

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

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**(Approved at July 5, 2018 Meeting)**

**Minutes of June 7, 2018 Meeting**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vicky Binetti. Also in attendance were Leon Lakritz, Anne Hastings, Ann Culkin, Mark Phillips, Russ Price, Devin Walker, George Gerber, Lola Pellegrino, Jodi Smith and Sarah Geiger.

The minutes of our May 3, 2018 meeting were approved as presented.

**Treasurer's Report**

Treasurer Ann Culkin reported a balance in our account of \$2,434.62. There are two outstanding purchases - a sign for Monarch Butterflies in the amount of \$33 and \$70 for two conference registrations (Sustainability Summit).

**Old Business**

**Workshop Meeting**

There was no workshop meeting in May.

## Sustainable Jersey

Washington Township obtained a Bronze Certification in the Sustainable Jersey Program in 2017. Vicky Binetti announced that she recently updated documentation for the six actions which expired at the end of 2017 to refresh our Bronze status, and submitted three new actions for 2018. Vicky mentioned that Washington Township has developed a new app called "Washington Township O-N-E" and encouraged members to check it out. One of the categories accessible in this new app is "Washington Township Saves Lives," one of the three new actions submitted. Sixteen Township restaurants/bars are participating in this initiative, which offers Uber service to patrons who feel they need a safe ride home after alcohol consumption. The Police Department saw a 53% reduction in DUI's in the first month of the program as a result.

Washington Township is also sponsoring an incentive program ("Shop Washington Township") to encourage residents to shop locally, and to increase patronage of Township businesses. A percentage of sales at participating merchants is applied as a credit against property taxes.

The next phase in this program for Washington Township is to achieve a Silver certification. The Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) plans to apply next year.

## Open Space

Leon Lakritz mentioned that the Open Space & Recreation Plan Update will be presented to the Planning Board this summer prior to its adoption into the Township Master Plan. The plan will be available on the Township website and paper copies will be available at the Municipal Building and at the Library.

## Earth Day/Arbor Day

Vicky Binetti was happy to report a successful series of events and thanked individual members who volunteered their time to help at the various activities held throughout the month of April. She asked members to give thought to what type of program we would like to pursue next year. She hopes to start the planning process for 2019 in the fall of this year.

Vicky recognized the Margaret E. Heggan Library who partnered with the Environmental Commission to bring a variety of programs to the library during April in conjunction with our Earth Day/Arbor Day program.

## Recruitment

As part of our membership drive, Vicky Binetti sent a letter to individuals who attended our Earth Day lectures and activities and indicated an interest in learning more about the Environmental Commission. She suggested they contact her directly or email the Commission at [WTEC@twp.washington.nj.us](mailto:WTEC@twp.washington.nj.us). Anne Hastings thought we should add a link to our web page where people

Vicky Binetti thanked Devin Walker for recruiting four Rowan University students to serve internships with the Environmental Commission. They will work on several approaches to help to create

better access to the trails in Washington Lake Park and information about the natural features of the Park.

#### Super Saturday

The Environmental Commission participated in Super Saturday. As part of our Monarch Butterfly proliferation project, milkweed plants were distributed to attendees wishing to participate in growing these plants which are the main food source of these butterflies. The Commission acknowledged the assistance of Jim McCann, who grew the milkweed plants in the greenhouse in Washington Lake Park.

#### Bluebird Project

Vicky Binetti announced that seven new Bluebird nesting boxes have been placed in the Township, and there is evidence of nesting in several of them.

#### Monarch Butterfly Project

Vicky Binetti suggested we set up a group discussion on our web page, if possible, where residents could share their success in growing milkweed and to report if they have seen any Monarchs in their backyards.

#### Royal Farms

The Township Council voted to change the zoning for the entire parcel Block 86, Lot 1.02 to industrial/commercial. (Two-thirds of the lot had previously been zoned Rural, and one-third Commercial/Industrial.) This change will allow the building of a gas station as a conditional use, although several variances would still be required. The lot is in a wellhead protection area. The owner of the property, however, has reached out to the Environmental Commission and indicated they are willing to work with us to install protections.

#### Gloucester County Nature Club Firefly Festival

Vicky Binetti reminded the Commission of the upcoming Firefly Festival to be held on July 21 (rain date July 22) in the Tall Pines State Preserve. If anyone is interested, the Gloucester County Nature Club is looking for additional volunteers to help with the event.

### **New Business**

#### Planning & Zoning Boards

There was no report.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Council Report**

In Sean Longfellow's absence, Anne Hastings mentioned that Council is still trying to resolve the outstanding issues on the Trap, Neuter and Release ordinance.

### **Open Space**

Leon Lakritz noted that several projects are being considered but are currently on hold.

## **Announcements**

### **Washington Township Rotary**

Ann Culkin mentioned that the Rotary Club under the leadership of Randy Davidson offered to partner with the Environmental Commission on a project. Ann asked members of our Commission to suggest an event or activity that would be of mutual interest.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Submitted by:

*/s/Dorothy Hunter*

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary  
Washington Township Environmental Commission