

# WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting

Minutes

March 8, 2023

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:39 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 February 2023 meeting were approved as corrected.  
(Motion: Ream, Second: Coates, AIF)

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

### **Review:**

**The 5 Mile Hike, Feb. 11, 2023.** Scott B. reported in excess of 30 people participated and many completed the entire hike, ending at the Tea House. The trails were in good shape and the weather was pleasant. The Break Back Run Trail detour was not needed as participants were comfortable traversing the more challenging section of that trail. Julie took photos that can be posted on the web site.

### **Trail Maintenance**

**Eldridge Trail/Tea House.** Julie reported the trail and Tea House were in good shape with no significant problems.

**Wenonah Lake Loop Trail.** Scott B. said the trail is in good shape, including the section at the north end of the lake. He said there has been no recent activity at the party spots.

**Wenonah Lake Kiosk.** Julie said she has 1 paper map left and plans to laminate it then post in in the Kiosk. Dave had printed a map copy on canvass but does not currently have access to equipment to print another. Julie suggested we might have Fossil print a copy of the trail map on thin Custom High Pressure Laminate. Julie said we will laminate all postings since, for now, we will not be using an enclosed acrylic fronted case. She said she will discuss longer term plans with Scott C. but feels going with enclosed panel is unlikely.

**Spring Work Party, Sat. March 25 at 9 AM.** Scott B. said one area we can focus on is the Glen Trail where we need to trim back vegetation and clear fallen limbs from in and around the old stone dam and pool. Julie suggested we could also work on the Garden Trail. She said the section of trail by the stone pool is soggy and wet. We could have the Borough deliver crushed stone to the end of the driveway, then we could haul it in wheelbarrows to the stone pool and raise the trail bed there. We could also paint tree trunks in the Garden Trail area with sand

added paint to protect them from the beavers who have been quite active in the area. Julia said she can use Sign Up Genius to promote the work party and notify volunteers. We will also promote the event on Facebook and with an email. Scott B. said we could either have volunteers go to both sites sequentially or break into 2 groups, depending on how many volunteers come out. Dave said it is important to have volunteers engaged and enthusiastic. He said providing coffee and doughnuts would be a nice gesture.

**5 Mile Trail Survey.** Scott B. said we should hold off discussion until Scott C. is available.

**Letter to Conservation Area neighbors.** Scott B. reported that Carol at the Borough is continuing to pull tax lot location addresses into our mailing list and will notify Scott B. when that process is complete. Scott B. said he has mailing envelopes and will print return address labels. When all this is in place we can gather and stuff envelopes.

**ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grant.** The grant would be up to \$1500 and has a filing date of April 17, 2023. We would need to track a minimum of 80 hours of labor for a project. Scott B. said he didn't think there was a trail project currently that would be suitable for the grant. Julia noted that one of the grant approved projects was community gardens. She said the newly formed Wenonah Native Plant Garden Club is planning to install a pollinator garden at Wenonah Lake. She said forming a partnership with the Garden Club and using the grant for the pollinator garden might be possible. Scott B. will reach out to Heidi Congalton and Elaine Goodman of the Garden Club to see if they would be interested. Julia said the Green Team can help with putting together the grant application.

**Bird Quest.** Scott B. said the GCNC Bird Quest will be held on Sat. May 6 and the gathering will be at Wheelabrator. He said the theme is Birds On The Move and a t-shirt has been designed for this year. Scott B. suggested the WEC again become a BQ sponsor for \$100. (Motion: Ream, Second: Coates, AIF)

Rich said he would again like to form a WEC BQ team that would bird at Tall Pines and the Wenonah trails. He said we can promote the WEC team and seek participants in April.

**Monthly educational articles.** Julia said the next monthly article will be on the pollinator garden planned by the Wenonah Native Plant Garden Club for Wenonah Lake.

**Lake Park Restoration Committee.** Dave reported the Borough has been awarded a CARES Act Grant, administered through the County, for \$150,000 to improve the Lake Park to be ADA Compliant. This will include the restrooms, walkways and a redesign of the park entrance. Work is expected to begin in September.

**Stone Pool on the Garden Trail.** Julie said her neighbor, Jamie Fallon, has been working at the stone pool cleaning out debris. Amy said she would be willing to donate some aquatic plants for the pool. It was agreed any plants we would use should be native species and we would need to research what species would be suitable for a small pool in a shaded spot.

**Anonymous donor and future projects.** Julie reported that an anonymous donor, who made a major contribution to the Bog Walk project, has inquired about future WEC projects he may be willing to donate to. Scott B. said there was no major project at the moment. He noted smaller projects include extending the boardwalk on a south section of the BBR Trail, improving the east bridge to the island on the MCT, adding puncheons to sections of the Wenonah Lake Loop Trail and dealing with the sink holes at Clay Hill. It was suggested we ask the donor what projects he had in mind and was willing to donate to.

**Planning Board.** Scott B. reported a variance for a fence on a corner lot on N. Princeton Ave. was approved. Scott also noted that recordings of Council meetings are now available online. Scott B. said the DRPA has responded in writing to questions about the proposed light rail that had been submitted by then Mayor Dominy They dealt with issues about the quiet zone and insurance liability. Scott B. said no significant new information was included in the DRPA's reply.

**Duckweed/algae treatment proposal for Dilks Pond.** Rich said the treating of Comey's Lake by Princeton Hydro will continue under the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 2 year contract. The WEC decided not to treat Dilks Pond this year. Julie mentioned floating plant islands as an alternative to chemical treatments and said a company called Bio Haven manufactures them. We would need to calculate the areas of Dilks Pond and Comey's Lake to have them installed. We also need to research cost and effectiveness of this strategy.

**Private boardwalk near BBR Trail.** Rich reported the Pine Acres resident that built the fire pit and private boardwalk across Break Back Run almost to the BBR Trail on the Wenonah side has now installed a string of lights on the boardwalk. The lights extend from his back yard to the end of the boardwalk. The issue of the extent of encroachment of the boardwalk onto conservation land remains unresolved.

#### **Friends of Wenonah Trails Account Activity since the February 2023 meeting.**

##### **Expenses**

None.

##### **Deposits**

None.

**Current Balance: \$5,764.39**

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:37 PM.  
(Motion: Ream, Second Coates: AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Rich Dilks, Sec.