

# WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

## Meeting Minutes

June 10, 2020

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:30 P. M. in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act. Due to the restrictions in place to combat covid-19, this meeting was held as a video conference through Jitsi Meet.

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

**Associate Members Present:** none.

**Public Guest Present:** Erin Fallon.

The minutes of the May 2020 meeting were approved.

(Motion: Kreck, Second: Ream, AIF)

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

### **Review**

**Tea House graffiti free.** Scott B. reported that as of earlier today the Tea House is graffiti free, at least for now.

**Frank Eggert Memorial Awards to 6<sup>th</sup> grade graduates.** Scott B. reported the awards to two graduating 6<sup>th</sup> graders will be announced at the graduation ceremonies held virtually on June 12. Scott has created and submitted to Wenonah School a 1 minute video that will announce the winners at the ceremony. Each winner receives a check for \$100, a certificate, letter, Trail Guide and other nature oriented materials. (The winners were not disclosed at the WEC meeting but let the minutes show they are Ali Hayes and Christian Snyder.)

**Woman's Club gift cards.** The WEC contributed \$228 to the Woman's Club's multi-organizational effort to provide gift cards to all Wenonah graduates. 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders will receive gift cards to Hawk's Deli ( per Scott B.'s suggestion) and GCIT and 12<sup>th</sup> grade graduates will receive Wawa gift cards.

### **Near Term Projects.**

**Chuck Forsman stone memorial.** The stone memorial for Chuck was installed at Comey's Lake, near the dock on June 7. It was suggested that some sort of garden or landscape planting should be created at the memorial site. Rich suggested putting a pinxter flower or other native shrub(s) behind the stone and planting ferns and native perennial at the site as well. Julie said she has ferns in her yard she could donate. Rich said he would look into sources for these plants such as Triple Oaks and purchase appropriate plants when located. It was decided that we should not attempt to do the plantings now as summer heat and possibly drought approach, but will wait until Sept. to do the landscaping at the memorial.

**Independence Day Hike, July 5.** Maria said the Lions Club will be meeting in coordination with the Mayor and Fire Co. on Monday to decide if 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebrations will be held. Although no decision has yet been made, the Lions are inclined not to cancel. If the celebrations are held, the WEC hike on July 5 will begin at the Eldridge Trail entrance at 1 PM. We will wish to maintain social distancing with a potentially large crowd and therefore having a dedication ceremony at

Chuck's memorial would be difficult. It was suggested that we could have the dedicatory remarks on Pine St. where there is ample space, then people could view the memorial as a part of the walk. Scott B. also encouraged WEC members to wear cowboy hats on the walk.

**Clay Hill Grant application.** The submission date for the A. E.C./ Sustainable Jersey grant is 7/16/20. The WEC will request \$5,000 for the project. Sharon said she met with Dave on the grant and that Dave and Pat met at Clay Hill to assess the possible elements of the restoration. Dave said an educational component to the project would be helpful. It was noted the Wenonah School stream assessment is now done at another location where the creek is shallower. Julie suggested the Gateway beaver field trip she and Rich do could be done at Clay Hill in future. It was also suggested the Wenonah Historical Society could contribute information on the historical significance of Clay Hill and that a sign on the history of Clay Hill (similar to the Tea House sign) could be part of the project. It was also suggested the Lions Club might wish to contribute a modest donation and in-kind labor. There would also be signage, perhaps a plaque on the back of a bench acknowledging all the partners ( WEC, AEC, Sus. Jersey, WHS, Lions). Dave said we still need a plan or design of what exactly will constitute the restoration; reducing the two sets of steps to one, putting in new benches , possibly one at creek side and one on the hill top, redesigning the space at the base of the steps, etc. We also need to develop a budget for the project. It was noted the small foot bridge just east of Clay Hill needs upgrading. Dave said that will be included. Sharon said the working title of the project is "Clay Hill Restoration".

**Debris removal from trails.** Dave reported that he had removed debris from MCT by the Mullens property, BBR Trail and Camel's Back Loop Trail, but the kayak dock at Hanisey's Landing still has to be sawed up and removed. Julie said there is debris to be removed from Indian Trail, including pvc pipe (which we could save), and an old air conditioner.

**Poster shelters and trail signs.** Dave reported he installed two trail signs, one on Hayes Ave. and one on Mantua Ave. to guide hikers between BBR Trail and MCT. He said he has 6 signs left, 3 with right arrows and 3 with left arrows. He said we can go ahead with installing the 4 poster shelters. He said it would take 5 sign post to do that and the trail sign on N. Jefferson Ave. The installation of a trail sign near the southwest end of the Wenonah Lake Loop to guide hikers across Maple St to BBR Trail was discussed. The exact placement of the sign needs to be determined. Dave said he plans to get 6-8 sign posts for these projects

**Tea House graffiti photo on Facebook.** Scott B. noted that Scott C.'s photo of the Tea House graffiti had a large number of views and a number of comments but no one came forward as recognizing the "signature" of the perpetrator.

### **Trail Maintenance.**

**Tea House.** Julie said she had written the draft text for a warning notice we can post at the Tea House to deter vandalism. Rich sent Julie some minor editing suggestions.

