

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**P. O. Box 1106 523 Egg Harbor Road
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(Approved at May 2, 2019 Meeting)

Minutes of April 4, 2019 Meeting

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

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ann Culkin reported a balance of \$1,210 in our budget.

Old Business

Workshop

There was no workshop meeting in March.

Sustainable Jersey

The Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) continues to work on their next goal, a silver certification for Washington Township, in the Sustainable Jersey program. Vicky Binetti reported that the necessary documents to retain our Bronze certification and advance to the silver level, will be submitted before the June 2, 2019 deadline.

An announcement was made by Vicky Binetti that the Chamber of Commerce is hosting a luncheon on April 16th to introduce members to the new Green Business Recognition Program. The Program will adopt the guidelines and criteria of the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry.

Vicky also talked about a competition called "Arts Tank" sponsored by the South Jersey Cultural Alliance. The Arts Tank program is intended to showcase community

programs in South Jersey that encourage participation in the arts, in particular using the arts as a tool to address a community issue. The Green Team has established a subcommittee, the Creative Team, to enhance awareness and appreciation of the arts in Washington Township. As a first step, the Creative Team is focusing on visual arts, and has adopted the theme of "Painting the Town." The concept calls for making opportunities to connect residents with various artists and their work at familiar locations around the Township, including our parks, schools and businesses. For example, local artists could showcase their artwork when the Rotary Club holds their wine fest event in Washington Lake Park in June.

Vicky Binetti reminded the Commission that the Sustainability Summit will be held in Holmdel on June 14. Attendees have a chance to share information during the meeting and at breakout sessions. The Environmental Commission has previously sent two representatives to this summit, and Vicky Binetti asked for a motion to cover the registration fee. The motion was made by Anne Hastings, and seconded by Chet Nawoyski, that we will fund two members to attend this day-long Summit in our behalf. The vote was unanimous.

The Township has applied for several grants: one to support an electric charging station in the Township, one for a Green Acres grant to provide for development of a handicapped-accessible playground in Washington Lake Park, and another to finance enhancement of the area around Cedar Lake with bike and pedestrian trails.

Vicky Binetti mentioned that she met with the children's librarian at the Margaret E. Heggan Library to discuss a reading program entitled "Plant A Seed" which the librarian will present on Saturday, April 13, at 1:30 p.m. as part of Earth Day activities.

Clean Up Day

Clean Up Day is scheduled for October 12, 2019. Vicky Binetti suggested the Commission consider new ideas that include resident participation. She suggested an activity to collect gently-used, clean plastic toys for donation to an organization known as "Second Chance Toys". This organization distributes the donated toys to the needy.

Bluebird & Monarch Butterfly

A total of sixteen bluebird nesting boxes have been mounted and placed around the Township, and Vicky Binetti mentioned that two of the boxes have nests in them.

Jim McCann has started growing milkweed plants in the Township greenhouse. The 4-plant packs will be distributed on Super Saturday so that residents can grow milkweed in their gardens to provide food for Monarch butterflies.

Earth Day/Arbor Day

Vicky Binetti reviewed the list of activities we have scheduled in April for Earth Day/Arbor Day. She confirmed which members will participate and/or preside at each event to be sure we have adequate coverage. On April 2 the Home Composting lecture was held at the Margaret E. Heggan

Library and was well attended. A raffle among attendees was held, and six of the compost bins donated by the County were awarded as prizes.

The Commission agreed to extend the deadline for the rain barrel art challenge until April 13th. Vicky Binetti said we have commitments from seven people to enter the competition and paint the barrels. She would like to see more participation and will reach out to the school Art Departments to solicit their interest.

Proposed Ordinance: Trap/Neuter/Vaccinate/Release (Feral Cats)

There was no report.

Proposed Resolution: Support OFF (Off Fossil Fuels) Act

Ann Culkin and Chet Nawoyski researched and located a draft resolution as a first step in the process to encourage Council to support legislation to eliminate fossil fuels by 2035. They will meet with Councilman Sean Longfellow to discuss its merits.

Annual Report

Vicky Binetti said she is still working on a draft and asked Chet Nawoyski to share his Clean Up Day photographs for inclusion in the final report to the Mayor and Council.

Super Saturday

Vicky Binetti asked for four members to volunteer for coverage at our table on Super Saturday. As part of our project to aid in the proliferation of Monarch butterflies, milkweed plants will be distributed to residents interested in participating. We will also be offering reusable tote bags as giveaways.

New Business

Planning & Zoning Boards

- Planning Board – Ganttown Equities (project located at the intersection of Ganttown and Egg Harbor Roads) was heard at the last meeting of the Planning Board. We did not receive copies of the plans; however, the Environmental Commission did not anticipate that there would be any significant issues.

Environmental Films

The TriCounty Sustainability Alliance will be purchasing or renting various sustainable movies/documentaries to share with communities. Vicky Binetti mentioned several of the titles and suggested the Environmental Commission may want to consider an event featuring these environmental videos.

ANJEC Grant

Vicky Binetti announced that ANJEC is offering open space stewardship grants for \$1,500 (which are not matching grants). If we are awarded the funds, the money would be used to continue our work on the Poplar trail in Washington Lake Park. A motion was made by Anne Hastings, seconded by Chet

Newoyski, to apply for this grant. The vote was unanimous. Vicky Binetti will prepare the paperwork and submit the application prior to the April 15th deadline.

2019 Budget

Vicky Binetti attended the recent budget meeting held by Township Council. It appears that Council will continue to support and fund the various environmental events and activities that we sponsor during the year.

Committee Reports.

Open Space

Leon Lakritz reported that the Open Space Advisory Committee recently applied for and received a Green Communities matching grant to fund a community forestry program. Remington & Vernick was retained to assist in the development of a Comprehensive Community Forestry Management Plan, which will outline and detail the Township's commitment to actions over a 5-year period.

Leon Lakritz reported that appraisals on two properties have been obtained, and the Township is awaiting a response from the potential sellers.

Council

No report in Sean Longfellow's absence.

Correspondence

No report

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Submitted by:

/s/Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary
Washington Township Environmental Commission

