

# WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes  
October 14, 2015

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:30 in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act at the Jack C. Sheppard Sr. Community Center.

<u>ROLL CALL</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>
Scott Barnes (Chair. / Planning Bd. Rep.)	X	
Maria Ceravolo	X	
Bob Bevilacqua (V. Chair)	X	
Rich Dilks (Sec.)	X	
Dave Kreck		X
Tommy Lombardo		X
Julie Ream	X	

**Associate Members Present:** John Mullens, Sharon Ceravolo.

**Public Guests Present:** , Dave Coates, Erik Mollenhauer.

Minutes of the September 9 meeting were approved. (Motion: Bevelacqua, Second: Ceravolo AIF)

## **Mad Hatter's Tree Party**

Public guest, Erik Mollenhauer, of the Gloucester County Nature Club and coordinator of the MHTP was recognized to give a report on the event planning and seek additional volunteers from the WEC. He said he had walked Eldridge Trail today with the college student who will play the Mad Hatter. The event will be structured as a series of stations along the trail and end with the gathering at the tea house. Each station should have at least two persons manning per shift and stations will be manned in two 90 minute shifts

**Stations.** The welcome table will be at the Eldridge Trail head. There will be a sign in sheet, activities, and materials. The WEC could have trail guides for sale there. There will be 5 stations along the trail and presenters will talk about two trees at each station. A tree measuring activity and comparison with the largest record tree of those species will be included.

1. High bridge station. 2.Low bridge station. 3. Comey's Lake dock (with dulcimer player), 4.Large tulip tree near Comey's Lake, 5. Ironwood tree south of the tea house.

**The tea house.** There will be a harpist. Light refreshments will be served. Small tables will be set for a children's tea party. Participants are encouraged to come in "wonderland" costumes.

Erik said a professional 4-5 minute video will be made of the event and become part of a packet that can be distributed to other communities to create their own tree parties and to propagate the message of the importance of trees to a health environment.

**Things to be done.** Erik said we have 20-25 people volunteering but we still need additional volunteers. He also is looking for child size tables to set up at the tea house and even child size tea sets. Road signs need to be set up at the corner of Mantua Ave. and S. Princeton and other locations to guide out of town visitors. Bob has several blank "election" signs we can use. Set up on 10/25 will begin at 9:30 A.M. at the Lenape Trail entrance. Karen Kravchuk is coordinating food & beverages. Erik will get some publicity photos to Scott for the website, emails and Face Book. Erik will follow up with an email to everyone in a day or so.

All WEC members and others present at the meeting volunteered to be a part of the event.

## **Chairman's Report Scott Barnes.**

### **Near Term Projects**

**Trail post storm clean up status from June macroburst and September rains.**

**Comey's Lake Loop/Tea House.** The tea house was damaged when a very large tree limb fell on the roof. On Oct. 6; Bob was able to remove the limb and repair the hole in the tea house roof. He still needs to replace the shingles at that location. The southwest corner of the roof is also damaged and in need of repair.

**Eldridge Trail.** Clear. Julie reported that there is some blockage on Indian Trail.

**Monongahela Loop Trail.** There was discussion on how much of the loop trail should be reopened this fall. There are several blockages on the upper portion and the lower portion is overgrown. The upper portion will be a target for the 11/7 work party. No attempt to reopen the lower portion will be made until the vegetation dies down.

**Monongahela Brook Trail.** It was reported the stump blocking the trail below the Cornell home is still there. Scott also noted there is a large tree down near the bog walk.

**Garden Trail/Stone pool.** The trail is passable but There is a large toppled tree and resulting hole along the trail and also a large branch balanced on the upended roots It was also noted the water level in the pool should be lowered by inserting a notch or leveling pipe.

**Glen Trail.** An upended tree has created a large hole in the trail and dirt will need to be hauled in to fill it.

**Mantua Creek Trail.** The bridge at the east end of the island, previously damaged by a limb has now buckled from recent flooding. John Mullens had previously placed a single plank on the missing section as a temporary repair. John Mullens noted that the boardwalk near the east bridge was dislodged by the flooding but is now only slightly out of place. It will still need to be realigned and reset. John said the boardwalk needs to be more securely anchored with metal street sign posts. He said he is very willing to work on repairs there if we can get materials to the site. Bob will inquire whether the Borough has any sign posts we could use. Bob said the repairs are more than we can accomplish in a single work party but will be a longer process. Scott agreed the metal posts are a more durable way to secure the boardwalks. Scott noted 3 new fallen tree on MCT that are large step overs. Scott also noted that Clay Hill will need attention soon.

