budget.

Matthew noted that DEQ hired a new Compliance Specialist for the area, Kristyn Albro. He mentioned Kristyn had conducted unannounced inspections for sites in Harrisonburg.

Matthew explained that projects in the development pipeline have slowed down, which was normal for late spring. He highlighted that Erosion and Sediment Control and Stormwater plan review fees were to increase July 1, 2026, to match the State's increase. He noted that the increase ranged from 49-63% based on the type of permit. Matthew mentioned an update to site plan review based on changes made to State law. He noted that this update would limit what staff can review on resubmission.

Matthew noted that Community Development staff was looking for training opportunities related to floodplain administration.

Stormwater Programs Updates

HCAP Updates

Shayna Carter informed the committee that there have been 13 approved practices, one of them was Rainwater Harvesting. She noted this was the first time someone had been approved for that practice. Shayna explained that staff selected someone for the Environmental Program Specialist position, and they were expected to start in late May. She noted that this new role would take some of the administrative workload from the Shenandoah Valley Soil and Water Conservation District (SVSWCD).

Drainage Improvement Updates

Hill Street to N. Mason Street- Keith updated the committee that the last public meeting was held on April 22nd. The consultant presented two alternatives to alleviate flooding. He noted that one alternative installed new stormwater pipes in the City Right of Way and routed water away from private property, while the other alternative utilized the alleyways between residential areas.

Keith explained that the northern section of the neighborhood had its own study. He mentioned that the first half of the study was completed in late March and phase two was expected to start in July after the new fiscal year. Keith highlighted that the goal was to combine the Northeast South and Northeast North studies which would potentially be phased as one large project during the construction phase.

Charles to Madison St- Keith updated the committee that Matthew and his team were completing a design for the project if the City was selected for the Congressional Directed Spending.

Waterman Dr-Keith notified the committee that the Waterman Drive project was not selected for FEMA funding. Dany asked if the Waterman Drive study included the proposed development on the Quarry property. Keith noted that it did not because the study began before the rezoning was approved and the development indicated that planned to direct their stormwater away from Waterman Drive. Dany asked if staff knew where the project lost points in the ranking of the FEMA grant. Keith noted that the grant funded were ideally supposed to go to Southwest Virginia to remediate damages from Hurricane Helene. He explained that the funding was likely prioritized for applications more in that area.

Stormwater Projects

Blacks Run South Stream Restoration Update

Austin Shenk informed the committee that the project had been completed. He noted that staff submitted with last Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) reimbursement request.

Mountain View Drive Stream Restoration Update

Austin updated the committee that the contractor was expected to mobilize on the site soon. He noted that the project repairs would take two months.

Other Topics

Shayna reminded the committee that June was Pollinator Month and there were several events planned throughout the month.

Next Meeting Dates

2026 Dates

- August 5th
- November 18th