

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

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**( Approved at September 6, 2018 Meeting)**

**Minutes of August 2, 2018 Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vicky Binetti. Also present at tonight's meeting was Anne Hastings, Ann Culkin, Lola Pellegrino, Jodi Smith, Russ Price, Chet Nawoyski, and guest Giancarlo D'Orazio. Minutes of the July 5, 2018 meeting were approved as presented.

**Guests**

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Ann Culkin reported a balance of \$2,039.67 in our budget for 2018.

**Old Business**

**Workshop Meeting**

There was no workshop meeting in July.

## Sustainable Jersey

Vicky Binetti reported that the Open Space & Recreation Plan Update has been approved and accepted by the Planning Board as an amendment to the Township Master Plan, and a resolution is being drafted. Vicky also distributed copies the Washington Township Water Conservation guide which was a joint venture by the Environmental Commission and the Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA). The cost to print 2500 copies of this guide was possible through a Sustainable Jersey grant and funding provided by the MUA. The guide will be distributed to schools and libraries and to the public during our outreach activities.

Vicky announced that the next meeting of the Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) is scheduled for Monday, August 6. She also noted that the exhibit in the Municipal Building lobby has been changed to showcase the Sustainable Washington Township program.

## Bluebird Program

Vicky Binetti reported that four Bluebirds nestlings were banded for identification purposes in Washington Lake Park on Monday, July 2. The brood of baby birds was located in a nesting box near the amphitheater. Three other Bluebirds were banded at Quay Park. Vicky noted that an adult Bluebird (likely a parent of the brood) was spotted in the Park wearing an identification band. The identification numbers on the band were not discernable. A picture was taken of the adult Bluebird with the hopes of enlarging the numbers to see if it was previously banded in Washington Township.

In order to get a head start on next year's Bluebird project, it was agreed to utilize the amount allocated in our 2018 budget, up to \$300, for the purpose of purchasing Bluebird boxes and mounting supplies. This will allow us to install nesting boxes Washington Township in the Fall of this year and early in 2019. Vicky Binetti made the motion, and it was seconded by Chet Nawoyski. The vote was unanimous to allow this purchase.

## Monarch Butterfly Program

Despite efforts to attract Monarch butterflies by planting milkweed (their main food source) around the Township, there have been very few reported sightings of Monarch butterflies this summer.

## Firefly Festival

Due to inclement weather, the Firefly Festival sponsored by the Gloucester County Nature Club, was postponed from Saturday, July 21, to Sunday, July 22. Over 200 people participated. The event was very successful. Fireflies were abundant and quite visible in the dark on the grounds of Tall Pines Nature Reserve. There were educational stations along the trails with glow sticks lighting the way. The Nature Club is already planning to repeat the event in 2019.

## Trap, Neuter & Release Ordinance

Anne Hastings had no new report since she has not received any feedback from Council regarding the proposed Trap, Neuter & Release legislation which they are spearheading.

### Proposed Resolution – Support OFF (Off Fossil Fuels) Act

At the Environmental Commission meeting in July, guests Jocelyn Sawyer, South Jersey organizer of Food & Water Watch and Mike DeLozier, Gloucester County Food & Water Watch, spoke about the goal of a bill introduced in the state legislature to shift from Fossil Fuels to 100% renewable energy sources (wind, solar and geothermal) by 2035. They spoke before Township Council on May 9<sup>th</sup> to encourage their passing of a resolution in support of OFF. After a discussion of the pros and cons of the OFF Act, the Environmental Commission, on a motion by Anne Hastings and seconded by Ann Culkin, voted to support this legislation and encourage Council to pass the appropriate resolution. Vicky Binetti abstained.

### Clean Up Day

Clean Up Day is scheduled for Saturday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. Anne Hastings agreed to send out letters to past volunteers to solicit their participation this year. Anne also announced that she will not be available on Clean Up Day; however, Ann Culkin agreed to step in for Anne Hastings and assume her responsibilities on that day. Anne stressed the importance of drafting the clean-up site list first and foremost. It was suggested that if we do not have a sufficient number of sites for the volunteers, then we should use the manpower to clean up the trails in Washington Lake Park. Vicky Binetti is expecting Environmental Commission members to volunteer and hopes to have the event fully organized by our September meeting.

## **New Business**

### Planning & Zoning

There was no report in Rich Fini's absence. However, Vicky Binetti reported that the Revelations Beauty Salon project came before the Zoning Board on July 9<sup>th</sup>. The applicant has addressed the tree protection ordinance requirements, and the storm water basin meets all specifications and is compliant. The applicant is trying to locate the septic system believed to be located on the site.

### Washington Township Redevelopment Zone

The Township Council is considering an amendment to the Redevelopment Plan for Area 1 of the Washington Square Development Zone, to allow an additional use (convenience store with fueling centers and limited indoor and outdoor seating).

### KIA (4601 Route 42 Assoc.)

Vicky Binetti discussed this proposed project, located in Tier 1 of a wellhead protection area. KIA plans to expand their service area. Vicky noted that the amount of impervious surface will not be changing and no trees are involved. After discussion, it was unanimously agreed, upon a motion made by Anne Hastings and seconded by Ann Culkin, that Vicky Binetti prepare a letter to the Zoning Board noting our concerns that this expansion is a prohibited use in a wellhead protection area. The comments will include emphasis of the importance of controls or containment facilities and recommend ground water monitoring, should the Planning Board opt to entertain a variance to permit the expansion.

## Trail Guide

The Township is planning to improve the Chapel Heights entrance and nearby parking areas in Washington Lake Park. Vicky Binetti noted that we have \$400 in our budget for the purpose of reprinting our trail guides this year. Since it would be logical to wait until after the Township has made the Park improvements to reprint the trail guides, Vicky suggested that we use the money this year to purchase signs for signage, as part of a project underway by four student interns from Rowan University. The anticipated outcome of the project will be a prototype of an electronic trail guide, and improved signs and markers along one trail. Commission members agreed to use the budgeted funds for signage.

## Royal Farms

Guest Giancarlo D’Orazio attended tonight’s meeting to voice his concerns regarding the anticipated Royal Farms project and its possible effects on our drinking water. The proposed project would be located in Tier 1 of the wellhead protection area for planned well #19. The Commission answered the questions Mr. D’Orazio raised to clarify the project review and approval process.

## Committee Reports

### Open Space

There was no report in Leon Lakritz’s absence.

### Council

There was no report in Sean Longfellow’s absence.

### Announcements

Anne Hastings proposed that the start time for Environmental Commission meetings be moved to 7:00 pm, from the current start time of 7:30 pm. After discussion, members agreed to begin meetings at 7:00 pm, provided that any administrative and notice requirements can be met. Vicky Binetti will coordinate with the Clerk’s Office and Mayor’s Office to effect the change.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Submitted by:

*/s/Dorothy Hunter*

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary  
Washington Township Environmental Commission