

WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting
Minutes
November 9, 2022

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:33 P. M. 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
Scott Conway	X	
Rich Dilks (Sec.)	X	
Julia Horn (via teleconference)	X	
Dave Coates	X	
Julie Ream (V. Chair.)	X	

Associate Members Present: none.

Public Guests: none.

The minutes of the October 2022 meeting were approved as standing.
(Motion: Ream, Second: Coates, AIF)

Chairman's Report- Scott Barnes

Review

Harvest Fair Oct. 15. The WEC table at the fair was successful. Julie said all the t-shirts, except 4 XXLg, were sold as well as Greene's Pond postcards and trail guides. Total proceeds were \$420. Julie said a larger portion of the attendees were Wenonah residents than at the Farmers Market. Julie suggested we offer the last 4 t-shirts for sale in a FaceBook post and also use the post to publicly thank Elaine Goodman for creating the design for the shirts. It was decided not to order any additional shirts for now, but possibly offer them for sale again next year.

Mad Hatter's Tree Party. Oct. 23. Scott B. and Rich said the attendance for the Tree Party was down a bit from past years, largely due to the threat of rain. The rain did hold off until the end of the event and attendees were enthusiastic. Set up and take down went fairly smoothly and the use of lawn sign design trail side signs made things easier.

Fall Work Party Nov. 5. The only activity was Sharon's planting of an eastern red cedar on the Glen Trail and Canada anemones and sedges at Clay Hill. The other planned activity, clearing and brushing on the School Trail, had already been taken care of by Scott.C. There was no action taken on the dugout fort because the homeowner had promised to remove it.

Trail Maintenance

Eldridge Trail. It was noted that a 4x4 board had been placed at the sloping entrance to Eldridge Trail near Pine St. It was unclear if this was a part of Borough efforts to control storm water flow and erosion on the trail. It was clear that much more would need to be done to remedy the situation. Scott C. said he would check the area after a rain to determine water flow patterns. It was also noted the hole near the Comey's Lake dam has not yet been filled in.

Beaver Activity. Julie noted that there was beaver activity at 2 trees near the Comey's Lake dock a couple of weeks ago but nothing lately. Julie said she has seen no recent activity at Wenonah Lake either.

Garden Trail. Scott C. noted he had put down gravel on the trail in some spots a while ago. Julie will check to see how well it is holding up.

Mantua Creek Trail. Scott C. reported he has replaced the stolen rope at Clay Hill and has now replaced the rope fasteners for all 3 sections of rope with screws and pipe straps. This should make any attempts to steal the ropes much more difficult. Scott C. also reported there is a sink hole at Clay Hill near the lower bench. He said he dug the area out then filled the hole with a bag of hardened cement, gravel and dirt to stabilize it. Scott C. also said he has removed the stones from the Boy Scout Island party spot and will continue to check the area for activity.

Break Back Run Trail. Scott C. said he walked the School Trail, Dilks Pond Trail and BBR Trail. The one problem he encountered was in a ravine on BBR Trail just north of the Dilks property. There is a fallen tree there that is blocking drainage and causing water to back up on the small boardwalk there. He said the tree needs to be cut to clear the water backup.

Dilks Pond. Rich noted that Sharon and Scott C. had suggested that the large potted sycamore that Gary Odenbrett had offered us for the Glen Trail be planted at Dilks Pond since it will not be possible to transport it the Glen Trail site. It can replace the previously planted sycamore there that was cut down.

Glen Trail tree plantings. Sharon had reported by email that she had planted an eastern red cedar on Nov. 5. She said 6 additional trees will be coming from Exleys; 2 eastern white pines, 2 eastern red cedars, an eastern redbud and a flowering dogwood. Exley's will dig them Nov. 11-14 and then arrange a delivery date. Rich had spoken with Mrs. Ledu about the Borough crossing her property with heavy equipment to transport the large potted sycamore and tulip trees donated by Gary. She said the clearance on her property was only 3 feet on the side by the driveway. It was determined that would not be sufficient for the Borough heavy equipment to pass. The large sycamore can be planted at Dilks Pond instead and the tulip tree, as well as the 6 trees from Exley's will need to be transported down the trail by cart.

