

# WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting  
Minutes  
November 13, 2024

Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:31 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 October 2024 meeting were approved as corrected.  
(Motion: Coates, Second: Wood, AIF)

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

### **Review**

**Mad Hatter's Tree Party, Sun. Oct. 27.** Scott reported this Gloucester County Nature Club/WEC event was well attended and participants were enthusiastic. The weather was sunny and seasonable, and there was good autumn foliage color along the Eldridge Trail. Rich reported we received \$70 in trail guide sales and donations.

**Work party Oct. 20.** Matt conducted a shed inventory that includes various nuts, bolts screws and two pairs of waders.

**Work party Oct.26.** The area around the Tea House was spruced up in anticipation of the Mad hatter's Tree Party and the Ohio buckeye tree was planted at Dilks Pond. Dave has been watering it during the current drought.

**Fall Work Party, Nov.2.** Matt reported he worked at the W. Cherry St. access trail, repairing a planked section and using additional wood to adjust the boards to be even. He said some plywood sections should be replaced and that some work still needs to be done on the small foot bridge. Scott and Dan were at Wenonah Lake and reported minimal trash on the trails there. They said there are trees to be cut at the lake and they are accessible now that the lake level is lowered. It is believed the Borough's permit would require the lake level to be raised to normal in Feb. 2025.

**Wenonah Woman's Club Friendship Dinner, Nov. 11.** Scott attended on behalf of the WEC and gave a brief presentation on our mission and projects.

### **Trail Maintenance.**

**Wenonah Lake.** Scott said he had reached out to trail volunteer John House but discovered that John has moved out of the area and is unavailable to assist with the lake trail projects. Scott said that Bob will be working with us on these projects. He said he and Bob plan to do an inspection of the bridges on the trail section on the lake's western shore. Scott will also reach

out to Lion, Dan Ceravolo. We need to assess what materials we will need to upgrade and repair the bridges, and then to determine the cost of materials. We would like to have volunteer participation from the Lions Club. Dan has expressed interest in assisting with repairs to the raised boardwalk on the Eldridge Trail as well. Assistance from the Lions and the American Legion with cutting and removing to shore the trees in Wenonah Lake would also be very helpful. Scott will reach out to John Forren. Matt suggested that the trees could be removed from the lake to the immediate shore or some could be used to buttress and stabilized sections of the trail where needed.

**Dilks Pond.** Dave brought up the issue of the fallen pine tree by the bench at Dilks Pond. He said the esthetics of that section of shore are degraded by the fallen tree in the water there. He said he spoke to Gary O. about hiring a service to remove the tree. He said Gary suggested the cost could be about \$1,000. Matt said we should wait to get a cost figure from Bob for the lake trail projects to determine how much funding we would have for the tree removal. We could then get a quote.

**South West Ave. trees down.** Julia reported (by email) that there was a down tree, a medium size step-over, and a leaning tree on the S. West Ave. Trail. The tree across the path could easily be removed with a chain saw. The leaning tree would require further evaluation.

**Glen Trail.** Scott and Dan cleared out vegetation overgrowth along the Glen Trail. The bench by the small dam had graffiti in it and would need to be painted over. Dave said he could paint the graffiti with a green paint that is compatible with the green the bench is currently painted.

**Break Back Run Trail.** Dave reported that young people have been building a "fort" with a blue tarp and various items along BBR Trail. He said he would take some photos for us before we decide on any action there.

**Comey's Lake.** It was mentioned that Debbie Mix reported that some kids were making a "fort" near Comey's Lake and that she saw a tarp and collected firewood.

**Clean Communities Day, Nov. 9.** Julia and Dan did a trash cleanup along the railroad tracks. Among the items they found were a bike, a lawn chair, a ceramic horse and other small ceramic figures.

**Possible equipment purchases.** Dave reported the STIHL weed whacker and charger would cost \$1200. He said there was also an extension for high branches that sold for about \$600-700. Dave said the weed whacker would be a useful purchase but that the extension may not really be needed by us.

**2024 budget balance.** We still have \$3500 in our current budget. These funds could be used for a combination of the Wenonah Lake trail bridges, Dilks Pond tree removal and/or new equipment purchases. We will need to identify costs for each of these items before deciding how to spend the funds.

**Stewart Estate plaque on Mantua Ave.** Scott said he will talk to Bob about how best to stabilize the plaque. The ground is currently eroding under the plaque and its cement base, and it is in danger of coming loose and tumbling down the hill.

**New WEC web site.** Scot said we could look into hiring a professional for the site redesign. Scott said one possibility was to hire the person who recently redesigned the GCNC web site. Matt said the new site should have an updated donations page. Scott also mentioned streamlining the process for posting our minutes on the site.

**WEC 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary coming in 2025.** Scott mentioned the WEC (founded in 1975) will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2025. Its predecessor, The Wenonah Woodlands Council, was founded in 1965. This is an opportunity to promote our mission and projects as part of the anniversary.

**WEC Volunteer Appreciation Night.** We will hold our annual appreciation night gathering the evening of our Dec 11 meeting. Scott will send out an email to organize the event closer to the time.

**Geocaching policy.** Matt reported he is researching geocaching policies at other parks and public locations and hopes to develop a policy the WEC/Borough can adopt for the conservation area. He plans to report on this next month.

**New forms/procedures for use of Borough facilities.** Scott reported the Borough is revising its forms and procedures for organizations to use Borough facilities. The Borough is planning a presentation to organizations on Nov. 21, after the council meeting on that date. Scott will attend.

**WEC FaceBook Page.** Scott said that colleagues he spoke with at the ANJEC Congress emphasized that organizations need to have a consistent public identity. Consequently, he proposed that our FaceBook Page be renamed *Wenonah Environmental Commission* from the current *Friends of Wenonah Trails*, so that the public clearly understands the Facebook Page represents the WEC. There was general agreement on this issue. Scott said he would speak with Julia about doing this.

**Joint meeting with the Deptford and West Deptford EC's.** Scott reported there was nothing new on that proposal.

**Moonlight Hike.** Our annual Moonlight Hike will take place on Sat. Jan.11. Details will be discussed at the Dec. meeting.

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

#### **Deposits**

\$257.94 donation from Byron Hapner (technically still in PayPal. Scott to transfer)

\$70.00 trail guide sales and donations from MHTP

\$327.94 total deposits.

#### **Expenses**

None.

**Current Balance: \$9,856.70**

MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:30 PM.

(Motion: McCue, Second: Coates: AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,  
Rich Dilks, Sec.