

# BYRAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

## April 28, 2016 Minutes

Call to order and attendance:7:35

In Attendance: Michelle Rehse, James Meyers, Jim Rienhold, Cathy Varian, Dave Gray, Donna Keonig

Minutes for Approval: For May meeting; March and April 2016

### Correspondence and updates:

- Ongoing: Community Forestry Management Plan: 5 year (2015 – 2019) management plan distributed to keep up to date with programs and requirements that will maintain Byram's status with the DEP's NJ State Forestry Services.
- June 4<sup>th</sup> – National Trails Day – Discussed maintenance on Johnson Lake/Cranberry Overlook – Maybe a good day to put up QR Codes
- Hike at Mahlon Dickerson Reservation – Saturday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 10 am, approx. finish: 1:30 pm. Will this be included in Byram's 50-Miler? Will discuss with Janet.

**Meeting Location:** 137-157 Weldon Road, Jefferson, NJ The largest park in the Morris County Park System, encompassing 3346.07 acres Mahlon Dickerson Reservation is located at the Northern most point of the Musconetcong Watershed. This 7.5 mile hike will begin on the Highlands Trail on our way to the scenic Hadley Overlook with views of Lake Hopatcong, we will then continue on to the Pine Swamp and Boulder trails past the Highest Point in Morris County (1,395 ft. above sea level) making our way to the Ogden Mine Railroad Trail ending back at our meeting location. Trails will range from easy to moderate, with a minor scramble on the Highlands Trail. Come prepared with proper footwear, water, and a snack to enjoy at the scenic overlook. MWA members are free

- Conserve Wildlife – for future reference, any Environmental/Wildlife program EC would like to offer, Stephanie D'Alessio, Director of Education at Conserve Wildlife will gear a program around our needs and target audience. (full moon hike?)
- Dedication for Horace John Engler brought up. Should EC initiate?
- Vernal Pool maintenance/rain garden
- Start planning for Byram Day and what we want to display.

### Business:

- Help Keep our Lakes and Streams Clean! Postcard: Cathy re-worked the postcard – Donna will email it to all before our next meeting.
- 2016 ANJEC Environmental Commission grant – Copies of the application were brought to the meeting. We should hear from ANJEC by May 7<sup>th</sup>. EC will be responsible to inputting trail information if we get the funds .
- Share the Woods signs – Donna to contact ANJEC to see how they handle hiking/hunting trails
- Sussex County Day: Postponed till Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup> due to rain. Volunteers are needed to man Byram's booth.

- Amphibian Crossing – MacKenzie Hall and Kelly Triece met with Joe Sabatini and myself on April 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss Byram Township being the Grant Applicant for the Amphibian Crossing project on Waterloo Rd. Kelly was notified on April 30<sup>th</sup> that Byram Township will not be able to assume responsibility and administration for the project due to several factors, the major one being that it is a County Rd. and Byram cannot assume future responsibility of the fence and tunnels under the road.
- Arbor Day Celebration –Stephanie D’Alessio of Conserve Wildlife spoke at the Arbor Day/Earth Day celebration at the Byram Lakes School on April 23, 2016. She discussed NJ Wildlife, protecting their habitat and how we can help.
- Rec Committee and EC organized a 50-Miler Challenge. This hike involves residents signing up and doing weekly treks on Township and surrounding trails, beginning April 15<sup>th</sup> , ending October 15<sup>th</sup> . Residents will chart and keep track of their own miles (pedometer, fit bit, etc.). Dinner/award celebration at the end of October at a local restaurant – open for suggestions on awards/prizes. Spread sheet passed out at meeting. Donna to contact Township Journal to publish.

### **Planning Board Applications:**

None

### **Trails:**

- Donna to create an email list for volunteers (will contact High School Env. Club, lake communities) interested in trail maintenance days, as well as a list of what to bring and wear when volunteering.
- Ongoing - Blazes with QR code to be added to trailhead posts
- **April 30<sup>th</sup>** - Trail maintenance day postponed
- *Spring*: Johnson Lake clean up – scheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup> , will email a week before to all interested
- Chain Saw rules: Spoke with Joe regarding chain saw use during EC maintenance days. The EC would need to write up a resolution listing Place/Date/Time (the DPW might look into first for large debri). This resolution would have to be approved by Mayor and Council, and a hold harmless must be signed before clean up.
- Geocaching – Tabled

### **Forestry:**

- Ongoing - No Net Loss Grant – Several township properties were identified for possible planting designs. Met with Township staff, Cory Stoner, and Matt Morris (Township Engineer and Landscape Arch.) January 22. Matt will visit sites and put together an initial design.

### **Expenditures and budget:** The following membership have been renewed:

- \$565 for membership dues (ANJEC, MWA, NYNJ Trail Conference, Arbor Day, & Shade Tree of our \$2600 budget.
- \$200 – for Conserve Wildlife Arbor Day/Earth Day celebration.

### **Reports from committees:**

- Musconetcong River: Michelle –
  - 1) Filled us in a little on the Hampton Farms development project.
  - 2) MWA will now meet quarterly with Lake Hopatcong Foundation to maintain water quality for Musconetcong River / Educating residents in water flow and quality.

3) William Penn Grants, extension to work on water testing. Survey Eastern Brook Trout plantings for nesting/proposals to restore & conserve habitat necessary to support and sustain existing populations

4) As part of the river restoration project, the Warren Glen Dam is slated for removal. For some interesting facts and history, visit:

<http://www.musconetcong.org/dam-removal.php>

or

[http://www.musconetcong.org/files/Musky\\_River%20Restoration%20PartnershipFINAL.pdf](http://www.musconetcong.org/files/Musky_River%20Restoration%20PartnershipFINAL.pdf)

5) Water Chestnut Hand-Pull: Saturday, July 16<sup>th</sup> @ 10:am, volunteers need for weed harvesting that targets parts of Lake Musconetcong that the weed harvester cannot reach

6) Earth Day Open House at Genesis Farms on April 30<sup>th</sup> - Donna to email flyer to all members.

- Open Space Committee: Michelle –

1) Formalize chain saw rules for EC

2) Tamarack Park – if all goes as planned, the park will be open this fall, will provide playing fields as well as a trail connecting Johnson Lake to C.O. Johnson Park

3) Tamarack Park – putting in new irrigation well

- Dave Gray –

1) Discussion regarding the controversy of the Sparta Mountain Wildlife Management Area – Forest Stewardship Plan – pros and cons of the NJDEP managing the forest for re-growth, promoting a healthy, diverse ecosystem vs environmentalists and residents opposing the tree clearing as a logging operation under the guise of “stewardship.”

2) add to agenda next month – Septic Management Plan

3) add to agenda next month – discuss sending a letter to DPW about cleaning then posting “No Dumping” signs at storm drains and retention basins – Donna to bring ordinance to next meeting.

**Adjourn** 10:20 pm