

WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
December 9, 2015

Following the Volunteers' Appreciation Night social hour, Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:41 in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act at the Jack C. Sheppard Sr. Community Center.

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

Associate Members Present: Chuck Forsman, Sharon Ceravolo.

Public Guests Present: , Dave Coates, Laurie Forsman, Bill Ceravolo

Minutes of the November 11 meeting were approved. (Motion: Bevelacqua, Second: Ceravolo AIF)

Chairman's Report: Scott Barnes.

Review.

Mad Hatter's Proceeds. Scott reported that since accurate records of WEC trail guide sales and donations to the GCNC were not available, the GCNC had decided to split the proceeds of \$151 from the MHTP equally between the two sponsoring organizations. Scot gave a check from the GCNC for \$75.50 to Rich for deposit in the FWT account.

Clean Communities Day. Scott reported much was accomplished by our work party. On the Garden Trail repairs were done to the main bridge, a small foot bridge was replaced, the flooded trail was corrected by re-diverting the stream causing the flooding, the trail was raised with stream gravel and a drainage channel were dug. A large tree blocking the trail was cut, the drain at the stone pool was unclogged and the water level lowered. It was suggested that a cage be placed over the drain to prevent future clogging. Some large limbs were cut up as well. Maria reported that a cleanup of Wenonah Lake trails was also done by other volunteers. Rich indicated the Borough will be awarding us \$213.48 in Clean Communities funds.

Cub Scout Hike 11/22. Rich and Julie reported a very successful hike by 9 cub scouts and additional scout leaders on the Eggert and Wenonah Lake Loop Trails. Sharon noted she witnessed a large contingent of Woodbury scouts hiking the trails near the trestle.

Turkey Trot WEC table 11/27 Rich and Bob manned the info table at the Presbyterian Church during the run registration from 8 to 9 AM. Rich considered this a worthwhile community relations activity.

Short Term Projects

Wenonah Lake beaver. Scott informed us that Dr. Speth had contacted him concerned about renewed beaver activity at the lake. Scott and Rich both walked the area and found the beaver was actively gnawing trees on both the east and west shores of the lake and had gnawed or ringed several large black gum in addition to the American beech. The beaver has also built a low dam on the feeder stream just north of where it enters the lake. Water has pooled there and the stream is now higher, but no flooding of the trail has yet occurred. Dr. Speth had also noted the deposition of sediments near the foot bridge. Rich stated he felt this was not due to any disturbance the WEC created, but was coming from erosion gullies further upstream. Scott

recommended we paint some additional trees to protect them from the beaver killing them or felling on the trail. Scot said the painting of the trees will likely be delayed until after the winter season. Bob noted the Canada geese at the lake are also a problem. Dave noted the Lake Assoc. and Borough are looking into humane strategies to discourage the geese, and that he will make inquiries.

Shade Tree Commission request. Rich said that he met with Gary Odenbrett of the STC, who has requested permission to remove 3 trees on S. Marion Ave. at the Monongahela Brook trail entrance that are leaning over the street and are potential hazards. He also requested permission to trim or remove several small trees on the north side of E. Mantua Ave, near Camels Back Run, that are leaning on utility wires. Gary also suggested a joint STC-WEC work party to clean up branches at Maple St., opposite Wenonah Lake. The WEC will suggest to Gary the work party can be scheduled for Sun. 11/13 or Sun. 12/20. Rich will coordinate. The WEC also approved Gary's request to trim or remove the trees indicated above.

(Motion: Dilks, Second: Bevilacqua AIF)

Bob reported that Tim McGuire of 204 E. Pine St. has cut the fallen trees from the upturned stumps on conservation lands behind his home. He will use a backhoe to right the stumps in the ground and help restore the area. Bob reported a neighbor has requested that he take the logs and saw them into planks. The WEC decided to gather more information on this request before making a decision. Dave will contact the neighbor.

Moonlight Hike 12/18. Mantua Creek Trail was chosen for the route. The hike will begin at the Glen Trail and end with light refreshments at Dave's house.

Trail Status Reports

Comey's Lake Loop / Tea House Eldridge Trail. The E. Cherry St entrance is still badly blocked. Bob suggested, we may want to reroute the trail there.

