

WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
December 8, 2021

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:32 P. M. in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act at the at the Jack C. Sheppard Community Center.

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

Associate Members Present: none.

Public Guests Present: none.

The minutes of the November 2021 meeting were approved as amended.
(Motion: Ceravolo, Second: Conway, AIF)

Chairman's Report- Scott Barnes

No report

Near Term Projects

Meeting with ACE on assistance with hazardous tree removal

Sharon reported that she has been speaking with Larry Henshaw from Conrail and Burt Lopez from ACE (taking over for Jacob Sneed who is on paternity leave). There were some concerns about permits but Conrail is not requiring this (would have been \$2500). Also a liability release which has now been signed by Mayor Dominy and Scott Barnes. A publicity release for photos has been requested. ACE states that the work will be done as an in kind donation (\$12K) to the Borough. ACE and Conrail plan to meet on site next week and need to complete the work by the end of December 2021 due to their budget. When they decide on a date for the work they will contact Sharon because they want a couple of WEC members on hand to prevent any hikers from passing through the work area. Sharon will let the committee know when she gets this information.

Beaver Activity

Scott B. brought up the issue of significant flooding at the North end of Wenonah Lake that was observed in the course of Clean Communities Day 11/13/21. Maria worked that day to clear out some drainage passages from a couple of small beaver dams and after just an hour or two that water was draining well. However, since then beavers have worked to plug the gaps and flooding is back. The high bridge and much of the area East of it remains impassable. Scott B., Sharon, and Julie plan to meet on Saturday 12/11 to see what can be done to improve the situation.

Julie reported on the beaver dam just East of the concrete bridge on South Marion Avenue. It is now 3-4 feet high and has caused widening and slowing of the creek back towards the

Eldridge Trail. Julie reported new instances of small trees taken down and mature trees being gnawed. She caged a few trees near the South end of the Lions boardwalk with leftover wire from the shed. She bought 2 gallons of latex paint and intends to paint a few trees in the area on Saturday 12/11 or as soon as time allows.

Glen Trail

There was a brief discussion about removing Glen trail from the map on the WEC website (not cause for re-printing the printed map). It was agreed that the next couple of months would be the best time to try to find and mark the old trail and determine the feasibility of reopening it.

Budget for 2022

For the last 3 years WEC has requested and been granted \$7,500.00. The budget this year was exhausted and even overspent by a couple of hundred dollars. Scott C. says we will need to purchase more gravel since the borough used our supply at S. Jackson. We all agreed that the cost of wood and other construction materials will likely continue to increase and same for Princeton Hydro costs. Sharon made a motion to increase our budget request to \$8,500.00 for FY2022 and it was accepted. Scott B. will send the request to the Borough. (Motion: Ceravolo, Second: Conway, AIF)

Moonlight Hike Sunday 1/16 8:00 p.m.

It was decided to again hike the loop trail starting from East Pine Street onto the Eldridge Trail, around the Tea House and back. The next WEC meeting will be 1/12, just a few days ahead of this for any last-minute planning.

New Member

As of the January meeting, Dave Coates will be replacing Dave Kreck on the Commission. We continue to seek new members for future vacancies.

The Corner Press "We Will Regrow" T-shirt sales

Apparently the sales were about \$2,400.00 of which 25% was supposed to go to WEC and Shade Tree. Melissa Buscher contacted several people including Julie and Rich stating that Gio Postorivo said the monies needed to go to a 501c3 organization. But neither of the groups has this status. Scott B. does not know how the discussion turned out or if any money has been distributed.

TD Bank Grant

Gary Odenbrett contacted Sharon regarding a possible grant offered by TD Bank and the Arbor Day Foundation. From the website: **TD Green Space Grants** support green infrastructure development, tree planting, forestry stewardship, and community green space expansion as a way to advance environmental and economic benefits toward a low-carbon economy. Through the program, municipalities in the United States and Canada are eligible to receive \$20,000 (USD) - \$25,000 (CAD) grants in support of local forestry projects in areas of great need within a community.

Gary was interested in applying for Shade Tree but noted that no more than 50% of the money could be used to purchase trees. So he thought perhaps either WEC or Green Team could share and come up with other ideas for the grant application. We discussed other ideas based on the description, like maybe restoring Glen Trail or creating a bird-watching observation area along the de-forested MCT Trail. While discussing Julia noted that the application deadline is December 17, 2021. Sharon stated this was too tight to apply this year and she would suggest to Gary O. that we wait and apply next year.

Wenonah Park Committee

Scott B. reported that they want to re-open the park asap. Some electrical work, uneven walkways, and removal of the old benches are yet to be completed before that can happen.

The borough signed an agreement with Bartlett Tree Experts to evaluate ~80 trees and present a re-planting plan. The first meeting is scheduled for 12/14 and Gary O. will attend. Scott B. believes there will be an open meeting at some point for the town to offer ideas/opinions. Dan Cox has a map that he has taken to a few groups' meetings focused on new walkways.

Website Redesign

Scott B. is taking vacation at end of December and hopes to make progress on this effort.

No GCL News to report

OTHER

Julia reported that the "Hiker Babes" group raised \$275.00 for WEC and that the check has been received by Rich.

Scott B. reported that he received an e-mail thank you note from Rita Kulisek for our work to re-open the MCT.

Trail Maintenance.

No significant issues were identified other than the beaver activity stated above.

Friends of Wenonah Trails Account Activity since the November 2021 meeting.

Deposits:	\$275.00 Hiker Babes of South Jersey donation
	\$50.00 Bog Walk donation from Neil & Kelly Young
	\$325.00 Total

Expenses: \$ None

Current balance: \$5,396.10

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:28 PM.
(Motion: Ream, Second Conway:, AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Julie Ream (for absent Rich Dilks, Sec.)