**Break Back Run, Wenonah Lake Loop & Eggert Trails.** Clear.

**Dilks Pond.** Passable

**Synnott's Pond Trail.** No new problems. The area is very overgrown this time of year and the northeast bridge needs to be better secured.

**Hannisey's Landing.** Julie reported she replaced the missing pole on the kayak launch.

**South Jefferson Ravine.** Resident Clark Kenyon of 108 S. Jefferson contacted Scott with concerns about a leaning tree in the conservation area now hanging over his house. His ins. co. has advised him to have it removed and he has offered to contribute financially to the removal. It was decided to confer with Gary Odenbrett of the Shade Tree Commission and refer Mr. Kenyon to the borough for possible action. The WEC does not undertake major tree removals. Mr. Kenyon was also concerned that fallen trees in the ravine may be blocking a small spring fed stream and increasing flooding on his property. The Commission was not clear that there was any evidence that the trees were blocking drainage. Any attempt to remove them would be very difficult.

**Women's Club Project.** Julie reported she has conferred with Matt Emmet at Gateway HS and brought several examples of sign work they do there. She said Emmet could do an illustration of the trail map for a sign and would do the art work for free. He could also help with updating our guides. Examples Julie brought included engraved wood, etched metal (monochrome) and aluminum with full color vinyl and acrylic coating. Julie also checked some online businesses. They would likely be more expensive, depending on size, number and other specifics. The Commission generally liked the idea of working with local students. Julie also brought some sample photos. There was one of a small sign board with a shingle roof. It could display a large trail map and also have room for additional changing material such as notice of events and environmental tips for residents. A number of smaller aluminum signs could be placed at various trail heads. Although we don't yet know the costs for these, we will use a reasonable estimate of \$500 for now. Scott will forward our ideas to date to the Women's Club.

Erik also had a suggestion for the project. He noted that in Missoula, Montana he saw personal poetry kiosks and book trading boxes on lawns and in public spaces. He suggested the WEC create a kiosk in town that could display the trail map and other materials, possibly with other organizations participating and combine that with a community book trading box.

**Wenonah Fall Festival 10/24, 11A.M to 4 P.M.** The WEC will have a table (provided by Bob). Maria will bring the Frank Eggert float. Erik will get MHTP fliers for the table. Dave noted (by email) he has literature and copies of the Guide to the Conservation Area to bring. Julie hopes to put together a photo display on a table easel. Scott will bring a rain barrel. Rich will bring the old conservation area signs and trail maps (\$3)

and the Greene's Lake postcards (\$5) for sale. Rich will also make up two sign-up sheets, one for the WEC email list and one for the 11/7 work party.

**Fall Work Party. Nov. 7.** It was decided we would meet at the Community Center at 9 A.M. then decide which locations and tasks to assign. Four areas for work were discussed. 1. Getting material to the boardwalk and bridge on MCT and beginning work there. 2. Clearing the upper portion of Monongahela Loop Tr. 3. The hanging limb at the Garden Trail. 4. The bridge near the Garden Trail where gravel has washed out under the south end of the bridge.

**Clean Communities Day. Nov. 14 at 8:30 A.M.** The WEC decided to participate.

**Tool Purchase.** Dave reported by email he has not yet been able to get the prices for various hand tools.

**2016 Activities Calendar.** The Borough has not yet requested this. Rich will work up a draft A.C then share it for review with the Commission.

## **Long-Term Projects**

**Comey' Lake-Dilks Pond algae/duckweed.** Rich reported he contacted Princeton Hydro after the algae bloom last month and the lakes were treated. There is still some algae but it will disappear with the cooling weather. Both lakes remain almost entirely duckweed free. Princeton Hydro will contact us in the winter about 2016 treatments.

There was no substantive discussion of other long term projects at the meeting.

Scott noted the planning board granted variances to the Spross residence that abuts part of the south shore of Dilks Pond. Mr. Spross was approved to construct a new, more substantial fence with stone posts and a swimming pool in the front yard.

**Tall Pines.** Rich reported that settlement has been delayed by the discovery of a second septic tank (near the old restaurant site) that must be decommissioned before settlement. Rich does not believe the delay will be more than a few weeks.

**Friends of Wenonah Trails Account.** Rich noted account activity in the past month.

\$573.73 check to Bob as reimbursement for costs of the Frank Eggert stone memorial.

\$286.86 deposit from the American Legion for 50% of memorial costs.

**Current Balance: \$9,678.26**

MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:05 PM. (Motion: Ceravolo, Second: Ream AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Rich Dilks, Sec.