

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**P. O. Box 1106 523 Egg Harbor Road
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(Approved at March 1, 2018 Meeting)

Minutes of February 1, 2018 Meeting

Chairman Vicky Binetti called the meeting to order. Also attending tonight's meeting were Anne Hastings, Leon Lakritz, Ann Culkin, Ed Andricola, Russ Price, George Gerber, Chet Nawoyski, Lola Pellegrino, and Jodi Smith. The minutes of our January 18, 2018 Reorganization Meeting were approved as presented. Vicky Binetti reappointed Dorothy Hunter as secretary of the Environmental Commission for 2018, with the concurrence of Commissioners.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ann Culkin gave the following financial report:

Account Balance

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| • Environmental Commission | \$674.63 |
| • Earth Day | 1,225.97 |
| • Clean Up Day | 3,633.69* |

**This amount includes \$894 refunded from the Parks and Recreation budget to the Environmental Commission for the tent rental for Clean Up Day.*

Old Business

Workshop Meeting

The Environmental Commission did not hold a workshop meeting in January. Vicky Binetti announced that a workshop meeting will be held on Thursday, February 15th, to finalize Earth Day plans.

Sustainable Jersey

Vicky Binetti announced that the plaque awarded to Washington Township for its Bronze certification in the Sustainable Jersey program is on display in the lobby of the Municipal Building. The Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) is now embarking on the next phase, achieving a Silver certification. She announced that the next meeting of the GTAC is February 5, 2018, starting at 6:00 p.m. in the Mayor's office. The committee will be reviewing what actions they want to work on in the coming months. The deadline for grant applications to the Sustainable Jersey Small Grants Program is February 28th; an application will require a resolution by Council. Vicky noted that Mayor Gattinelli is very supportive of our participation and success in this State-wide program.

George Gerber, a Washington Township High School student and member of SAVE (Students Against Violation of the Earth), interviewed Mayor Gattinelli about Sustainable Jersey and what it means to our Township. The session was videotaped, and clips of the interview could possibly be posted on the Township website.

Open Space

Vicky Binetti announced that our contractor, The Land Conservancy of New Jersey (TLC-NJ), has incorporated our comments into the first draft of the Open Space & Recreation Plan Update, and the second draft should be available by February 15th. Updated maps have also been provided. The draft document will be available for public review on the Township website, and print copies will be available in the Clerk's Office in the Municipal Building and at the Reference Desk in the Margaret E. Heggan Library. A presentation by Barbara Davis of TLC-NJ is scheduled before Council on February 28th. The final draft is expected sometime in April after which time the Planning Board will have the opportunity to formally adopt the Open Space and Recreation Plan into the Township Master Plan.

ANJEC Training

The ANJEC Environmental Commissioners training is scheduled for Saturday, March 24th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building. Vicky Binetti reminded the Commission that we are hosting the event and encouraged members to attend and show support. Plans are being made to highlight our Clean Up Day event with a short presentation and preparation of a "tool kit" on how to organize a similar clean-up day program that other communities could use as a guide.

Bluebird and Monarch Butterfly Projects

Leon Lakritz spoke about the Bluebird project which the Environmental Commission and local residents began last year. He noted that two of the three Bluebird houses erected in Washington Lake Park produced four hatchlings. Anticipating the expansion of this project and with the support of the Environmental Commission members, Leon said that we will need volunteers to monitor and care for the Bluebird houses. There are specific tasks necessary to care for the houses, and the Commission plans to advertise for volunteers who would be interested in maintaining the bird houses. Ann Culkan suggested offering service hours to students who sign up to build the Bluebird houses.

Allen Jackson of the New Jersey Bluebird Society will give a presentation at the Margaret E. Heggan Library, and he will bring sample bird houses for demonstration purposes. The Gloucester

County Nature Club has agreed to be available for technical assistance. George Gerber announced that the SAVE organization is donating \$138 towards the Bluebird project from their recent fundraiser to support environmental projects.

The Environmental Commission also plans to start a pilot program this spring to encourage the proliferation of Monarch butterflies in Washington Lake Park and elsewhere in the Township. The State of New Jersey has passed two bills that would provide funding for State agencies to purchase seeds and plant milkweed, a food source for Monarch butterflies, in State-owned storm water basins and public parks. Vicky Binetti will continue to follow up to see whether the State might offer grants for this program.

Earth Day/Arbor Day

Vicky Binetti distributed and discussed a list of activities scheduled, or tentatively scheduled, for our Earth Day/Arbor Day program. She suggested that the Environmental Commission meet for a workshop meeting on February 15th to decide on the final agenda.

Recruitment

In a drive to promote interest and increase membership in the Environmental Commission, Leon Lakritz suggested we design a Powerpoint presentation that highlights the various programs that we sponsor during the year. This presentation could be shown on a laptop at various activities where we participate. He also suggested we reach out to the Washington Township Sun to run a short promotional story weekly. Chet Nawoyski thought we could write a one-page introduction to the Environmental Commission that would be included in a Township mailing, and Ed Andricola volunteered to speak with SAVE and solicit their interest to participate in Environmental Commission activities. Vicky Binetti asked members to give recruitment additional thought and bring their ideas to the next workshop meeting.

WTEC Annual Report

Vicky Binetti is currently assembling the WTEC Annual Report which will be submitted to the Mayor and Council in February. She reminded members responsible for any Environmental Commission activity in 2017 to forward pictures or statistics to her as soon as possible for inclusion in the report.

New Business

Planning & Zoning Boards

There was no report in Rich Fini's absence. Vicky Binetti noted that plans for the Jefferson Hospital expansion were recently approved by the Planning Board. The new project proposed (Procco Retail) to replace the former D'Eva Furniture store on the Black Horse Pike opposite Wal-Mart is coming before the Planning Board on February 20. The applicant's attorney discussed this project with the Environmental Commission at our meeting on January 18.

Committee Reports

Open Space

Leon Lakritz reported that the Open Space Advisory Committee has arranged to have the Stoyko and Chew properties on Hurffville-Grenloch Road appraised for potential purchase as open space. They are also about to kick off the Community Garden project and will be accepting applications for plots. Currently there are 18 plots with the possibility of 6 more depending on interest.

Announcements

Audubon Society

Vicky Binetti announced that the Audubon Society is sponsoring the annual backyard bird count from February 16th to 19th. She will e-mail members the event details if anyone would like to participate.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Submitted by:

/s/ Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary
Washington Township Environmental Commission