**Indian Trail.** Julie noted the puncheons are in place now.

**Garden Trail/ Stone Pool.** Dave said the area needs trimming of the vegetation and that he will get out there with the WEC trimmer. Sharon noted the stone pool needs cleaning of debris again and opening up. Scott B. said he has a pair of WEC waders and can assist.

**Mantua Creek Trail.** The trail blockage has been cleared. Dave said sections of the MCT need to be trimmed back, including on the island. Scott B. said there was a loose board on the boardwalk near W. Willow. Scott C. said he would repair it. There is a perennial problem with wash out at the W. Cedar access trail entrance from street runoff. A neighbor has been putting fill in to control it. At present it is quite passable.

**Break Back Run Trail.** Dave recently cleared a fallen tree from the trail. The extensive boardwalk project near N. Jackson is nearing completion.

**Wenonah Lake Loop.** Recent trail blockages were cleared by Scott C. And Scott B. Scott B. shared photos of the areas, including debris from a maple tree near the entrance to the Eggert

Trail. Dave noted there are some trouble spots around the northern area of the trail, including a muddy 12' section on the north-west trail that needs new boards. He also noted we need 16' and 8' section of boards in the northern section and an 8' section on the west side trail.

**Eggert Trail.** Scott B. reported with a photo that there are two pits, one nearly 20 feet across that are being used for a "party spot". Fires have clearly been set in the base of the pit. They are on the Eggert Trail as you go east from the trail sign and up an incline towards the RR tracks.

**Roots.** A question of cutting protruding tree roots arose. Scott B. said there was a high root near the RR tracks on MCT. Another large high root is at Clay Hill. It was agreed that any root that poses a safety hazard should be cut but most roots on trails can be left undisturbed.

**Dilks Pond.** Maria said she had been told a number of fish in the pond had died. The cause was not known. Rich said it should not have been caused by the pond treatment. Maria said the flow pipe out of Dilks Pond had been clogged, which could have had a connection to the deaths. It was agreed to monitor the situation. If additional fish deaths occur, we should call in an expert to evaluate.

**Spare parts for WEC equipment.** Scott C. said the blade for the WEC chain saw is in need of sharpening. He would need to take it to the dealer and sharpening would take a couple of days. The cost is approx. \$11. He said purchasing a 2<sup>nd</sup> blade would ensure we would always have a functioning chain saw available. A new blade would cost \$22.50. In addition, Scott C. said, it has become cumbersome and inconvenient for him and Dave to keep sharing the one battery charger for the saw and trimmer. Scott suggested we purchase a 2<sup>nd</sup> charger to alleviate that problem. The cost is \$89.99. The total cost for the sharpening and purchases would be \$123.49 with no tax. Purchase would be made at the STIHL dealership at Borrie's. Dave said he would get a Borough tax exempt certificate and submit the cost to our Borough budget.

(Motion: Ream, Second: Kreck, AIF)

**July Meeting.** Scott B. asked with the lifting of restrictions on indoor meeting of under 50 persons, whether should we consider returning to in person meetings in July. The Borough has not yet set a policy on meetings in the Comm. Center. The question also arose whether the Comm. Center would require a cleaning after each use. Scott said there was the possibility of someone doing a presentation for us in July, which would work better in an in person setting. Scott said he would inquire with the Borough about these issues.

**Wenonah Park improvements.** Scott B. noted the Wenonah Park Committee has done a number of new plantings, including azaleas, along the southern section of the Park, and continues to control and restore overgrown areas. Scott B. said he has been invited to join the Park Committee. Also serving are Mayor Dominy, Jack Sheppard Jr., Gary Oddenbrett, and Dan Cox.

**WEC fundraising.** Julie brought up the possibility of the WEC doing fundraising. Dave agreed it would be a good opportunity. It was suggested we have a donation box or have a Donate option on the website. Maria suggested a Go Fund Me Page. We will need research what the best fundraising strategies are, but additional funds would be welcome.

Maria indicated that due to numerous other commitments, that should another potential commission member be available, she would feel comfortable stepping back to associate member status.

**Queens Lake.** Dave said he was recently informed that the outflow from Queens Lake, that used to flow into Oak Valley Lake had been blocked for some time. Very recently, the flow became unblocked. As a result, Queens Lake dropped 6' and the surge of water rushed into Oak Valley Lake, then Wenonah Lake, then Break Back Run. The temporary surge caused no lasting problems on Break Back Run.

**Duckweed/Algae control** Rich reported Both Dilks Pond and Comey's Lake were treated on May 15 and June 2. There are no problems with either pond. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of 4 invoices for the treatments have been submitted to the Borough for payment.

**Friends of Wenonah Trails Account Activity since last meeting.**

**Deposits:** none.

**Expenses:** **\$581.03** to Sharon C. for BBR materials.  
**\$228.00** to the Woman's Club for graduating students' gift cards.  
**\$100.00** to WEC Eggert Environmental Award winner, Ali Hayes.  
**\$100.00** to WEC Eggert Environmental Award winner, Christian Snyder.  
**\$234.67** to Bob. Beviacqua for Camel's Back Loop bridge repairs.  
**Total \$1243.70**

**Current balance: \$5,344.11**

MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:00 PM.  
(Motion: S. Ceravolo, Second: Ream, AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Rich Dilks, Sec.