

Environmental Commission
April 26, 2018 – Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm. Members present included James Myers, Katie Baron, Helene Jaros, Scott Olson, Michelle Rehse, Jim Reinhold, Lisa Shimamoto and Secretary Donna Fett. Also present was Casey McGuffy.

A motion was made by Katie, seconded by Helene to accept the March 22, 2018 meeting minutes.

New Business:

- Plan Spring Trail Clean-Up Event - National Trails Day will be celebrated on June 2nd. EC would like to hold their spring trail clean-up event at Tamarack Trail on Saturday June 2nd to coincide with this special event. They would like to do this from 9am-noon. Depending on the number of participants, a group could start at the COJ side and another group could start at the Tamarack Park side of the trail. If the number of participants was sufficient to support another starting area, a group could start at Johnson Lake. EC members would like to advertise this in the Township Journal, Township website and invite Ben Spinelli to participate.

Ongoing Business:

- Arbor Day Planning – Jim contacted Cerbo regarding pricing on blue spruce. Although EC agreed at last month's meeting to obtain a blue spruce, Cerbo advised against it due to disease issues. They recommended either a Norway or White Spruce. The Norway Spruce is faster growing and the White spruce is slightly slower growing. Both trees would max out at 30-40 feet and pricing is the same for both. For a 6-7' tree, it is \$150 and for a 7-8- tree it is \$200. The additional planting fee is half the cost of the tree. A motion was made by Lisa, seconded by Katie to purchase the 7-8' Norway Spruce tree for \$300 with the planting. Scott will follow-up with Township Manager to confirm we have permission to plant the tree at the intersection of Route 206 and Lackawanna Drive near the drainage area. The target for planting will be May.
- Delaware Basin/Watershed Fracking Regulations Resolution Request – This will be added to the May 2nd Council Meeting agenda.
- 2018 Goals / Partnerships Update – Secretary received an email from an Stanhope EC member who would like to partner with us on some events. She had several great ideas including holding a Tri-Town Clean-up (Byram, Stanhope and Netcong), getting schools and town EC's and Councils on board, holding an e-waste disposal / paper shredding event, reviewing trail markings, holding a poster/video contest for students, etc. Secretary will contact her and advise that EC member(s) would be willing to meet with Stanhope EC to discuss further ideas.

Planning Board Applications: There were no planning board applications to review this month, but Lisa advised that she had received a transcript with Anty Trucking details from the recent meeting. A member of EC may attend the May 3rd planning board meeting when this is being discussed.

Expenditures and Budget:

The full budget of \$2600 is now available. Balance is \$1902, including \$180 which is being spent this month for trailhead signage for Briar Ridge Trails. These were ordered at the request of Township Manager. The new signs will complement the existing Trail Map (the previously named “eastern” branch was renamed to “northern” and the previously named “western” branch was renamed to “southern”).

Training:

Lisa participated in “What’s in Your Water? Establishing a Drinking Water Testing Program in Your Community” seminar on 4/12. This was sponsored by Raritan Head Waters Association. Although we are not in their watershed, they offer support for any resident. Lisa reported that they are interested in doing education programs and are researching grants. Other programs they offer include such topics as conservation and lakeside buffers. They recommend getting water tested every few years and advised that a basic test is around \$60. The group discussed the possibility of offering this at Byram Day. Scott suggested reaching out to other towns to coordinate any water testing effort.

Trails:

Although Eric was not at the meeting, he reported that he noted two sections of Tamarack Trail that could use some attention. From the COJ side in the area where barberry was removed at the last trail clean-up, he noted a large muddy section where quads have torn up the trail. In addition, he felt that further up the trail run-off control is needed.

Eric suggested having EC members keep a log of the trails they hike, including the number of hours.

Membership: Casey McGuffy participated in the meeting and may be interested in joining as Alternate. She was advised to contact Secretary if she would like to officially join the group.

Committee Reports:

Open Space – Scott reported that Open Space is working with Ben Spinelli to determine the best uses for existing Township trails, parks, etc. Trails are being used as an economic driver for economic development for the town. Ben will use a drone fly-over of the trails, provide information on types of trees as well as historical information to create a master plan for Byram. He expects to provide a draft plan at the next OS meeting.

MWA – Michelle reminded the group that the native species sale is being held this weekend and confirmed flyers have been posted at Town Hall.

Other:

Clean Communities Projects Completed/Scheduled:

- West Brookwood Neighborhood Clean-up was completed on 4/14
- Forest Lakes scheduled for 5/5 – within Forest Lakes beach areas

Other Upcoming Events/Key Dates:

- Leaf/Brush Area Opening in Township Rec. Center – now open
- Free Electronics Recycling at SCMUA – May 19th
- Free Hazardous Household Waste at SCMUA – June 2nd
- Twp. Wide Garage Sale – June 2-3rd
- Byram Day – September 8th
- Hudson Farms Charity Hike – October 13th

Go Green Environmental Club at Lenape Valley High School – EC Secretary contacted Rachel Strodel, who is the faculty advisor of the club. Ms. Strodel advised she would be interested in being added to our email distribution list for future events. In addition, she is interested in possibly coordinating an Electronics Recycling Event for Byram Township. Ms. Strodel also contacted Stanhope EC member (see “Partnership Update” under New Business).

NJ Forestry Free Tree Seedling Program – NJ Forest Service was offering free seedlings to municipalities to replant from Superstorm Sandy. Seedlings would be picked up at distribution center on a given day/time and then be distributed to residents. It is too late for Byram to register for this program for this year. This program will run again in 2019 and that will be the last year. The EC Secretary is on the email distribution and should receive an email in January should we wish to register.

The ANJEC Open Space Grant was submitted and we will be notified by mid-May if it is awarded. The group briefly viewed the Open Space map and discussed the possibility of a field trip to “Byram Island”.

The annual recycling tonnage grant report will be submitted by April 30th and it is anticipated that we will report higher numbers than last year. NJ awards monies based on the amount of materials recycled during the calendar year, so we anticipate receiving a larger check as a result.

Byram Township was awarded Tree City USA status! A banner and plaque were received and Secretary was asked to advise on the size of the banner; perhaps the banner can be displayed at Byram Day booth.

Secretary was asked to contact Ben Spinelli to advise what areas in Township might be well suited to plant milkweed to encourage monarch butterflies and other pollinators.

Scott volunteered to coordinate registration for Stag Lake Tree Farm Day to be held on Friday, June 1st. Registration is needed by Friday, May 25th. Secretary was asked to send the information to EC members.

Next Meeting: May 24, 2018

Motion to adjourn was made by James, seconded by Jim at 8:40pm.