

# WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes  
October 12, 2016

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	
Sharon Ceravolo	X	
Maria Ceravolo		X
Bob Bevilacqua		X
Rich Dilks (Sec.)	X	
Dave Kreck (V. Chair.)	X	
Julie Ream	X	

**Associate Members Present:** Dave Coates.

**Public Guests Present:** Jaime Fallon, Jack Costantino, Stacey Costantino, Chris Colman.

The minutes of the Sept. 14 meeting were approved as amended. (Motion: Ream, Second: S. Ceravolo, AIF)

## **Public Guests.**

**Jack Costantino**, Troop 50 boy scout, spoke to propose doing an Eagle project in the conservation area- extending the trail rails and stone through the muddy section of Mantua Creek Trail near W. Cherry St. In response to Jack's questions, Dave Kreck explained that section of trail is about 150 ft. in length and the trail would be about 4 ft. wide. He also said that due to the loss of several large trees in storms, the ground is much wetter than previously. Dave said he would visit the trail site with Jack. Dave also said an access trail to MCT from W. Cherry St will be needed to transport the lumber and stone. He is working with a neighbor and Bob to construct a bridge over a small stream and clear a trail from near his property on W. Cherry St. Dave will be the WEC contact for Jack on this project.

**Chris Colman** is a Gateway student who told the WEC he is offering to do 20 service hours of volunteer labor over the year with 5 hours performed in each quarter. Dave Kreck replied Chris is welcome to participate in our work parties, including the fall work party on Nov. 5 and at the Mad Hatter's Tree Party. Dave will keep Chris informed of our work parties and activities and will also sign off on verifying his hours.

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

### **Near-Term Projects**

**Wenonah Fall Festival.** Sat. Oct. 22, 11-4. The WEC will have an information table. Scott, Dave Rich and Sharon (morning) will be available. Dave will bring storm water management literature, Julie will provide a photo display and other items for display will be worked out later. The WEC will also promote the Tree Party and Friends of Tall Pines. Sharon will provide the table.

**Mad Hatter's Tree Party.** Sunday, Oct. 23, 1 to, 4 PM. Our main concern is making sure the Eldridge Trail and Tea House are on good condition for the event. (See trail report below for details of current Eldridge Trail improvements.) Set up for the Tree Party will be at 10:30 AM at Lenape Tr. on 10/23.

**Haunted Trail invitation. Oct.29.** The WEC declined to participate this year.

**Fall Work Party.** Sat. Nov. 5 at 9:00 AM. We will meet at the Community Center. Several sites for attention were suggested: 1. Improve the muddy section of trail at the north end of Wenonah

Lake. Several new boards were put down in Sept., but additional work can be done. 2. Painting the bog walk. Sharon will purchase an additional gal. of paint (total 2) and brushes. 3. Julie suggested continuing to wrap wire around trees to protect them from the beavers. 4. Dave and Bob could continue to work on the bridge and access trail near W. Cherry. Scott will confer with Bob on materials and additional ideas. Sharon will contact the Gateway Nat. Honor Society to inquire about volunteers.

**Trail sign project.** Julie reported no new actions but she will inquire with Gateway about our plaques and the proposed beaver dam sign.

**Wildflower planting at Camel's back Loop.** Sharon inquired about the agenda notation. Rich said it was suggested by Maria but has not moved beyond preliminary discussion. Rich said this could be a good project this spring.

### **Beaver Activity.**

**Eldridge Trail.** It was noted Bob said he was able to lower the water level to minimize flooding and standing water at the low trail section. Sharon said her husband had recently cleared the pipe. It was also noted that sections of the dam had been torn away by unknown persons (and quickly repaired by the beavers). The water level is now at a manageable level, particularly with the new boards and stepping stones in the low trail section. Julie expressed concern that we don't interfere too much with the beaver. Jaime said she feared that areas that were underwater are now mud flats that can breed mosquitos. Scott said we need to keep our trails open but want to coexist with the beavers. Sharon suggested putting a sign at the dam site telling the public that disturbing the dam is prohibited. Dave Coates suggested the sign could also contain educational information on the beavers. Julie will look into wording for the sign.

### **Trail Maintenance.**

**Eldridge Trail.** Crushed stone was delivered to E. Pine St. and Bob has used it to grade, level and fill the section of trail between E. Pine and the bridge. He has also brushed the trail for the MHTP event on 10/23. Mike Sheehan has installed boards and a series of wood bounded paver stepping stones in the low trail section. This will make that section of trail crossable even if there is standing water on the trail. There was discussion whether they should be replaced in a future project by a raised boardwalk.

**Glen Trail.** Bob has repaired the bridge near the Glen Trail.

**Mantua Creek Trail.** The extension of the trail rails near W. Cherry St has been proposed as an Eagle project by scout Jack Costantino.. The completion of the access trail and bridge from W. Cherry would need to precede it. Dave said he, Bob and a neighbor could use I-beams to repair the bulkhead at Clay Hill.

### **Other items.**

**Lions Club Donation.** The position of the Lions Club on donations for the trail improvements on both Eldridge Trail and Mantua Creek Trail is not yet clear. An alternative proposal we could make to the Lions would be the creation of an observation deck on MCT overlooking the marsh. This would be high profile "signature" addition to the trail system. Dave will reach out to the Lions Club on these proposals.

**Light Rail.** Scott said it is possible (but by no means assured) that the increased gas tax could provide funds to revitalize that project.

**Borough Master Plan.** Dave said the Planning Board is reviewing the master plan for the Borough. He said he is introducing the proposal on behalf of the WEC that the plan set the goal of creating a connecting trail from the Wenonah Conservation Area to Tall Pines State Preserve. The trail would follow Mantua Creek and would need easements on two private parcels in Deptford : the Randolph Jewish Ctr. Prop. (which could go under preservation) and the Anyzek prop.

**WEC 2016 Budget Balance.** The WEC has \$1725 remaining in this year's budget. It was suggested that funds could be used as a matching for the funding of the Eagle scout MCT project and that any future expenses we will have this year for materials and purchases should be submitted for the budget rather than our checking account.

**Friends of Wenonah Trails Account.**

Expenses:

\$200.00 Lowe's gift cards

\$149.89 Bob Bevilacqua- reimbursement for plywood & studs

\$200.00 Bob Bevilacqua- reimbursement for funds given to Mike Sheehan for lumber for Eldridge Trail

Current balance: \$\$8,664.10

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:40 PM. (Motion: S. Ceravolo, Second: Kreck AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Rich Dilks, Sec.