

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

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(Approved at February 4, 2021 Meeting)

Minutes of January 7, 2021 Reorganization Meeting

The reorganization meeting to elect new officers was called to order by Secretary Dorothy Hunter. In attendance at the virtual meeting were Vicky Binetti, Anne Hastings, Ann Culkin, Leon Lakritz, Peter Garbowski, Eric Feerst and Council Liaison Sean Longfellow. The minutes of the December 3, 2020 meeting were approved as presented.

First order of business was to open nominations for Chair. On a motion made by Ann Culkin, seconded by Leon Lakritz, Vicky Binetti was nominated for the position of Chairman. With no other nominations, the vote was unanimous to elect Vicky Binetti Chair of the Environmental Commission for 2021.

Chair Vicky Binetti then asked for nominations for Vice Chair. Ann Culkin nominated Anne Hastings. Her motion was seconded by Leon Lakritz. 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 Anne Hastings. The nomination was seconded by Leon Lakritz. No other nominations for Treasurer were presented, and Ann Culkin was unanimously voted Treasurer. On a motion made by Vicky Binetti, Dorothy Hunter was reappointed as Secretary for 2021. Ann Culkin seconded the motion, and the vote was unanimous.

The minutes of the December 3, 2020 meeting were approved as presented. Vicky Binetti announced that Devin Walker will not be returning this year because of her busy schedule, and Eric Feerst has been appointed to complete that unexpired term as Commissioner. Council President Sean Longfellow will again serve as our Council Liaison.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ann Culkin reported a balance of \$191.15 in our 2020 budget after payment for secretarial services.

Old Business

Workshop Meeting

There was no workshop meeting in December 2020. Vicky Binetti does not foresee the need for a workshop meeting in January. She expects that the Environmental Commission will receive at some point the revised plans for the Atlantic City Substation project, including a re-designed façade surrounding the property.

Sustainable Jersey

The Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) recently received official notice that the Township has been certified at the Silver level in the Sustainable Jersey program. The certification is valid for three years. Vicky Binetti said that going forward we can continue to refine the actions we have accomplished, and she also discussed various new activities we could undertake such as doing a brownfield inventory and enhancing the Township's existing GIS. Mayor Gattinelli is supportive of efforts to facilitate transportation electrification in the Township, such as installing a vehicle charging station.

The most recent accomplishment of the GTAC has been in the Arts & Creative Culture. Three murals are now on display in Washington Lake Park near the Ranger Station; they were designed by two teachers from Township schools. The school district website and the Washington Township Sun published articles about the Creative Team and the work they are doing, highlighting the recent mural exhibit.

Vicky Binetti reported that the Tri County Sustainability (TSC) hosted a virtual workshop on December 9, 2020 entitled "Taking the Lead on Lead," which was attended by 20 participants. The next regular members virtual meeting is scheduled for January 27th at 7:00 p.m., when they will discuss their agenda for 2021. The advantages and disadvantages of the Woodbury-Glassboro-Camden light rail system will be among the topics discussed.

Vicky Binetti noted that there are 101 municipalities within the three county area (Burlington, Camden and Gloucester counties) that could each participate in some small way in an Earth Day celebration. The TCS leadership team is also considering the possibility of holding an outdoor event in Washington Lake Park on September 18, 2021.

The Evesham Green Team has initiated a program promoting practical ideas and advice for reducing waste at home and on the go. The initiative is known as "Zero Waste Wednesdays". The Evesham Green Team website and facebook page offer residents suggestions about how to be aware of

what they are throwing away and how to reduce that waste. Our Commission members agreed that this would be a good idea for our Green Team to undertake. Vicky reminded members that the Green Team meets virtually on Monday at 6:00 p.m.

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

Anne Hastings will be submitting an Open Public Records Act (OPRA) request to Gloucester County to obtain the number of 2018 and 2019 feral cat intakes and euthanasias that were taken to the animal shelter from Washington Township.

ANJEC Grant/Poplar Trail

Leon Lakritz is working with Zach Gorman to update the Township website with information regarding the Poplar Trail and the new signage.

Leon also noted that the Open Space Committee intends to erect signs on several properties in the Township to identify that they were purchased for the benefit of the community as open space.

Climate Change Project with Heggan Library

Vicky Binetti announced that the Library is still closed to the public and is not hosting any live events. As part of the Climate Resilience project, the Library does plan to show (remotely) the Nova film, "The Weather Machine." Ted Howell of Rowan University will present a lecture (virtually) on climate fiction, and lead the "community read" discussion on a science fiction book entitled, "End of the Ocean."

Ryan Lee is doing research on the weather stations at Atkinson Memorial Park and Rowan University to see when they were installed, what they monitor, and what records are available.

Hydration Station in Washington Lake Park

The hydration station discussed last month at our meeting was purchased, and Vicky Binetti expects delivery at the end of February. It will be located near the Rangers Station. It would support a water bottle filler unit and two bubbler fountains.

New Business

Rutgers Environmental Stewards Program

Vicky Binetti announced that Rutgers is hosting an online 20 week environmental stewardship program, from January 26 to June 1, 2021. The meetings are held on Tuesday evenings from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Topics include climate change, recycling, water resource protection, energy conservation, etc. The cost is \$200, and the program introduces volunteers to the science underlying key environmental issues in New Jersey. If any member would like to participate, please let Vicky know you are interested.

Potential MLK Day Project with Orchard Valley Middle School

Vicky Binetti mentioned that the Orchard Valley Middle School will celebrate Martin Luther King Day on January 18 and are interested to participate in service projects. If any members of the Commission have suggestions, please share asap with Vicky.

Planning for 2021

Various environmental projects for 2021 were discussed. Vicky Binetti noted that in recent years clean-up sites for our Clean Up Day event have declined. She suggested that we may need to consider alternative activities that would attract resident participation in a safe environment, with appropriate health protection practices.

Committee Reports

Open Space Advisory Committee

Leon Lakritz reported that several properties are still under consideration for purchase as open space. He also announced that the community forestry management program has recently been approved. The community garden will open in April 2021. Jim McCann will soon till the soil in preparation for new plantings.

Township Council

Sean Longfellow noted that Council re-organized on January 4. He had no further report at this time.

Correspondence

There was no new correspondence to discuss.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Submitted by:

/s/Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary
Washington Township Environmental Commission

