

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
January 26, 2023 - 7:00pm

Dana Flynn	Chairperson	X
Eric Duch	Co-Chairperson	X
Lisa Shimamoto	Member	X
Peter Dlugos	Member	X
James Myers	Member	X
Christine Aboulhosn	Member	X
	Alternate 1	
	Alternate 2	
Harvey Roseff	Council Liaison	

Also in attendance: Victoria Proskey, Rachel Popadich: EC Secretary

Call meeting to order, meeting opened at 7:35pm.

Open Public Meeting Statement- Adequate notice of this Zoom meeting has been published specifying the time and access information in compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Notice of this meeting has also been electronically sent to the newspapers and uploaded to Byram’s website, at not less than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. In addition, a copy of this notice is on file in the office of the Environmental Commission Secretary.

Public Participation – Danielle Conroy (Rec), Patty Poff (BLES), Ryan Schnieder

Review of Meeting Minutes – December 13, 2022, – Revision to correct Eric Duch’s name under new business. Motion to change was made by Dana, seconded by Peter and all members were in favor.

Committee Reports

MRMC – Last meeting, December 20; Next meeting February 21; Peter and James will attend the upcoming February 21 meeting and will report back to the EC committee via email.

Recreation – Upcoming meeting February 13; Peter cannot attend on Mondays for a period; Lisa offered to temporarily stand-in as EC liaison. Monthly hikes are to be scheduled at various locations, to be posted on the Township website. First hike is February 18; details will be provided by Rec. Danielle Conroy mentioned having the EC help co-sponsor hikes and events. Patty Poff is a STEM teacher from Byram Lakes - mentioned having an EC speaker, or sponsored speakers, at the school. Patty Poff would like to get more children and teens involved in nature, by providing nature-themed classes i.e., hikes, bird watching, orienteering, geocaching, tree walks, water sampling. This would be subsequent to 2023. EC members were agreement to work with Rec on coordinating and co-sponsoring environmental events.

Open Space – Eric reported at the December 12 meeting, the dog park will be moving forward into the design phase in 2023. The township was notified that the Highlands Council would be funding the engineering for phase 1 improvement at CO Johnson Park which includes the dog park. The exact timing of starting construction on the dog park would depend on the approval by DEP of moving impervious coverage. Next meeting February 13.

Council - Harvey Roseff provided prior to the meeting provided his report to Dana Flynn. Last Council meeting, January 17; Next meeting February 7.

-Council further reviewed upgrading CO Johnson Park. The Highlands Council has approved \$120,000 of funding for its planning.

-Harvey attended EPA presentation to the Planning Board regarding proposed well pump station building and review of Mansfield Trail Superfund Site testing.

-New facility (Veolia, previously Suez) well facility will be much larger and taller and will house both the EPA treatment of the Mansfield Trail toxins as well as Veolia's needs (nitrates, etc.). The height of the building is required to house tall salt silos which will be filled twice/year with delivery coming from 60-ft tandem trailer. There has been no engagement with the neighbors yet as how this will best fit into the community (stormwater management, privacy, landscaping, etc.). Mansfield Trail test regimes (4) – little to no conclusion as to what is occurring. Test results are not supportive of each other and therefore, various interpretations are still being debated.

-Eric asked Harvey to look into the sizeable number of trees that were cut down on Tamarack Trail. The Administration was aware that this was done and is looking into it. AT last Council meeting, it was unknown who did it. Eric estimated between 50 and 100 trees were cut, the majority near the water tower, and of different sizes/species. Hazardous trees need to be removed for public safety.

-Council approved an additional \$25,000 to design the municipal complex; majority of which is for fire suppression system design.

-Next Byram Twp. Historical Society 225th Anniversary event is "Founders Day" on April 2. Social event with cash bar, at the Meeting House in Waterloo Village. See BTHS website. Two more events planned for June.

New Business

-Making new residents aware of all the opportunities Byram has to offer. Peter recommended creating an EC Facebook page and members agreed; Town approval will be required.

-Dana mentioned sending postcards regarding the new soil ordinance and how to prevent soil/water contamination. Eric suggested educating the public using funding and program options available from the NJ Clean Communities and asked Christine to begin looking into this and to reach out to the Byram Township NJ Clean Communities Coordinator.

-The Planning Board is to provide the EC with a liaison. Lisa Shimamoto stated based on her own experience she has never heard of the EC providing a liaison for the PB. The PB meets twice a month on the first and third Thursday at 7:30pm to 10:30pm. To become a member of the planning board a 2-day course is needed. Lisa will investigate the ordinance and reach out to the PB chair.

GRANT PROJECT

-Preliminary project goal is to provide inventory and maps of conservation easements and waterfront landscape buffers. Potential grant sources include the Highlands Council and ANJEC was discussed. A data base table would need to be created and a layer would be added to the Highlands mapping. Lisa to lead and will reach out to Planning Board Chair on what data is available and the desired output.

-A project charter is needed which is to include a scope of what is required to meet goals of the project. Preliminarily this would entail a definition of the data table layer variables, a mechanism to input the data, definition of the new map layers and report output as related to the properties with an easement. This charter would then be presented to our contacts at the Highlands to come up with a budget to be used in the Grant Application. Finally, the EC will need to be directly involved in providing in kind hours to support this project. This should entail researching and collecting data of existing properties with easements, data entry of the new information into the database, testing in support of the changes to the Highlands mapping tool modifications and finally training of Township personnel in the use of the new tools going forward.

-Sponsor Two Trail Clean-ups/Invasive Species removal events- will be revisited in February.

-Host the annual EC Arbor Day Tree Giveaway, order seedlings although past deadline. Will revisit planning in February.

-Continue to monitor and provide comments as needed on the Lake Management Plan development, the Mansfield Dump Superfund site cleanup, and the Forest Lakes soil contamination cleanup.

Old Business

-Trails Committee – Two EC members are interested in joining the committee if permitted. The Trail Committee currently does not have enough members. A second email will be sent to the Mayor, Harvey, and Cindy Church stating the need for an EC liaison and to determine the EC's current roles in Trails maintenance if there is no formal Trails Committee established to-date.

-Trex Plastic Challenge- 328 lbs. collected to-date; Weiss and Kohls are accepting plastics. Spreadsheet of plastics collected need to be formally recorded into the established Trex account.

-Soil contamination in Forest Lakes, EC requested an update from the Zoning Department. The EC followed up but is still waiting to receive additional details from the town planner.

-Lake Management Plan – Harvey to provide update if available.

Planning Board Applications

-No applications to review.

-Applications to be moved to first in order on agenda and future agendas will include date to be put before the PB for reference.

Membership

-Discussion to recruit high school students to be EC part-time members. It is unknown if there is a Go Green Club at Lenape Valley Regional at this time.

-One Member, Alternate I, and Alternate II positions currently vacant.

Training

-Eric attended the ANJEC Electric Vehicle webinar

-Eric provided March dates for ANJEC training – March 21 and 22. To discuss in February.

-Fundamentals for Environmental Commissions training video recordings are available on ANJEC's YouTube channel – <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLeWoUxfSTM0J7YZszpKTez4qUv5oRCcan>

-Peter has viewed this training

Budget – Adoption of the Municipal Budget approved in the amount of \$2,600.

-2023 EC Purchases:

Renewed ANJEC membership

Arbor Day/Earth Day, educational events

Other

Next Meeting to be held February 23, in-person

Motion to Adjourn – was made at 9:57 PM by James, seconded by Lisa.