

BYRAM TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

March 24, 2016 Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:33

Present: Lisa Shimamoto, James Myers, James Rienhold, Steven Levy, Nora Amato, and Donna Koenig. Guest: Richard Hansen

A motion was made by Lisa to approve the February 2016 Minutes, the motion was seconded by Jim

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.
- April 16th – Musconetcong Watershed Assoc.'s River Clean-up. Salt Shakers meeting to clean up from Salt to Shop Rite on Route 206 and behind on the Highlands Trail. Any interested volunteers can meet at Salt at 9 AM. Donna to send out email reminder.
- April 30th: Tentative Johnson Lake clean-up. Email: High School volunteers, Salt Shakers, Jo-Anne Beliveau (interested resident)
- June 4th – National Trails Day – Discussed enlisting volunteers for Johnson Lake/Cranberry Overlook/or other Township trail for a Trails Day clean-up project.
- Guest Richard Hansen: Richard spoke to EC about the perils of plastic and how can we should educate the public on plastic alternatives. ED will address this topic for Byram Day. Richard recommended watch a documentary (available at the Library) on Plastic Recycling.
- For next budget year: Earmark funds for Education.
- Talked about appointing a rep. to the Recreation Committee.

Business:

- Update Help Keep our Lakes and Streams Clean! Postcard: In the past, this postcard was included with the tax bill mailing to all residents in order to meet Stormwater Education Points. Since this can no longer be done (and we have a limited amount of postcards left) it's time to revise our process. Cathy gratefully offered to redesign the postcard, which we can pass out at Byram Day. In lieu of a postcard, would a pamphlet be more effective?
- 2016 ANJEC Environmental Commission grant – Grant request was sent March 30, 2015 to ANJEC. Will pass out copies next meeting.
- Share the Woods signs – Donna to contact ANJEC to see how they handle hiking/hunting trails
- Amphibian Crossing – Conserve Wildlife Foundation is trying to obtain funding for the installation of amphibian fences and tunnels on Waterloo Rd. Being non-profit, they cannot apply and are asking Byram Township to be the Grant Applicant. Joe Sabatini and Donna will meet with MacKenzie Hall and Kelly Tiece April 5th to discuss particulars and Byram's responsibility with this request.
- Arbor Day Celebration – Formal vote on funding Conservation Wildlife seminar on Wildlife Habitats in NJ. All members in favor. The presentation involves Bald Eagles, Osprey, Falcons, American Kestrels, Hawks, Owls and their habitat, diet, nesting, behavior, conservation and "other cool facts". The

presentation cost is \$200 and the public is invited. Also discussed tree dedications (Scott Daneilson/Dan Florenza). Both would also fulfill one of our guidelines for Community Forestry Program.

- Byram 50-Miler - a collaborated effort from Rec. Committee and EC. This program involves residents signing up to do short weekly treks on Township trails, beginning April 15th, ending October 15th. 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 regarding charting miles and awards/prizes. Discussed whether to allow trails outside of Byram.
- In the future: Work with Patti Poff and her Env. Club on the Vernal Pool (maintenance) and Butterfly Garden creation – both sites on school grounds.

Planning Board Applications:

- Brian Church – BL 317, L 20.01, 4 Raccoon Trail addition – EC submitted the following comment: *Maintain a vegetative buffer along at least 80% of the water's edge in accordance with the township requirements.*
- Wustefeld application: Lisa brought up the fact that the photos we looked at for the Wustefeld application (January) were outdated –the photos showed plantings/shrubs and a walkway, so we didn't feel it necessary to comment on a buffer. The Planning Board ended up recommended a buffer along the shoreline.

Trails:

- Jo-Anne Beliveau, Sparta resident, visited Township Office to let us know how much she enjoys our trails. She and her buddies have hiked every trail and they're interested in volunteering for any work/maintenance days we schedule. She reports our trails "need lots of work". In the future, EC will maintain a volunteer email list for spring trail work days. This would be a good example for the ANJEC grant – to be able to email blast subscribers/volunteers about maintenance days.
- Blazes with QR code to be added to trailhead sign posts in spring.
- 2 Trail head posts still need to be installed – Cat Swamp connector meets Highlands Trail and Glenside Woods off of Ranger Trail. Also, need to check the Lee Hill Rd./Ranger Tr. site (Boyd property, right hand side) for trail post which was either never installed, or disappeared.
- *Spring:* Brookwood Park trail maintenance
- *Spring:* Johnson Lake clean up (add bench?)
- Report from resident that there are downed trees at the Cranberry Overlook Trail that need to be cleared. Adolf was informed, maybe EC can check out early spring.
- Geocaching – idea to get residents familiar with trails, EC could create a geocaching treasure /scavenger hunt/hike (spring 2016)
- Contact Scout Masters for future Eagle Projects on trails (Installing a bench on the Johnson Lake Trail)

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.
- Ongoing - Tree City USA signs: Two to be installed at town hall; discuss with Township Manager.

Expenditures and budget: The following membership have been renewed:

- Vote on funding \$200 for Conserve Wildlife Birds of Prey Arbor Day celebration
- So far, we've spent \$565 for membership dues (ANJEC, MWA, NYNJ Trail Conference, Arbor Day, & Shade Tree of our \$2600 budget.

Reports from committees:

- Musconetcong River: Michelle n/a
- Open Space Committee: Michelle n/a
- Council: Dave Gray n/a

Open for comments, suggestions, questions.

Adjourn.