

WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting

Minutes

April 11, 2023

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 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	X	
Dave Coates		X
Julie Ream (V. Chair.)	X	

Associate Members Present: none.

Public Guests: Heidi Congalton, Jaime Fallon, Dan McCue

The minutes of the March 2023 meeting were approved as corrected.

(Motion: Ream, Second: Conway, AIF)

Public Guests comments- The stone pool garden.

Heidi Congalton and Jaime Fallon of the Wenonah Native Plant Garden Club proposed the WNP GC take on management and maintenance of the garden at the stone pool on the Garden Trail. Jaime has been working at the stone pool, clearing out debris. The pool is now free of debris and the drain has been repaired to provide proper drainage. The WNP GC would work with the WEC, which would have final approval of all projects and plantings. Heidi hopes to form a standing committee of a minimum of 5 WNP GC volunteers for the stone pool garden project. Should that not materialize, Jaime and other volunteers would continue to work on the garden informally. Julie Ream will be WEC liaison to the WNP GC for this project. Actual trail/ bridge maintenance on the Garden Trail would remain a WEC function. Heidi and Jaime said that for now they are observing to determine what native plants from the 2011 Women's Club sponsored project are still coming up in the garden. No new plantings would be added to the area until it is determined what is already there. The first part of the restoration would be defining the specific area targeted, and then removing invasive plants, such as vines strangling shrubs. Any new plantings of native would not take place until fall. Heidi and Jaime said they would not request any signage to commemorate this WNP GC project. Heidi did report that Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve offers spring and fall grants of 100 native plants (total value (\$400-\$600). One condition of the grant would be required signage referencing Bowman's Hill at the site. The size and design of the sign required would need to be looked into. The deadline for filing for the fall plants is June 1. Jaime also said she has some aquatic plants she could plant in the pool itself. They would not be winter hearty and would not escape into the surrounding wetlands environment.

Chairman's Report- Scott Barnes

Review:

Spring Work Party, March 25. The work party at the Garden Trail accomplished a number of tasks. The lack of drainage at the site was remediated by digging drainage channels (stone wrapped in a cloth barrier and then recovered). The area now appears much drier. Also, trees

were painted to protect from beaver damage and lumber for the bridge improvements was transported to the site. It was noted the trail camera near the old dam site is still in place.

Letter to conservation area neighbors. Scott B. reported that the letters had been mailed out. To date we are unaware of any mail returns. It was noted that list of addresses and current property owners that Scott B. compiled can be used for future mailings.

Dog incident on the trails. Jaime Fallon reported that she and her dog were attacked on the Eldridge Trail by an unleashed boxer recently. The dog's owner seemed unconcerned about the incident. Jaime subsequently filed a police report with the Mantua Police. Scott C. said it would be helpful if the police had greater familiarity with the trail system. He suggested possibly taking some police on an orientation tour. In light of the increased trail usage by the public, providing the police with a map showing the many entrances and access trails would be helpful, particularly should there be a need for first responders. Scott B. will speak to the Borough Council public safety liaison about this issue.

Trail Maintenance

Garden Trail. Scott C. reported that of the 5 small bridges on the Garden Trail, 4 needed repair. Scott C. has completed repairs on all 4 bridges.

Break Back Run Trail. Scott C. reported that he has raised and repaired the bridge at the southern end of the BBR Trail.

Eldridge Trail. Scott C. also has raised and repaired the small bridge near the intersection with the Monongahela Brook Trail.

Clay Hill. Scott C. said he is looking into a fix for the bulkhead and the sinkholes that result from undercutting currents. He said he will be conferring with Bob on solutions. He will also check with Dave K. as there may be permit requirements for work on the bulkhead. Scott C. said he just wants to do a repair of existing structures and not raise the level of the bulkhead.

Wenonah Like Loop Trail. The north end of the loop is currently walkable, the puncheon and boards on the northwest section of the trail are in need of an upgrade. This could be the next WEC trail project.

Unaccounted for lumber. Scott C. noted we have 3" planks and 4x4's stored near the WEC shed at the mulch yard. He said that 7 of the 4x4's are missing. He said if the Borough did not take them (he'll check with Dave K), then they have been stolen. Scott C. took the remaining lumber and moved it to a less conspicuous location in the yard and placed older wood on top. It was noted that a large number of people have access to the mulch yard and the lumber could possibly be stored at the Borough garage. It was also suggested Brian could mount a camera at the yard.

