ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

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(Approved at September 18, 2025 Meeting)

Minutes of July 3, 2025 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vicky Binetti. Also attending in person were Leon Lakritz, Jodi Smith, Ava Henson, and Rick Eckert. Attending remotely were Chet Nawoyski and Anne Hastings. The minutes of the June 5, 2025 meeting were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Chet Nawoyski reported a balance in our budget of $3,986.24. Vicky Binetti encouraged members to suggest items or services we might need this year for our activities. Anne Hastings reported on her efforts to identify something to anchor our tents - against the wind when we are holding an event; members discussed potential options, but none was selected.

Old Business

Workshop Meeting

There was no workshop meeting in June. Vicky Binetti does not expect to call a meeting in July as there are no projects to review in July.

Sustainable Jersey

Fire Chief Patrick Dolgos will be speaking at the July 7, 2025 Green Team meeting and will discuss the range of services provided by the Washington Township Fire Department and fire concerns during the summer months.

Efforts under the Community Energy Planning grant awarded to the Township by the Board of Public Utilities will be getting underway shortly

ANJEC Grant/Poplar Trail

There was no new report. The purpose of the project is to develop and install signs along the Poplar Trail with educational information on the foliage, wildlife and habitats.

Communications – Web Page, Facebook, Other

Anne Hastings had no new report. Members discussed posting videos or slide shows of our activities on our web page, and Vicky Binetti asked members to come back next month with some ideas of what we could do in this regard. She also asked for ideas to add to our Facebook presence.

Monarch Rescue

There was no new report.

Pollinator Garden

The Pollinator Garden has been weeded and is well tended, thanks to our volunteers, Debbie and Ed McGuigan.

Blue Bird Buddies, Purple Martin Pals

Two new Bluebird nesting boxes have been installed at the Library this season. - There has not been any activity observed yet at the new Purple Martin houses next to the Pollinator Garden, but we expect colonizers next spring, if not before.

Washington Township Re-Leaf

The first large tree planting was made in May on the Thorn Tract and will be known as Rotary Woods. It was jointly funded by the Rotary Club and the Township Tree Fund. The project will be maintained by the Rotary who plan to plant more trees at this location. Vicky Binetti suggested we give some thought to a new location for a second planting. It would be helpful to have another partner, and she suggested looking at open space near a neighborhood where homeowners might be willing to participate.

Tree Labelling in Washington Lake Park

Vicky Binetti asked for volunteers to label trees in the heavily traversed areas of Washington Lake Park, specifically those near the ranger station and the dog park. We would use the tree inventory that was done last year as a guide. A date would be scheduled after July 14th to scout the area and make a plan.

Tree Protection Ordinance Revision

Vicky Binetti had no new update. The most recent proposal drafted by Township professionals has been submitted to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for review before presenting it to the Township Planning Board and Council for approval.

US Homes/Township Walk (Block 115, Lot 6)

This project was on the Planning Board agenda for July 1st, but the Applicant postponed the hearing until August 12th. Vicky Binetti noted that we did submit our comment letter, but she has not seen any revised documents from the applicant.

New Business

Committee Reports

Open Space Advisory Committee

Leon Lakritz mentioned that there is one plot open in the Community Garden. The bridge over the pond that was damaged in Washington Lake Park has been repaired by the Township. Also, Gloucester County is exploring the possibility of including a parcel along Salina Road into the Farmland Preservation program.

Council Report

There was no Council report.

Correspondence/Announcements

There was no new correspondence or announcements.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Submitted by

/s/Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary
Washington Township Environmental Commission