**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP**

 **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

 **December 12, 2022**

 **Regular/Zoom Meeting**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Mrs. Emmetts via Zoom, Ms. Coriston, Mr. Szabo, Mrs. Tracey, Mrs. Tsadilas, Ms. Wills, Mr. Dvorsky via Zoom

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mr. Branagan, Mrs. Branagan

Mrs. Wunder called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. with the statement that this meeting is in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Regular meetings are held on the second Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m., at the Stillwater Township Municipal Building located in Middleville, New Jersey.

The flag was saluted and roll call taken.

Vice-Chairperson Dvorsky ran the meeting in the absence of Mr. Branagan, Chairperson.

**Minutes**

Mr. Szabo made a **motion** to approve the minutes of 11/14/22, seconded by Ms. Coriston.

**Roll Call Vote**: Ms. Coriston, yes, Mrs. Emmetts, abstain, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mrs. Tsadilas, yes, Ms. Wills, yes, Mr. Dvorsky, yes

**Bills**

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to approve the following bills, pending availability of funds, seconded by Mr. Dvorsky:

Secretary:$240.00

Eurofins (2022 Stream Water Testing): $2,945.00

The EC provided authorization for Mrs. Wunder to sign the Eurofins purchase order in the absence of Mr. Branagan.

**Roll Call Vote**: Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Ms. Coriston, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mrs. Tsadilas, yes, Ms. Wills, yes, Mr. Dvorsky, yes

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:13 p.m.**

**There being no members of the public present, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:13 p.m.**

**Correspondence**

**NJDEP Application**: Robert L. Campbell Associates, Inc., application for General Permit #24, Block 3701, Lot 11, alteration of a malfunctioning septic system. Mr. Szabo noted the maps included with the notifications are too small to make any kind of determination. On 11/18/22, he mailed the notice and map for Block 505, Lot 16 back to the NJDEP indicating such and requesting a legible copy of the plan be provided to either him or the township. As of this meeting he has not received a response.

**Resignation Email dated 11/30/22**: EC Member Sara Branagan – Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to accept the resignation with regret, seconded by Mrs. Tsadilas.

**Roll Call Vote**: Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Ms. Coriston, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mrs. Tsadilas, yes, Ms. Wills, yes, Mr. Dvorsky, yes

**Old Business**

**Biochar Update:**

The EC reviewed the proposed biochar ordinance drafted by Township Attorney Vex. Following the lengthy discussion, it was determined the following minor revision recommendations would be made to the Township Committee for their next meeting:

Section 1, page 2: Remove Section A. completely and re-letter B, C, D to A, B, and C. Remove “any” in original section B. and replace it with “aqua filter.”

Section 1, page 2, 468-3 Enforcement: Remove Sussex County Board of Health and State Police as enforcing agents.

Mrs. Wunder would include a cover letter with the changes highlighted on a copy of the draft.

Mrs. Tsadilas made a **motion** to approve the revisions as discussed to be forwarded to the Township Committee, seconded by Ms. Coriston.

**Roll Call Vote**: Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Ms. Coriston, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mrs. Tsadilas, yes, Ms. Wills, yes, Mr. Dvorsky, yes

**2022 Annual Report:**

Following EC review of the 2022 Annual Report, Mr. Dvorsky made a **motion** to forward the report to the Township Committee, seconded by Mrs. Emmetts as follows:

Stillwater Township

Environmental Commission

Annual Report

2022

During the course of 2022, the Stillwater Township Environmental Commission engaged in the following activities:

Met on meeting dates during the course of the year in the Municipal Building in person or via zoom and entertained public comment.

Walked properties and completed site survey forms evaluating each for the Planning and Zoning Boards.

Reviewed and prepared an annual budget.

Conducted stream water testing of ten sites in the township.

Researched Biochar product and worked to develop a plan for the proper disposal of spent Biochar and drafted a letter to the Stillwater Township Committee requesting an ordinance regulating its disposal.

Reviewed the proposed Biochar ordinance drafted by the Township Committee, making recommendations for minor changes for introduction and adoption.

Worked to develop a carry-in/carry-out program for trash at Veterans Memorial Park to be implemented during the spring 2023.

Worked with Stillwater School on a TREX Plastic Film Recycling Program, with the placement of two collection receptacles at the Municipal Building and Community Center. A member collects the film from the receptacles one to two times per week for the school.

