

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**P. O. Box 1106 523 Egg Harbor Road
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(Approved at April 4, 2019 Meeting)

Minutes of March 7, 2019 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vicky Binetti. Also attending tonight's meeting were Anne Hastings, Ann Culkin, Leon Lakritz, Chet Nawoyski, George Gerber, Jodi Smith, Lola Pellegrino, Devin Walker, and Peter Garbowski. The minutes of our February 7, 2019 meeting were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ann Culkin reported a balance of \$841.31 in our temporary 2019 budget. She also reported that the Earth Day account has a balance of \$835.45 and the Clean Up Day account has a balance of \$3,370.56. Vicky Binetti discussed upcoming expenses relative to our 2019 Earth Day event. She also reminded the Commission that the Sustainable Jersey Summit is scheduled around the middle of June. We usually send two members from the Commission to represent us, and this will be discussed at our April meeting.

Old Business

Workshop Meeting

There was no workshop meeting in February. Vicky Binetti indicated that we will probably have a workshop in March to finalize Earth Day plans.

Sustainable Jersey

A meeting of the Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) was held on Monday, March 4, in the Mayor's office. The Committee is concentrating on increasing awareness of the arts in our Township. They plan to create an inventory of our creative assets and cultural institutions. The South Jersey

Cultural Alliance is sponsoring an “Arts Tank Creative Placemaking” competition where the winner will receive a \$5,000 grant. Final proposals are due by April 1. Five finalists will be selected to give their presentation in Atlantic City prior to the judging.

The GTAC has submitted a small two grant applications to the Sustainable Jersey program to help support the initiatives that the Township is trying to accomplish.

On related matters, the Township will also be submitting applications for Green Acres grants for improvements in Washington Lake Park.

Vicky noted that ANJEC is also sponsoring a grant program, with awards up to \$1,500, for stewardship of open spaces. The Commission should consider submitting an application that would fund further development of the electronic guide to the Poplar Trail and additional signage, to expand the project that was begun in 2018.

Earth Day/Arbor Day

Commission members reviewed the month-long activities planned in April to celebrate Earth Day and Arbor Day. Vicky Binetti indicated that the various events will be publicized on the Township website, Facebook, Washington Township Sun, the Rotary website, and the school district’s Backpack publication. She will also meet with the new children’s librarian at the Margaret E. Heggan Library to introduce our Earth Day program.

The rain barrel workshop will not be held this year since the ones donated by the County do not require any assembly. Vicky Binetti suggested we invite interested local artists to participate by showcasing their artistic talents with paintings on the barrels. Their artwork would be displayed at prominent businesses around the Township. This could be a cooperative effort with the Sustainable Washington Township Creative Team.

Clean Up Day

There was no report. Clean Up Day is scheduled for October 12, 2019.

Blue Bird/Monarch Butterfly Projects

It was announced that six additional Blue Bird houses will be added this year to the program. Vicky Binetti mentioned that locations have been identified, and the New Jersey Blue Bird Society will assist with mounting of the new bird houses.

Jim McCann has ordered the milkweed seeds and will begin growing them in the Township greenhouse for distribution to residents interested in participating in our program to expand the Monarch butterfly population.

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

There was no report in Sean Longfellow’s absence.

Proposed Ordinance: OFF Fossil Fuels (OFF) Act

Chet Nawoyski and Ann Culkin are working to persuade Township Council to state their support for State legislation to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy by 2035. Vicky Binetti suggested that Chet and Ann prepare a draft resolution to present to Council as an initial step towards this goal.

Greentree Road/Shoppers Lane – Storage Capital Partners

This application was before the Planning Board on February 19 after the project was postponed several times since the initial approval in 2008. Vicky Binetti reported that the applicant agreed at the hearing to update their tree inventory and compensation plan. As part of our recommendations, we asked the Zoning Board to consider installation of sidewalks along No Name Street and Shoppers Lane. Applicant stated that they previously agreed to install them in certain areas but felt that in other areas the sidewalks were the responsibility of the Township and owner of shopping center.

Annual Report for 2018

Vicky Binetti reported she is still in the process of completing the report.

New Business

Planning & Zoning Boards

Ganttown Equities – This project is located on Ganttown and Egg Harbor Roads. Applicant plans to erect a third building on the site. Vicky Binetti has requested a copy of the plans-

Super Saturday

The Environmental Commission will have a table at Super Saturday on May 11th. We will distribute reusable shopping bags and milkweed plants to local residents interested in participating in our project to proliferate the Monarch butterfly population.

Committee Reports

Open Space

Leon Lakritz reported that the Open Space Advisory Committee (OSAC) is still in the process of locating and hiring a state-approved forester to develop a comprehensive forestry plan. The Township is also working to improve the back portion of Washington Lake Park, installing bike and walking paths around Cedar Lake, and will apply for a Green Acres grant to partially fund the work.

Correspondence

No report.

Council Report

There was no report in Sean Longfellow's absence.

Announcements

Bird Quest

Vicky Binetti announced that the Gloucester County Nature Club will host Bird Quest, an annual birding event, on May 4th. Further information can be found on the club's website. They will also be holding bird identification field workshops prior to May 4th if anyone is interested.

ANJEC Training

ANJEC will hold their Environmental Commissioners training on March 23, and our newest member, Peter Garbowski, expressed interest to attend.

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

Submitted by

/s/Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary
Washington Township Environmental Commission