

**WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**P. O. Box 1106 523 Egg Harbor Road
Turnersville, NJ 08012**

(856) 589-0520, Ext. 232

wtec@twp.washington.nj.us

(Approved at October 3, 2019 Meeting)

Minutes of September 5, 2019 Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Chair Vicky Binetti. Also attending tonight's meeting were Anne Hastings, Leon Lakritz, Ann Culkin, Peter Garbowski, Jodi Smith, and Chet Nawowski. The minutes of our August 1, 2019 meeting were approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Ann Culkin reported that our budget has a balance of \$2,516.51.

Old Business

Workshop Meeting

There was no workshop meeting in August.

Sustainable Jersey

Vicky Binetti announced that the Green Team Advisory Committee (GTAC) submitted the documentation to continue our Bronze certification in the Sustainable Jersey Program. She mentioned the possibility that, if we complete certain actions before the end of this year, we could qualify for the next level in this program which would be a Silver certification.

Vicky also mentioned that Washington Township will be featured in an article in Business View North America magazine highlighting our creative and artistic endeavors as part of Sustainable Jersey.

The Creative Team is sponsoring two challenges in which residents may participate. The first one is a "Chalk Challenge" where children of all ages can use sidewalk chalk to create artwork and then submit photographs of their work as part of a Township-wide competition. The deadline for entries is September 18. The second challenge encourages residents to take photos of their sports-themed party buffet tables or tailgate event for a chance to win a \$25.00 gift card.

Clean Up Day

Clean Up Day will be held on Saturday, October 12, 2019 (rain date Sunday, October 13, 2019) from 9:00 a.m. to noon. A barbeque will follow in the Park at noon. Ann Culkin and Adele Riff are finalizing the site list of areas that require clean up. The cleaning supplies will be packed on the night of Thursday, October 10th at 7:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building. Clear plastic bags will be used this year instead of cardboard boxes. Anne Hastings reviewed the list of supplies that we will need. She also assigned Commission members with tasks to carry out on Clean Up Day. She will confirm those assignments in an e-mail. Clean Up Day will be advertised on Facebook and on flyers circulated around town. Leon Lakritz has initiated a new activity this year and will be leading a group of supervised volunteers to clear twigs and debris from trails and remove invasive species of plants growing in Washington Lake Park.

Anne Hastings brought to our attention the outbreak of spotted lanternflies in the northeast US; they have recently been discovered in Gloucester County. She suggested that the Commission could put a flyer together that would raise awareness of the presence of these destructive insects in our community and the damage they can do to vegetation and trees.

Bluebird and Monarch Butterfly Projects

Vicky Binetti reported the Bluebird project had good results this year, and that at least 25 bluebirds fledged from the nesting boxes placed at various locations around Washington Township with the help of the New Jersey Bluebird Society.

Milkweed, the main food source of Monarch butterflies, was planted in the Community Garden and at other locations in Washington Township. Sightings of Monarchs were reported.

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

As a prerequisite to obtain points towards our Sustainable Jersey certification, Council Liaison Sean Longfellow is working with Council to adopt a resolution declaring Washington Township an animal-friendly community and dedicated to managing companion animals. We are currently awaiting an update on the resolution.

ANJEC Grant/Poplar Trail

Washington Township received a \$1,500 grant from ANJEC to be used for educational materials and signage on the Poplar Trail in Washington Lake Park. Leon Lakritz contacted Michael Hogan, naturalist with the South Jersey Land and Water Trust, to provide his expertise to identify noteworthy plants and foliage along the Poplar Trail. Placards imprinted with QR (Quick Response) codes will be placed by these plants. The codes, when used in conjunction with a cell phone, will provide the onlooker with instant information on the ecology of the plant and other pertinent facts.

Environmental Commissioner's Award

The Commission has unanimously agreed upon a recipient for the 2019 Commissioner's Award which will be presented on Clean Up Day. Peter Garbowski and Ann Culkin are making the award arrangement. Our Chair Vicky Binetti will make the presentation.

New Business

Planning & Zoning Boards

Vicky Binetti announced that there are no new projects at this time which require review by the Environmental Commission. However, she advised that a Wawa proposed for Egg Harbor Road will require our comments.

ANJEC Congress

Vicky Binetti reminded the Commission of the ANJEC Congress which will be held on October 4 at Mercer County College. It is an all-day event, and the registration fee is \$75 per attendee. A motion was made by Vicky and seconded by Jodi Smith that we send up to 3 members from the Environmental Commission. Vicky Binetti, Leon Lakritz, and Ann Culkin have expressed interest to attend.

ANJEC Film

An environmental film entitled, "Bag It", is available for lending from ANJEC. The film highlights the dangers of plastic in the environment. It has tentatively been reserved by Vicky Binetti and will be shown at the Margaret E. Heggan Library. No date has been set.

Committee Reports

Open Space

Leon ~~also~~ mentioned that he had a discussion with Nick Fiorentino, Washington Lake Park Supervisor, and was informed that the Stagecoach Trail in the Park will be eliminated. He also noted that the Coughlin Trail will be moved to higher ground because of the muddy conditions that exist. Crushed stone will be put down as a base to provide a walkway.

Remington & Vernick has not as yet provided a revised draft of the Community Forestry Management Plan that incorporates input from the Open Space Advisory Committee.

Council

There was no report in Sean Longfellow's absence.

Correspondence/Announcements

There was no report.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by

/s/Dorothy Hunter

Dorothy Hunter, Secretary

Washington Township Environmental Commission