

BYRAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES, MAY 22, 2014

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm. Present were John Boyer, acting chairman, Michelle Rehse, Lisa Shimamoto, James Myers, Cathy Varian, Council Liaison David Gray. Guests were Katie (Lisa's niece), and special guest MacKenzie Hall from Conserve Wildlife Foundation.

****Dave reported that there is no statute or ordinance containing age restriction as a membership requirement to EC. Therefore, Katie, who is 17, is lawfully permitted to become a member of the EC.**

MacKenzie Hall from Conserve Wildlife Foundation gave a presentation on the Amphibian underpass under Waterloo Road at the location of one of the largest and most productive vernal pools in the area. Without intervention, approximately 50-75% of animals are killed when crossing the road based upon a conservative estimate of 15 cars/hour, the effect of which is devastating to the local ecology. Conserve Wildlife Foundation is working on obtaining grant funding for an amphibian underpass which would cost approximately \$160,000 but last over 50 years. Ms. Hall presented the plans and strategy behind the construction. However, she needs Sussex County to be the applicant for the grant.

****Motion to draft a letter to the County in support of the project made by Cathy, second by John, passed unanimously. MacKenzie will send an email to Margaret with the specifics and bullet points/contacts for a letter to be sent to the County by the EC in support of the project. Copy of this letter to be sent to Patti Poff so that she stays informed on this issue for education purposes.**

Michelle suggested that she inquire as to MRWC/William Penn grant possibilities. Also suggested local education/children classes re: vernal pools.

EC will invite MacKenzie Hall to Byram Day booth for presentation of materials.

April minutes were approved; motion by John, second by Michelle, unanimous.

Correspondence and updates:

Arbor Day events: Report on May 3 dedication of tree to Peg Swentzel. (Dave submitted photos.) EC will discuss electronic storage of photos at next meeting – is Margaret able to keep saved photos on town computer?

Report on contamination at NJDOT garage: Dave reported that NJDOT did respond and is working with LSRP to re-evaluate the site.

Applying to be Tree City USA: Margaret is working on application.

Business:

Easement monitoring pilot project: EC discussed volunteer work. Consultant Lucy Halse working at town hall M-T-W. EC volunteers to reorganize and identify plats in storage room on Monday June 2, 7:30 p.m. (John, Michelle, Donna, Margaret).

Recycling partnership with Patti Poff: EC discussed timing of postcards. Make plans for Byram Day and for drafting two mailings: letter/postcard promoting 50% recycling rate by Earth Day 2015 (or end of school year); joint EC-Board of Health postcard about what can be recycled (discuss further at joint EC/BoH meeting in June—see next item). Other plans: post ReCommunity flyers at local community clubs; ask ShopRite to hand out flyers at check-out; put recycling containers in main meeting room at town hall.

Letter from Patti Poff thanking EC for help with Earth Day (attached).

EC and Township Board of Health to meet jointly in June: BoH members will come to the EC meeting. Discuss joint issues—recycling, septic, well testing, garbage/recycling, etc.—and who takes the lead.

*****Discussion of Chairman position. Motion by James to appoint John Boyer as Chairman. Second by Michelle. Passed unanimously. ***Margaret to send a note to Mayor recommending appointment of John Boyer as Chairman.***

****ADD SOIL ORDINANCE TO AGENDA AT NEXT MEETING**

**** ADD CUTTING OF SIGN POSTS TO AGENDA AT NEXT MEETING**

Planning Board:

- Lanci: 27 Meteor Trail. On May 1 Planning Board agenda: to return on June 5. Discussion about definition of number of stories, locations of generator and AC unit, need for impervious coverage/disturbance calculations, construction and maintenance procedures, large attic space. Water is community well April 15 to September 28, but drawn from the lake with filtration system otherwise. Some discussion about appropriate EC comments (copy of Lanci comments attached).

Trails:

- *Update of Trail Guide:* Delivered; final invoice \$3,700 to be split between EC and Recreation Department out of 2013 budgets.
- *Park/trail signage:* RFQ for C. O. Johnson signs mailed—only one reply, from Sign Art on Sparta-Stanhope Road. Janet Meisner and Margaret will oversee.
Vote on cost of nine new small trail-head signs: Fossil Graphics quote for \$368 (attached). **** Motion to approve payment made by Cathy, Second by James, passed unanimously.**
- *EC advocacy for Cutoff trail:* Letters of support from Warren County Board of Recreation Commissioners, NY-NJ Trial Conference, Hopatcong EC. 2007 Byram Township Council resolution supporting Cut-off trail. Margaret still reaching out for more support; will report at June meeting.
- *National Trails Day, June 7:* Salt Shakers organizing cleanups at Sussex Branch Trail, Tamarack Park Trail. Margaret will send information about where to meet.

Musconetcong River: Michelle reported that at the next meeting she will inquire about Lake Lackawanna silt trap grant and MacKenzie Hall amphibian project.

Protecting/planting milkweed for monarchs: Margaret is in process of purchasing seeds/plants and get OKs for planting areas; should complete by June meeting or sooner.

Adjourn.