

**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 February 6, 2020 Meeting)

Minutes of January 9, 2020 Reorganization Meeting

The reorganization meeting to elect new officers was called to order by Secretary Dorothy Hunter. Present tonight were Vicky Binetti, Anne Hastings, Ann Culkin, Leon Lakritz and Peter Garbowski. The first order of business was to open nominations for Chair of the Environmental Commission for 2020. On a motion made by Leon Lakritz, seconded by Anne Hastings, Vicky Binetti was nominated for the position of Chair. With no other nominations, the vote was unanimous to elect Vicky Binetti Chair of the Environmental Commission for 2020.

Chair Vicky Binetti then asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Leon Lakritz nominated Anne Hastings. His motion was seconded by Ann Culkin. There were no other nominations. Unanimously Anne Hastings was voted to serve as Vice Chair. For the position of Treasurer, Ann Culkin was nominated by Leon Lakritz. The nomination was seconded by Anne Hastings. No other nominations for Treasurer were presented, and Ann Culkin was unanimously voted Treasurer.

With the concurrence of the Commissioners, Vicky Binetti appointed Dorothy Hunter to serve as secretary of the Environmental Commission for 2020.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ann Culkin reviewed the purchases made in 2019 by the Environmental Commission. She also reported that she was unable to obtain the figures for our 2020 temporary budget. She hopes to have the numbers by our February meeting.

Old Business

Workshop Meeting

There were no workshop meetings in November and December 2019.

Sustainable Jersey

Vicky Binetti announced that Washington Township received recertification at the Bronze level and was recognized at the November annual luncheon of the Sustainable Jersey program in Atlantic City. The Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) is continuing to work towards a Silver certification. They met on Monday, January 6, 2020 to discuss their plans and goals for 2020. Vicky reminded Commission members that the Tri County Sustainability Alliance (a group composed of green team and environmental commission representatives from neighboring communities) is hosting an Energy Efficiency Summit on Wednesday, January 22 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Haddonfield Borough Hall. The summit is open to business owners, homeowners, renters, and municipal officials and will present strategies to lower individual and community greenhouse gas emissions while saving money.

Bluebird and Monarch Butterfly Projects

Because our efforts to increase the bluebird population were so successful last year, the Commission agreed to continue the project this year. Fifty-four bluebirds were fledged using bluebird boxes placed in the Township open space and parks. Additionally, Leon Lakritz noted that Jim McCann has already ordered supplies to start milkweed plants in the Township greenhouse. The milkweed plants will be distributed at Super Saturday so residents can help to provide food for young Monarch butterfly caterpillars.

Proposed Ordinance: Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate & Release (Feral Cats)

Township Council has some revisions to make to the original resolution on community commitment to companion animals before it can be officially adopted.

Proposed Resolution: Support OFF (Off Fossil Fuels) Act

There was no report.

ANJEC Grant – Poplar Trail

Vicky Binetti and Leon Lakritz met with Zack Gorman, newly-hired webmaster for Washington Township, to discuss our needs in regards to the Township website.

The ANJEC grant we received is funding the development of educational information and signage for the Poplar Trail in Washington Lake Park. Leon Lakritz brought a prototype of the new signage with QR (quick response) codes that will be used as markers to allow those walking the trail to obtain instant information about selected foliage on the trail.

Recycling

Vicky Binetti announced that new guidelines have been instituted by recycling companies, and as a result, residents will need to be re-educated on the new rules. Companies are mandating that certain items not be included in collections, for example, items that they cannot now recycle (e.g.,

plastics other than those numbered 1 or 2, single-use plastic bags, food waste) and are imposing fines to municipalities for “contaminated” loads. She also reminded members that Amy Falasca, Public Works Department, is initiating a new recycling program to collect plastic bottle caps. The Commission discussed ways to encourage residents to reduce consumption of items that they use every day rather than buy new. The Commission agreed that our environmental theme for 2020 will be “reduce” and encourage residents to not only reduce the use of items and materials that quickly become trash, but to reuse where appropriate.

Atlantic City Electric Substation Update

Because of concerns raised by residents impacted by the proposed upgrading and expansion of their electrical substation along Hurffville-Grenloch Road, Atlantic City Electric (ACE) agreed at the last meeting held in the Senior Center to take another look at their plans. However, Vicky Binetti reported that recent information from ACE indicates they will proceed with construction. ACE is holding another open house meeting with residents on January 29th before appearing before the Zoning Board on February 10.

New Business

Goals and Activities for 2020

A list of 2020 environmental projects and activities submitted by Vicky Binetti was distributed to members for review. Vicky asked members to evaluate and consider whether they would like to lead an event or assume responsibility for a project area. She is encouraging more member participation. She mentioned that Earth Day 2020 (April 22) is the 50th anniversary of Earth Day. As we prepare our annual slate of activities for April, to celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day, Vicky asked the Commission for suggestions to commemorate this special anniversary. A display at the Margaret E. Heggan Library was suggested by Anne Hastings who thought we could exhibit a comparison of commonplace items that we used 50 years ago (for example, a sandwich wrapped in waxed paper, a naked piece of fruit, a thermos, all packed in a paper bag or metal lunch box) and what they have evolved into today (sandwiches wrapped in plastic wrap, snacks in individual throwaway packaging, bottled water, all packed in a plastic sack).

Super Saturday is a Township activity that Vicky Binetti would like additional Environmental Commission participation as it serves as a great outreach opportunity not only to promote our programs, but to solicit new membership.

There was no further business, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Submitted by:

/s/Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary
Washington Township Environmental Commission