

# WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes  
September 9, 2020

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 6:36 P. M. in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act at the Tea House.

<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:** Marc Logue, Zach Solem.

The minutes of the August 2020 meeting were approved as amended.  
(Motion: Conway, Second: Ream, AIF)

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

### **Review**

**Graffiti policy.** IT was agreed that the WEC should develop a policy for dealing with graffiti and vandalism in the future.

**Clean Communities Day, Aug. 29.** Scott B. reported he and Rich did trash pickup along Glassboro Rd. and Sharon did trash pickup along the railroad tracks. Scott C. and Bob did repairs on the small bridge near the Tea House. The bridge is open but additional work needs to be done. Dave headed repairs of the Mantua Creek bridge near the Glen Trail. Rich reported he has signed the voucher for the CC mini-grant. The WEC will receive \$350.

**Clay Hill ACE-Sustainable Jersey Grant.** Sharon had previously informed us that we have been awarded the \$5,000 grant. Dave said that Sustainable Jersey is requesting a statement or press release about the award, possibly from the mayor. The formal announcement of the award by Sustainable Jersey will be by Zoom meeting on Sept. 30. Dave said he thought the time period for completing the grant funded project was 1 year. Scott B. suggested we should meet at Clay Hill to go over the details of the restoration and that other partnering organizations can attend as well.

### **Near Term Projects**

#### **Trail Maintenance.**

**Comey's Lake.** Dave gave a report on the status of the dam. He referenced the report he recently made to the Borough and concluded the 1908 dam has serious problems and is not functioning as designed. The leveling device, which consists of a series of removable boards, is completely non-functional. The side rail has become detached and two or more of the bottom boards are missing. The 22" inlet pipe to the dam interior is completely clogged. This is the only thing keeping the lake from draining. If that pipe were to start flowing freely, the lake would drain to that level. The emergency spillway is now flowing full time and largely determining the level of the lake, although it was designed only as an emergency back up system. There is also debris around that area that needs to be cleared. Removing part of the dock deck to access that area may be necessary. Dave said attempting any major repairs to the dam itself poses serious problems. Having any personnel descend into the dam to effect repairs would be putting that person at serious risk of injury or death. He said both he and the Borough are unwilling to put

anyone at that level of risk. Further, Dave said to do a major repair of the dam would require DEP permits, which the DEP well may decline to issue. It has been general DEP policy to encourage the draining of small lakes in the state. Dave said he believes Comey's Lake is not currently on the list of DEP monitored lakes. Dave plans to have a camera inserted into the inlet pipe to better assess the condition of the pipe and blockage. Another issue Dave mentioned is the slope erosion near the dock that resulted from the recent storm overflow. The erosion has exposed the roots of a large tulip tree. If that tree were to fall, it would seriously compromise the earthen dam at that section. Dave will have the Borough bring in fill to stabilize this area.

**Tea House bridge.** Scott C. reported he and Bob have been working to repair the bridge. They have leveled the bridge and placed support material under the Princeton side of the bridge to give it a firm foundation. Scott said there should be 4 posts holding the bridge in place but one is missing and two are loose. They are constructing a bulkhead by that side of the bridge as well. Dave said we can drive boards vertically into the sands along the bulkhead to prevent the water from undercutting it. The bulkhead will need to be back filled. This could be done at the fall work party or before by a bucket brigade transporting sand and silt that has eroded downstream, then capping the fill with more durable material. Scott C. also mentioned that the fallen tree debris he cut up and removed from Camels Back Run should be moved or dispersed and this could be done at the work party.

**Eldridge Trail.** Dave said the erosion bars on the section of the trail off Pine St. need repair or replacement. One difficulty at that site is that the bars are meant to direct the flow of water away from the trail to the sides but in places the sides are higher than the trail.

**Monongahela Loop Trail.** Julie reported she has placed a sign near the raised boardwalk informing hikers that the lower section of the loop is not passable.

**Wenonah Lake Loop(northern section).** Dave reported the beaver dam there has raised the water to just under the footbridge and made the nearby muddy sections worse. He suggested we install a flow pipe in the dam to lower the water level. Dave also mentioned the recent opening up of a clogged pipe at Queens Lake which resulted in a lowering of that lake's level and the transporting of large amounts of silt and sand to the area round the north head of Wenonah Lake.

**Mantua Creek Trail. (Willow St access)** Dave said he wants to reroute a section of this access trail that Mike Mix and Tim Huhn had marked out. Dave wants to bring the trail further up off the slope and avoid having another small bridge to maintain. He said to do so a large downed tree will need to be moved. Dave said he will see if Borough equipment can be used for that.

**Mantua Creek Trail. (W. Cherry St bridge)** Dave said perhaps we should rethink the use of the bulkhead to protect the bridge. He said the stream continues to cut down in the channel and undercut the bulkhead. He said the bulkhead also created a choke point at the bridge site. He suggested an alternative would be to just use rip rap at the site to minimize undercutting and lengthen the bridge as necessary if the channel widens.

**Break Back Run Trail. (ravine erosion)** Dave said the problem is that when storm runoff flows down N Jefferson, there is no curbing at the small section of Garfield near the ravine head and the street runoff flows down the ravine carrying mass amounts of material down slope into the conservation area. Previously a tree at the head of the ravine kept the soil in place. The fix would be to install curbing or a barrier where Garfield meets N. Jefferson to keep the street storm water out of the ravine. The use of coir logs might be helpful at the site as well. Dave said the Borough can apply for a Transportation Enhancement set aside grant, which may be able to fund this and the repairs at the MCT Cherry St bridge.

**Dilks Pond.** Scott B. noted there is a tree down in the slope area of the trail and chainsaw work would be needed to clear the trail.

**Chuck Forsman Memorial dedication.** A date for the dedication has not been set. Dave will check with Laurie about a date good for the Forsman family. Dave also noted we should not do any plantings at the memorial until after the Borough has finish using heavy equipment there to fill in the nearby eroded slope. An Oct. date may be possible.

**Donations.** Scott C. brought up the question of donations, saying that someone had approached him asking the procedure for giving a donation. He said he asked Rich about the process in that instance but suggested there should be information generally available. Scott B. said we can put that info on our Facebook page and that donations will be highlighted on the new WEC website.

**Possible Eagle Scout Project.** Zach Solem attended the meeting and said he wanted to take on an Eagle project to make improvements on Break Back Run Trail. He has been in consultation with Sharon. He said he plans to widen trail sections, fix eroded trail areas, and install steps among other activities. He said he currently needs Sharon to sign off on the paperwork he needs to submit to the scout council. He also said he needs to complete the project before May 2021, when he will age out.

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

**Deposits:** \$774.00 reimbursement from WEC budget for expenses paid out of the FWT account.

**Expenses:** none

**Current balance:** \$5,347.88

MEETING ADJOURNED at 7:37 PM.  
(Motion: Kreck, Second: ream, AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Rich Dilks, Sec.