

WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
June 10, 2015

Vice Chairman Bob Bevilacqua called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at the conclusion of the annual WEC picnic at 7:28 in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act at the Wenonah Lake pavilion.

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	
Tommy Lombardo	X	
Julie Ream	X	

Associate Members Present: None.

Public Guests Present: Dr. Peter Speth, Pat Duncan, Mellany Alio, Beth Lombardo, Kathy Schools and additional picnic guests.

Minutes of the May 13 meeting were approved. (Motion: Kreck, Second: Ream AIF)

Chairman's Report

The meeting was chaired by Vice Chairman Bob Bevilacqua in the absence of Chairman Barnes.

Review

May 16 joint invasive species work party with the GCNC. Bob gave a brief report indicating about 15 persons participated at three locations: Mantua Creek Trail, near Lisle Field and the tea house. The teams cut English ivy vines that were choking trees and removed garlic mustard for near the MCT entrance at Mantua. Ave.

Holly Tree Planted. Rich reported that he and Scott planted a hybrid orange berry Am. Holly tree at the Stone Pool Garden. Scott had won the tree as a door prize at Bird Quest.

Near-Term Projects.

Newsletter. Scott had submitted the WEC article prior to leaving on vacation. Items were reports on the March 28 work party (E. Cherry St.) and the May 16 work party, and a write up on our 4th of July events. Kathy Schools said that she can accept additional items from us until the June 16 deadline.

Student Awards. The awards have been named in honor of Frank. Scott will present the awards to two Wenonah School graduates on June 23, chosen by the school. Rich will prepare the packets which will include a \$75 check, letter, certificate, a copy of Maddie Kreck's "Field Guide to the Wenonah Woods" and other items.

4th of July and Frank Eggert Memorial Activities.

Parade. Maria and Sharon are preparing the float. Maria is looking for photos and other material to be used on the float. Rich gave her a copy of the stone monument text. We plan to also exhibit the float in the park after the parade so people can get a better look at the items. Maria suggested we hand out free trail guides along the parade route to promote the WEC and its mission. The suggestion was agreed to. Rich has the trail guides and said there were plenty to spare for this.

Stone Memorial. Bob report a brass plaque could not be in place for a 4th of July dedication. He has instead looked into our having a stone (mahogany granite) with the text carved it Bob also noted John Forren and the Am. Legion have approved the draft text for the memorial. The stone would be placed at the edge of the Wenonah Lake parking lot, not on Stewart Estate lands. He said it can be done and placed by July 4. Dave will check with council (June 25) to confirm borough approval for the monument. The cost would be approximately \$500, split between the WEC and the AM. Legion.

(Motion: Dilks, Second: Lombardo AIF)

Trail walk. The 4th of July trail walk will be on the trail at Wenonah Lake named in Frank's memory. Rich will check the trail prior to the walk. Rich also suggested we should have a trail sign, even a temporary one, identifying the trail for the walk. He will look into having one made.

Our 4th of July special activities were mentioned in the Lion's 4th of July newsletter and will also be noted in the program.

Trees down near the teahouse. Julie noted some large trees have fallen near the teahouse. None are blocking any trails. Bob indicated they can be cleared out but that this would be a low priority project for now.

"The Field Guide to the Wenonah Woods". Dave reported that Maddie Kreck's field guide project is complete. He brought several hard copies to the show the commission. Two of those will be given out to the student award winners. The guide can also be put online on the WEC web site. Members were very impressed with the quality of the guide. Dr. Speth commented that the trout lilies and lady's slipper orchids near Wenonah Lake could be added to the Guide.

Fishing line at Dilks Pond. Tommy noted that recently a great blue heron got entangled in fishing line in the branches at Dilks Pond and drown. It was suggested that we should cut back those over hanging branches to remove the fishing line hazard. It was further suggested the best time to do that will be in the winter when the pond is frozen, providing easy access to the branches.

New well at Dilks Pond. Dave reported the DEP is urging the Borough to plant additional trees along the water's edge at Dilks Pond as part of the restoration of the well construction site. Dave has explained to the DEP the pond is already fully lined with trees, to the extent that falling leaves are adversely affecting the health of the pond.

Long Term Projects.

Synnott's Pond Area. Bob reported there has been vandalism at the site recently. The bench top has been ripped off, and boards and other items have been thrown into the stream.

Comey' Lake Land Transfer. It was noted the Simpson property is now under contract for purchase by the new owner. Nothing can be done at present about the land transfer or the public use of the trail by the house. It was suggested we contact the new owner when things have settled. Pat Duncan said he will look into any options we may have under the "Adverse Possession" legal principle or precedents.

East Cherry St Trail Entrance. Bob noted the project is complete. Other also remarked the entrance is holding up well under the recent heavy rains and looks good.

GIS Town & Conservation Lands Mapping. Dave announced he is leaving the firm that would have undertaken this project and that the project now appears defunct.

Maple Ridge. Rich reported that the maintenance shed, the well shed and the gazebo at Maple Ridge have been demolished and removed. The lower bridge has had its dilapidated decking removed in preparation for a new deck. These actions indicate a settlement date is likely in the very near future.

Duckweed Control at Dilks Pond and Comey;s Lake. Rich reported both ponds continue to look good. Dilks Pond was treated on May 9 and Comey's Lake on May 20 and again in early June. Rich had forwarded the first of three invoices from Princeton Hydro to the Borough for payment in May.

Trail Maintenance. Bob noted he had installed new posts and boards on the bog walk this spring.

Additional Business.

Deer Ticks. Dr. Peter Speth addressed the commission. He noted that he has found deer ticks are now common in the woods around Wenonah Lake.

Wenonah Lake Beaver. Dr. Speth also addressed his concerns about the lake's beaver girdling large trees. He had contacted Sarah Summerville of UWR for advice on protecting the trees. Dr. Speth reported back to us that Sarah had visited the site with him. She said the beaver was likely a juvenile and recommended painting the lower trunks with latex paint mixed with sand to prevent further damage. Dr. Speth informed us he had promptly done so. He reported that the beaver is now going after other species of trees than the beech. Dr. Speth also said he found the beavers "burrow" on the lake's western shore. His concern is that many of the mature trees near the lake shore will be killed by girdling. He suggested trapping and removing the beaver as a possible solution. The Commission felt that it has no experience with this and would like some advice from experts before taking any action. With Sarah Summerville relocating out of the area, that may be difficult. Dr. Speth said he will follow through with research and reach out to knowledgeable persons on this question and then report back to the WEC.

Addendum of items not mentioned at the meeting.

Contribution. Dr. Speth made a \$500. Contribution to the WEC at this meeting.

Clean Communities Day May 9. The Borough has sent the WEC a voucher indicating we will receive \$275 for our participation.

Friends of Wenonah Trails Account. The balance is \$9,147.76. There was no account activity in the past month.

Thank You letter. The WEC received a thank you letter from the nature club for being a Bird Quest sponsor this year.

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:12 PM. (Motion: Kreck, Second: Ream, AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,

Rich Dilks, Sec.