

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**P. O. Box 1106 523 Egg Harbor Road
Turnersville, NJ 08012**

(856) 589-0520, Ext. 232

wtec@twp.washington.nj.us

(Approved at April 5, 2018 Meeting)

Minutes of March 1, 2018 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Vicky Binetti. Also attending tonight's meeting were Ann Culkin, Lola Pellegrino, Chet Nawoyski, Russ Price, Devin Walker, Jodi Smith, Leon Lakritz, and guest Marie Hageman. The minutes of our February 1, 2018 meeting were approved as corrected.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ann Culkin reported the following balance in the Environmental Commission temporary budget: \$ 674.63

Old Business

Workshop Meeting

A workshop meeting was held on February 15, 2018. The topics of discussion were Earth Day activities, Open Space & Recreation Plan, Bluebird and Monarch Butterfly projects, and the John Boyer environmental service award. Vicky Binetti indicated that a workshop meeting in March will be held to finalize Earth Day activities.

Sustainable Jersey

The Sustainable Washington Township Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) met on February 5, 2018 to continue discussions on which actions to undertake towards a Silver certification in

2018. A Trap, Neuter and Release (TNR) program, to help control the feral cat population humanely and reduce euthanasia rates, is being considered as one possibility. Small grants to fund actions in the Sustainable Jersey program are currently available, and the GTAC is determining whether to submit an application in this cycle.

Open Space & Recreation Plan

The draft updated Open Space & Recreation Plan and maps were presented to Township Council at their televised meeting on Wednesday, February 28, 2018. A public workshop on the draft Plan was held immediately prior to the Council meeting. Vicky Binetti mentioned that the document is available for public review on the Township website, and print copies are available at the Margaret E. Heggan Library and Township Clerk's office. Public comments are welcome, and the deadline for submission is March 16th. The final draft should be ready sometime in April 2018, and the Planning Board will then have the opportunity to formally adopt the Plan into the Township Master Plan.

ANJEC Training

Cheryl Reardon of ANJEC will be coordinating the training program for environmental commissioners on Saturday, March 24th, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building. The Environmental Commission will host this year's event for South Jersey environmental commissions. Mayor Gattinelli will deliver opening remarks and Anne Hastings will prepare a short presentation on Washington Township's Clean Up Day, and provide a "toolkit," including information and templates, to help other commissions develop similar clean-up events in the communities.

Earth Day/Arbor Day

Vicky Binetti reviewed the agenda planned for Earth Day/Arbor Day and confirmed the Commission members assigned to each activity. She also discussed tentative activities to see which ones the Commission would like to pursue and add to the program.

Bluebirds & Monarch Butterflies

The committee behind the Bluebird endeavor is currently deciding on appropriate placement of the Bluebird houses in Washington Lake Park and elsewhere in the Township, with the assistance of the Gloucester County Nature Club and the New Jersey Bluebird Society. The next step is to obtain volunteers to care for the houses which require specific tasks. We have heard from several residents who expressed interest and want to be involved. Allen Jackson, President of the New Jersey Bluebird Society, will present a lecture on bluebirds at the library on April 11th, as part of the Commission's Earth Day-Arbor Day program.

The Monarch Butterfly project is now under way. Vicky Binetti recently purchased milkweed seeds (their main food source), and Jim McCann of Public Works is overseeing planting in the green house in Washington Lake Park. Milkweed plants will be distributed at Super Saturday to those attendees who would like to participate in the Monarch Rescue project and grow milkweed in order to attract the butterflies. Also, Erik Mollenhauer, of the Monarch Teacher Network and the Gloucester County Nature Club, will present a lecture on "Marvelous Monarchs" on April 30th, at the library.

Recruitment

Leon Lakritz reminded members that the Environmental Commission should continue to build upon our membership base and actively recruit new members who have an interest in protecting the environment.

New Business

Planning & Zoning Boards

In Rich Fini's absence, Vicky Binetti and Chet Nawoyski gave the following update:

Planning Board

- Provco (formerly D'Eva Furniture Store)- Applicant received preliminary approval. Traffic issues need to be resolved prior to final approval.
- Fishpond Equities – Environmental concerns exist since the site was previously an orchard with arsenic and lead contamination; the applicant is employing soil blending to reduce the concentrations.

Zoning Board

- Royal Farms – Legal issues have delayed Royal Farms application.
- Self-Storage Facility (located on No Name Street behind Kohls) - Applicant requested an extension of approvals due to economic conditions, until possibly 2019 if necessary.

Committee Reports

Open Space

Depending on acquisition of a matching fund grant from the NJ Department of Forestry, Leon Lakritz reported that the Open Space Committee would like to employ a forester to assist in developing a Community Forestry Plan. This could include an evaluation of open space for reforestation. Leon also noted that 100 acres on Hurffville-Cross Keys Road is under preliminary consideration for potential purchase as open space.

The first appraisals for the Stoyko and Chew parcels have been received. The committee is awaiting receipt of a second set of appraisals before a decision to purchase can be made.

Council

No report.

Announcements

Super Saturday

Vicky Binetti announced that Super Saturday will be held on May 12, and asked Commissioners to help to staff a table for the Commission. As part of our program to promote the proliferation of Monarch Butterflies, the Environmental Commission will distribute milkweed plants. Residents will be encouraged to plant them to help attract and feed the Monarchs.

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

Submitted by:

/s/Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary
Washington Township Environmental Commission