

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

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(Approved at June 6, 2019 Meeting)

Minutes of May 2, 2019 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vicky Binetti. Also attending tonight's meeting were Anne Hastings, Ann Culkin, Devin Walker, George Gerber, Mark Phillips, Peter Garbowski, and Leon Lakritz. The minutes of our April 4, 2019 meeting were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ann Culkin reported a balance in our temporary budget of \$433.46.

Old Business

Work Shop Meeting

There was no work shop meeting in April.

Sustainable Jersey

The Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) is continuing their work towards achieving a silver certification in the Sustainable Jersey program. Vicky Binetti remarked that the deadline to complete all tasks to qualify for the silver certification is September 8, 2019. Vicky spoke about the partnership between the Chamber of Commerce and the municipality to recognize local businesses who have

adopted and promote green or earth-friendly practices. The applications to apply for the New Jersey Sustainable Business Registry can be found on the website of the Chamber of Commerce.

The Sustainable Washington Township Creative Team submitted an application to participate in the "Arts Tank" competition sponsored by the South Jersey Cultural Alliance. The competition is intended to showcase community programs in South Jersey that encourage participation in the arts. Vicky announced that Washington Township was one of five municipalities selected as finalists. The event takes place at the end of May in Atlantic City, and we will be called upon to make a presentation showcasing the Township's plans for creative placemaking.

Earth Day/Arbor Day

Leon Lakritz shared an invitation received from St. John Methodist Church requesting the Township's participation in an event they are sponsoring on May 18, to present information on recycling. None of the Commission members present indicated they were available to help out for the fair. He also discussed next year's Earth Day/Arbor Day activities and asked members to consider accepting chairmanship of a planned activity so that the workload is spread equally among members.

Super Saturday

Vicky Binetti has reserved three spaces for our use on Super Saturday: one for the Environmental Commission, one for Sustainable Washington Township, and one to display the painted rain barrels from the Earth Day competition. She also suggested we use this opportunity to hold a free raffle of a compost bins donated by the County earlier this year. The Environmental Commission will offer giveaways to those who stop by our display, and Vicky reviewed the list of items on hand, which include reusable tote bags.

Clean Up Day

There was no report. Clean Up Day is scheduled this year for October 12.

Monarch Butterfly/Blue Bird Projects

So far, it appears we will have a productive year with our Blue Bird population project. Vicky Binetti reported that one of the 16 Blue Bird boxes near the Community Garden had a nest in it, and five chicks have been hatched. Vicky said we still have 6 more boxes to be placed and will be looking for residents willing to monitor these Blue Bird boxes on a routine basis.

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

Anne Hastings had no new report. She is still waiting for further discussion from Township Council.

Proposed Ordinance: Support OFF (Off Fossil Fuels) Act

Ann Culkin had no report.

Annual Report

The annual report is still a work in progress, but Vicky Binetti plans to have it ready for submission to the Mayor and Council in May.

ANJEC Grant

The Environmental Commission submitted an application recently to the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) for a \$1,500 open space stewardship grant. The requested funds would be used to continue the development of educational information and signage for the Poplar Trail, a project we began last year.

New Business

Planning & Zoning Boards

- Zoning Board – Vicky Binetti brought our attention to a project coming before the Zoning Board next week concerning the former Bottino's property. The applicant proposes to convert the property into four units, including the existing Urgent Care, a new Goodwill store, and two others yet to be determined.

Environmental Commissioner's Award

The Commission discussed potential candidates to be nominated as a recipient of our Environmental Commissioner's award. The award is periodically given to someone in the Township who has contributed their time and effort to support environmental endeavors.

Open Space

Leon Lakritz reported last month that appraisals on two properties have been obtained, but to date, the potential sellers of those properties have not responded to the Township's offers. Remington & Vernick has been selected to assist in the development of a Community Forestry Management Plan under a Green Communities matching grant. Leon also mentioned that several of the trails and boardwalks in Washington Lake Park will have to be repositioned because of their proximity to water and the deterioration it has caused.

Council Report

There was no report in Sean Longfellow's absence.

Correspondence

Vicky Binetti reported that we received thank you notes from the Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge and Jeanne Wachter of the Margaret E. Heggan Library for our Earth Day activities.

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

Submitted by:

/s/Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary
Washington Township Environmental Commission