Kiosk. Julie noted and demonstrated metal fasteners that can attach a sheet of acrylic to the kiosk window through small holes drilled through the acrylic. We will need to buy a thicker replacement acrylic and Julie will look into prices. The size needed would be 30" x 42".

Dilks Pond duckweed. Rich said he would prefer to see how the pond responds this summer to the halting of chemical treatments before looking into any alternative duckweed/algae control methods, such as floating plant islands.

ANJEC Open Space Stewardship Grant for Wenonah Lake pollinator garden, \$1500. This grant would fund the WNP GC project of creating a pollinator garden at Wenonah Lake under the aegis of the WEC. Julia reported that she has completed the grant application and is gathering the support letters. She will file the grant application next week. We should be informed about the grant award outcome in approximately 1 month. The WEC will do publicity to promote the garden project.

Bird Quest- WEC team, May 6. The WEC has sponsored BQ with a \$100 donation. Rich said he hopes we will again field a WEC team that birds the Wenonah trails and Tall Pines. Rich said he will write up a promotional blurb for an email and Facebook and a flier for the WEC team. He will also handle registering team members. Rich did say he felt someone else should be team coordinator in the field this year to do the species tally and report the species online at the end of the morning.

5 Mile Trail Survey. Scott B. said we should focus on the Wenonah Lake Loop Trail and Break Back Run Trail for now. We will need to set a date for the walking survey.

Monthly Facebook article. Julia reported she plans to do a planting for pollinators, spring themed article for this month.

Camel's Back Loop adopt-a trail. Sharon said she has not heard from Chris Better recently and is unsure if Gateway is planning any activity for Volunteer Day. She will reach out to Chris.

Beaver field trip. Julie noted that neither she nor Rich have heard from Gateway about doing a beaver field trip this spring. Julie will contact Gateway to confirm if they will do the field trip this year.

Woman's Club "Friend of Wenonah Market". Scott B. said he received a general announcement from the Woman's Club that they were initiating a Friend of Wenonah Market donation request. The WEC decided to take no action at present. It was noted the Farmers Market is still offering civic organizations free table space.

WEC DropBox. Scott B. said that DropBox is instituting an additional layer to its login procedure. All WEC member use the same login. Scott B. will send out the details for the new procedure to all WEC members.

Borough cloud based data storage. Julia reported that the Borough is initiating a Community Wellness campaign. This will involve a Borough account on Google Docs in which all Wenonah agencies and organizations will have their own folders with storage space. This should make communications and sharing among these organizations much easier.

Recruiting a new WEC member. Dan McCue attended the meeting and expressed an interest in serving on the WEC. Dan has been WEC volunteer for some time and participated in numerous WEC work parties and activities. Sharon is planning to step down when her term ends, which she believes is this Dec. Scott. B. will confirm the term dates and procedures, since WEC members are mayoral appointments.

Motorcycle on the trails. Scott C. reported someone has been riding a medium size motorcycle/dirt bike on the trails. He has encountered the rider on the Mantua Creek Trail, including at Clay Hill, and has seen tracks on Break Back Run Trail as well. Scott C. also spoke to a police officer about the incidents. The officer said he would report it to his sergeant. Julie said we could put up the mini Rules of the Trails signs at the poster shelters, so riders could not use the "I didn't know" excuse if caught.

Sycamore tree. Julie and Rich received an email from Gary Odenbrett asking if we still had a use for the potted sycamore in the park that was too large to be moved to the Glen Trail. The WEC wishes to see the tree planted at Dilks Pond. Rich will email Gary and let him know.

Friends of Wenonah Trails Account Activity since the March 2023 meeting.

Deposits

\$1,000.00 anonymous donation for trail maintenance from a WEC supporter.

Expenses

\$82.81 to Scott B. for postage and mailing costs of conservation letter.

\$100.00 Bird Quest sponsorship to GCNC.

\$143.12 to Scott C. for screws and bolts.

\$325.93 total expenses.

Current Balance: \$6,438.46

MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:17 PM.

(Motion: Ream, Second Horn: AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Rich Dilks, Sec.