

# WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting

Minutes

March 13, 2024

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:32 PM in accordance with the Open Public Meeting 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	
Dan McCue	X	
Rich Dilks (Sec.)	X	
Julia Horn	X	
Dave Coates	X	
Shane Walsh	X	
Matt Wood	X	

## **Associate Members Present:**

**Public Guests:** Alex Pozza, Heidi Congalton, Mayor Jessica Doheny, Councilman Jonathan Barbato.

The minutes of the February 2024 meeting were approved as standing.

(Motion: Horn, Second: Walsh, AIF)

## **Public Comments.**

Mayor Doheny welcomed the new members of the WEC and expressed thanks to the WEC for its many projects and trail maintenance efforts. She said some residents had reported some trail issues, specifically muddy areas on Eldridge Trail, Mantua Creek Trail and the north end of Wenonah Lake Trail (punches needed) and some downed trees. She said the Borough would like to offer any assistance it can as the WEC revitalizes its trail maintenance program after the loss of Scott Conway. Scott B. said we can begin to address these issues with the Spring Work Party on March 23. Scott also mentioned the erosion problem on the Eldridge Trail slope at Pine St. He said he understands the Borough will need to address erosion from street runoff before we can stabilize the trail there. The Mayor said she would confer with Borough Engineer, Dave Kreck on this matter.

Heidi Congalton referenced the tree planting planned in memory of Scott Conway at the Stone Pool Garden area. She presented a list of suitable native tree species for lowland forest and wet areas. She said these trees are available from the Go Native Tree Farm and other growers. She has offered to pick up and deliver the tree for us.

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

### **Review**

**5 Mile Hike, Sat. 2/24.** Scott reported that the hike was well attended with approximately 25 participants. Scott said this year most participants completed the entire hike making it all the way to the Tea House.

## **Trail Maintenance**

**Mantua Creek Trail.** Scott mentioned that Dave Kreck plans to fill in the sinkhole near Cherry St and also plans to clear some downed trees. Dave mentioned the rail trail section of MCT near Mantua Ave. He said water was pooling in the trail there and we would need to add more stone to the path to build it up. This could be a Spring Work Party project. The muddy area by the small bridge at Mullens was also mentioned as needing more stone (immediate fix) and eventually an extension of the bridge there.

**Tea House.** Things are generally in good shape. No recent graffiti. Dave said he would check the trash can and empty it ,if needed.

**Eldridge Trail.** The Pine St. erosion problem needs to be addresses (see Public Comments above).

**Wenonah Lake Loop Trail.** Scott reported he had been contacted by the Lake Assoc. about some trail issues. He replied the principal areas of concern were muddy areas at the north end of the lake, the bench on the west shore needing a new seat, a bridge on the west side needing to be rebuilt and the small bridge nearest Maple St ,which was broken by a fallen tree. The WEC will be addressing these issues in future.

**Spring Work Party, Sat. March23 at 9 AM.** The work party will focus on laying crushed stone to build up the trail rails on Mantua Creek Trail and also at the muddy spot at the small bridge near Mullens. Matt suggested that using 2 sizes of crushed stone would make help make the walkway more stable. There could be bottom layer of larger stones with smaller stones laid on top. Matt will check with the Borough about availability of stone for the work party. Participants should bring wheelbarrows, rakes and flat shovels

**WEC 2023 budget.** Scott announced that the Borough has agreed to encumber the entire balance remaining in the 2023 budget of \$2,471.93. The Borough has stipulated those fund must be spent by March 2024.Scott reported he has ordered the 2 Conservation Area signs from Sign Boy. These would be future replacements of signs at Maple St. and Mantua Ave. The total cost of \$650 will come from the 2023 budget.

**Educational articles.** Julia mentioned she has posted an article for March on watersheds and how the public can help protect watersheds and water quality.

**Educational signs project.** Julia reported that she has received an updated quote from Fossil for the three proposed signs. The signs' cost would be \$4183. With shipping, the full cost would be \$4672. She said Fossil requests a down payment of \$2803 with a balance due of \$1869. Fossil would then begin the design process based on the text and graphics we provide. The signs would measure 24"H x 30" L. Rich suggested we use the remainder of the 2023 budget ( approximately \$1821) supplemented by funds from the Friends of Wenonah Trails account to make payment.

(Motion: Coates, Second: McCue, AIF)

**Bird Quest.** Scott said the GCNC has again requested that the WEC be a sponsor for Bird Quest on May 4.The WEC has a long tradition of sponsoring Bird Quest and approved a sponsorship donation of \$100.

(Motion: Coates, Second: Horn, AIF)

**Joint meeting of Wenonah, Deptford and West Deptford EC's.** Scott reported that Don Evans of the Deptford E.C. has proposed the 3 EC's meet jointly to discuss common issues and areas of cooperation. The WEC decided that Scott should work with Don to pick a date and time for the meeting. Several WEC members expressed an interest in attending. Scott said one

possible project with Deptford would be a trail on the upper Monongahela in Deptford that would connect to the Monongahela Loop Trail.

**Ice Cream Social.** Scott said the WEC has received an invitation to take part in the Ice Cream Social at Wenonah School. on May 6. The WEC has taken part in past years but not in recent years. It was decided to decline to take part.

**New chain saw received.** Dave had picked up the new 40” battery powered Stihl chain from the dealer in Delaware and brought it to the meeting. The saw had been purchased by Scott Conway but needed a part before we could pick it up. It was decided the saw, the 2 Stihl batteries and the charger will be stored in the WEC shed.

**Request for a beaver crossing sign on Maple St.** Rich reported that he received a call from a Natalie Pool of Oak Valley. She told him that recently a beaver was killed by traffic on Maple St nest the Wenonah Lake Dam. She said she has contacted Borough of Wenonah and Deptford Township about installing beaver crossing signs at that location. Rich told her that any street signage there would need to be done by the municipality, but that the WEC is supportive of the idea. It was noted that snapping turtles are also at risk from traffic in the area.

#### **Friends of Wenonah Trails Account Activity since the February 2024 meeting.**

##### **Deposits**

none

##### **Expenses**

none.

**Current Balance: \$14,114.42**

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:33 PM.

(Motion: Horn, Second Coates

: AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Rich Dilks, Sec.