Dugout fort on the School Trail. Mrs. Clark had responded to our Oct. 18 letter with a phone call to Rich on Nov. 1. She said her grandson, Daniel McQue had built the fort. She said she understood the fort was on Borough property and made a firm commitment that the fort would be dismantled no later than Nov. 6. On Nov. 9, Rich inspected the site and found the fort still intact. It was agreed that Scott B. would inform Karen Sweeney at the Borough and ask Karen pass the information along to Council. We would then gather on Clean Communities Day, Nov. 12, and dismantle the fort ourselves, as long as the Borough has no objection.

Clean Communities Day, Sat. Nov 12. In addition to dismantling the fort, we plan to have volunteers go to Wenonah Lake to pick up trash around the lake shore, while the lake level has been temporarily lowered. We need to advise volunteers that conditions will be muddy and waders would be appropriate.

Signs. Julie reported that she is still waiting for an update from Sign Boy for the conservation area sign for S. Marion Ave. We are not ordering any other conservation area signs for now. Julie also reported she has received a hard copy of the Teachers' Guide to Gloucester County Watersheds from Suzanne McCarthy. The book contains the map we will use for the **watershed sign**. Dave will be able to do a high resolution scan of the map. We will need to correct the label error on the map of "Breakneck" Run to Breakback Run. We will use the designation of Greene's Lake, not Greene's Pond (used on the historic postcard). Julie will work on the sign design for Dave to format in Photoshop. Julie suggested we could also do a **beaver sign**. She suggested that grant money from Sustainable Jersey might be available to fund the signs. We should check with Sharon about that. Scott B. also said that over a year ago Mayor Dominy said that the Stewart Estate would be making funds available for maintenance and management projects, not just land acquisition. It was agreed that we should look into how this Stewart Estate funding is structured and what the rules are. This could be used for many other projects in addition to signs. Julie said she would contact Mayor Dominy for further information.

Letter to conservation area neighbors. Rich noted that based on suggestions, he added text to the letter on the prohibition of unauthorized structures and use of motorized vehicles to the letter. Julie suggested that we simply reference the Borough Ordinance rather than print the text since the ordinance is lacking clear text about some of the prohibited activities listed in the letter. It was agreed to do so. A map could be printed on the back of the letter instead. It was agreed we would like to see the ordinance amended to specifically cover activities such as unauthorized structures and trails that are not currently enumerated. Since revising an ordinance is a rather involved process, our first step would be to identify those specific changes we would want made. Scott. B said he can give the Borough the address list and will ask for assistance with printing, postage and mailing.

FaceBook public education articles. Julia reported this month's article is on light pollution, how to improve exterior lighting options and the effects of light pollution on nocturnal insects and other wildlife.

Newsletter. Scott B. said the newsletter deadline is Nov. 16. He will submit our upcoming activities. Julia also has the updated info on the Green Team. Scott B. will also highlight the completed Bog Walk with photos of volunteers. A reminder that motorized vehicles are not permitted in the conservation area will be included as well. Julie noted that Chris Chaapel has offered to write an article for us on the negative effects of light pollution on moths and other nocturnal insects. It would be timely to put that out in late spring.

Volunteer Appreciation Nigh, Dec.12 at 6:30 PM. After a two year hiatus, we will again hold a Volunteer Appreciation Night in the hour prior to our Dec. meeting. As in the past it will be a low key affair with specific volunteers invited by email.

Report: GCL public meeting on Oct. 13. Scott B. attended the meeting on behalf of the WEC. He said the 90 minute meeting began with a presentation by the DRPA. The chairman of the DRPA attended the meeting. Scott reported the GCL is now in the engineering phase, funded for 200 million dollars. The phase will last for 2.5 to 3 years with the construction phase of 3 years to follow. Funding for the construction phase has not yet been determined. It is also not clear who will operate the line. That would likely be done by a contracted entity. The projected ridership estimates are also being revised. Each municipality that wishes to be designated a quiet zone must file an application with a federal agency. The costs to the municipality for the quiet zone would be fairly small since the line operator would assume liability costs and the operational cost for the gates.

Friends of Wenonah Trails Account Activity since the October 2022 meeting.

Expenses

\$36.60 to Bob B. for Bog Walk materials.

\$92.20 to Scott C. for Clay Hill rope and misc. materials

\$128.80 total expenses.

\$0.50 Balance correction

Deposits

\$10.00 cash post card sale- Harvest Fair

\$410.00 t-shirt, post cards, trail guide sales at Harvest Fair.

\$420.00 total deposits

Current Balance: \$5,715.74

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

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Rich Dilks, Sec.