Monongahela Brook Loop. Cleared by the 11/7 work party.

Monongahela Brook Trail: stump. Leave the stump for now. People can walk around it.

Indian Trail. Julie reported a large step over tree needs cutting.

Garden Trail / Stone Pool Garden The 11/14 work party resolved the serious problems on this trail. See above for details.

Mantua Creek Trail. Three large step over trees near the RR tracks need to be cut.

Breakback Run Trail. The fallen tree behind the Schulties property was cut by Bob. Bill Ceravolo reported a small bridge near the Maple St. entrance clogs and floods. It may need to be cleared out or raised.

Wenonah Lake Loop. Rich noted a sweet bay magnolia is partial blocking a small footbridge on the west lake shore trail. It may need to be cut.

Additional items.

Trail Sign Project. Scott reported he, Rich and Julie determined an appropriate sign location at the north end of the Wenonah Lake parking lot near the trail head. Scott said we will need the Borough's permission and assurances the location will not cause a problem with snow ploughing the lot. Dave will talk to the Borough. Julie said we will first need to determine the details of the revised trail map- including text, colors and other elements. The new map can be printed on UV resistant vinyl and placed inside the case at the kiosk. It was decided a sub-committee for the map/kiosk project be formed. Julie, Maria and Rich volunteered to serve. Julie said the final map shape will help determine the kiosk design (portrait, landscape or square). Scott said he would like to see color trail blazes at key areas on the trails as guides to hikers who are unfamiliar with the area, particularly in distinguishing the main trail from access trails. Scott said he has literature on the blaze system used on the Appalachian Trail he can share. Maria cautioned we want to keep the trail system as natural as possible. Sharon said there were small color decals that can be used as trail markers. Julie also noted that it is unlikely any additional progress with the trail map/kiosk project will occur until after the holiday season.

Tommy Lombardo resigns from WEC. Sharon Ceravolo appointed. Scott announced that Tommy has resigned from the commission but that he remains an enthusiastic WEC volunteer and supporter, still happy to pitch in and help on projects. Bob took a moment to thank Tommy for his years of service on the WEC and praise his hard work and dedication over many years to our trails and projects. Scott then opened the discussion to selecting a replacement member. Maria suggested associate member, Sharon Ceravolo. After a very brief and positive discussion, Sharon was offered appointment to the Commission and accepted.

(Motion: Ceravolo, Second: Bevilacqua AIF)

Welcome aboard, Sharon!

Stewart Estate inspection & report. Scott noted representatives of the Stewart Estate made their annual inspection of the conservation lands, focusing on the Kummer and Meserve tracts (Synnott's Pond area), Lentz tract (Mantua Creek Trail) and White tract (Break Back Run Trail). Scott will complete and return a brief questionnaire, due by 12/21.

2016 Budget. The Borough has requested we submit our 2016 budget request by 12/31/15. Last year's request was \$5,000, all of which was spent to cover duckweed/algae treatments of Comey's Lake and Dilks Pond. Rich said the cost of treatments for 2016 is expected to be about the same or slightly higher. Dave suggested we request \$6,500 for 2016 to cover the pond treatments and additional anticipated costs from the sign/kiosk project, rip rap for Synnott's Pond, planks and other trail maintenance materials. The Commission agreed on a \$6,500 request.

(Motion: Kreck, Second: Ream AIF)

Scott said there was nothing to report from the planning board.

Maple Ridge. Rich reported there will be a meeting of all the partners for Maple Ridge at the county offices in Clayton on Dec. 15. Rich and Chuck are attending for the Friends. The meeting will concern steps to get the park people ready and in shape for the dedication ceremony, most likely in late winter or early spring 2016. The meeting will also focus on developing a maintenance and management plan for the park. Dave brought up the possibility of a connecting trail along the creek from the RR trestle to Maple Ridge. That trail would cross the Anzek property and he would need to grant permission. Dave said he would discuss the possibility with Mr. Anzek.

Friends of Wenonah Trails Account.

Expenses. \$162.16 paid to Bob as reimbursement of purchased trail maintenance materials.

There were no deposits

Current balance: \$9,618.10

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:53 PM. (Motion: Bevilacqua, Second: Ream AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Rich Dilks, Sec.