

WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting

Minutes

October 9, 2024

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:30 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: none.

Public Guests: none.

The minutes of the September 2024 meeting were approved as corrected.

(Motion: Wood, Second: Coates, AIF)

Chairperson's Report- Scott Barnes

Review

ANJEC Environmental Congress. Chairperson Scott Barnes attended the ANJEC Congress on Sept. 29 and reported on the various speakers and topics discussed. One focus of the event was dealing with plastic waste and New Jersey's recently enacted plastics ban law was held up as a model for other states. David Robinson, NJ State Climatologist, was one of the speakers at the Congress and reported that climate change will lead to higher temperatures, increased precipitation and sea level rise in NJ that could reach 5 feet by 2100. These changes would give utilities and insurance companies increased power in determining future land use. He said there is still time for remediation of climate changes that are now occurring but action needs to be taken to reduce more drastic future changes that could occur after 2050. Another speaker from the Burlington County recycling facility spoke and said that recycling of #1 or #2 plastics can be done very efficiently. Another speaker talked about the problem of micro plastics in the body. A speaker from the NJ Invasive Species Strike Force discussed biodiversity. One point he made was that deer are a major problem because they over graze natives while avoiding invasives. If deer foraging could be better controlled, native plants would have a much better chance of competing with invasives. Another topic discussed was that that model of "weed" free monoculture lawns is out of date and should be replaced with more diverse plantings. Scott said the NJ DEP Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette also spoke at the Congress.

Scott Conway sign dedication. Scott Barnes noted that the WEC held the Scott Conway sign dedication at the Bog Walk and a memorial tree planting at the nearby Stone Pool Garden on Sat. Oct. 5 at 1:00 PM. The ceremonies were a fitting tribute to Scott Conway. Approximately 25 people attended, including WEC members, Scott C.'s family and friends, and well wishes from the community.

Lions Club offers to assist on trail projects. Scott B. reported that Dan Ceravolo of the Wenonah Lions Club has told him the Lions are interested in assisting us with trail projects. We discussed possible projects including the replacement or upgrading of the 4 bridges on the Wenonah Lake Loop Trail on the west side of the lake. We would need to develop a plan and design for each of the bridges, then check to see if we have the materials needed. Scott said he would reach out to volunteer John House for his input on the project. Another possible project suggested by Matt was the removal of the fallen tree in Dilks pond. The Lions may be able to assist with that. Limbs could be cut with a chain saw. Julia said she had a canoe that could help provide access.

Trail Maintenance.

Shed area on S. Garfield. Matt noted the area adjacent to the shed where the WEC stores its lumber is being overrun with poison ivy.

Eldridge Trail. Julia noted there was a cracked board on the boardwalk that needs to be replaced. Dave said there is a medium sized step-over tree that should be cut prior to the Mad Hatter's Tree Party on Oct. 27.

Mantua Creek Trail. Scott B. said that Dave Kreck agreed to look at the washout/sinkhole area at Clay Hill and advise us on remedies.

Mad Hatter's Tree Party & work party. It was decided to organize a work party for Sat. Oct. 26 at 9 AM in advance of the MHTP to sweep and spruce up the Tea House amphitheater and do any needed trail trimming, such as on the raised boardwalk. It was agreed the work party would also tackle installing the 3rd educational sign at Wenonah Lake (Matt and Dave have volunteered to do this) and the planting of the donated Ohio Buckeye at Dilks pond.

Possible equipment purchases. Dave suggested we purchase a 2nd weed whacker, saying that would be very useful for dealing with seasonal vegetation. It would be a battery operated Stihl. The batteries are interchangeable on all our Stihl equipment. It was also suggested we look into buying a battery operated hedge trimmer, that could deal with vegetation at heights that are not practical for a weed whacker. Dave said he would do some research on these items. We currently have \$3,500 available from our budget that could fund these purchases.

Fall Work Party, Nov.2 at 9:00 AM. One suggestion for the work party was to do a walk through examination and evaluation of the Wenonah Lake Loop Trail bridges with members of the Lions. We need to develop a design for the bridges and determine what materials are needed. At minimum most of the bridges will need redecking. Creating a wider walking surface is also desirable. There is also debris in the stream feeding Wenonah Lake that could be removed at the work party. Another project for the work party would be weed whacking the School Trail. It was also mentioned that we could sweep and clear the concrete steps on the west side of Comey's Lake.

GC Light Rail. Scott reported that Camden County Commissioner Jeffrey Nash (a booster of the project) has stated that bids for the final engineering phase and construction will be going out soon.

Green Team. Julia said that the Green Team is currently looking for more people to get involved. Scott suggested that the "Skip The Stuff" proposal for restaurants and take out eateries, by which they would not include unsolicited paper and plastic items (napkins, plastic utensils, etc.) with meals could be instituted in Wenonah as a GT project. This would include getting local businesses on board and possibly a new ordinance.

Annual WEC picnic date and time changed. At the Borough's request, we have changed the annual WEC picnic from the 2nd Weds. in June to the 2nd Weds. in May. It was also suggested

that the May picnic begin at 6:00 PM and the May meeting begin at 7:00 PM. Advancing both events by a half hour would give us at least an hour of daylight to conduct the meeting. Rich will confirm these changes with the Borough.

Friends of Wenonah Trails Account Activity since the September 2024 meeting.

No deposits

Expenses

\$125.00 fee for Scott to attend the ANJEC Congress.

\$143.86 DropBox fees

\$268.86- Total expenses

Current Balance: \$9,528.76

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:24 PM.

(Motion: Horn, Second: Wood: AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Rich Dilks, Sec.