Monitored threatened and endangered species in the community.

Recycled monofilament fishing lines at various township locations.

Members attended Planning Board meetings in connection with developing a new Master Plan.

Researched obtaining bear-proof garbage receptacles for Veterans Memorial Park.

Members attended webinars on various subjects.

Appointed new members to the Commission.

Members cleaned the tree swallow nests and repaired a damaged one at Veterans Memorial Park.

Reviewed a tree ordinance and provided the township with a list of native trees.

Maintained membership in ANJEC.

Worked on a solution to the trash problem at Veterans Memorial Park.

Worked in conjunction with the DPW to have the dilapidated recycling shed removed from Veterans Memorial Park.

Created new signage for Veterans Memorial Park.

Members attended Swartswood Lakes Grant Status meeting.

Members attended Coalition of Lakes Associations (COLA) meetings.

Members attended the Nature Conservancy/Ridge and Valley Conservancy Kittatinny region workshops focusing on the NJ Blueprint Map, organization collaboration and group discussion.

**Roll Call Vote**: Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Ms. Coriston, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mrs. Tsadilas, yes, Ms. Wills, yes, Mr. Dvorsky, yes

**TREX Plastic Film Program Update:**

Ms. Coriston is very pleased with the progress of the program. She is emptying the two municipal receptacles one to two times per week and bringing the collection to the school. A reminder notice was posted on Facebook for the disposal of bubble wrap, etc. following the holidays. The receptacle at the Community Center was missing for a short while but has been returned, possibly moved during the tree lighting ceremony.

**Stream Water Testing:**

The water testing results were received and distributed to the EC. The results were also forwarded to Bob Lippencott for his review and input. Mrs. Wunder included the full water testing record for comparison. The EC members asked for the results to be sent to Nathaniel Sajdak as well.

**New Business**

**Site Survey Inspection – Zoning Board:**

Mr. Szabo and Mrs. Tsadilas conducted the site survey for the following property: Block 3804, Lot 1.03, application to construct a driveway exceeding 15% slopes and reduced sight distance of 215’ is proposed with 250’ required.

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to accept the site survey, seconded by Mr. Dvorsky.

**Roll Call Vote**: Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Ms. Coriston, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mrs. Tsadilas, yes, Ms. Wills, yes, Mr. Dvorsky, yes

**Ms. Coriston – New Employment Position**:

Ms. Coriston indicated that she previously worked for Strauss News and has been asked to return. She has reviewed the township codes and could not find any regulation prohibiting such, however she wanted to inform the EC and provide full disclosure for ethical purposes. She would not be providing municipal coverage in the position but would do other stories such as features, informative reading, etc. and has laid very strict ground rules for her return to the newspaper. Ms. Chammings did not think there was a regulation preventing Ms. Coriston from accepting the position and thought it would be fine from a township standpoint. Mr. Szabo stated as long as Ms. Coriston did not report on environmental matters there should not be an issue. He suggested Ms. Coriston contact the Township Attorney if she felt apprehensive in any way for her own protection.

**Volunteer/Member Recognition**:

-Mr. Szabo and Mrs. Tsadilas for conducting the site survey.

-Mrs. Emmetts for drafting the 2022 Annual Report.

-Mrs. Branagan was recognized for her years of service and never-ending contributions to the EC during that service. The EC wished her well in the future.

**Endangered and Threatened Species Sightings**: None

**Swartswood Lakes and Watershed Association (SLWA):**

Mrs. Emmetts reported the SLWA was awarded a grant for $360,000 from the NJDEP for weed removal and hydro-raking. Mr. Sprague spearheaded the grant. The SLWA is approaching over $2 million in grant funding over the years. They are currently working on a grant to develop a watershed management plan.

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 8:10 p.m.**

**There being no members of the public present, this portion of the meeting was closed to the public at 8:10 p.m.**

**Planning Board Liaison Report**: Ms. Chammings

The Planning Board is moving forward with the acceptance of the final draft of the Master Plan. The next step would be to notify neighboring municipalities.

-Engineers were interviewed for the Board Engineer position on December 7th and a recommendation will be forthcoming.

-Board Secretary Alfia Schemm has announced her retirement for the end of this year.

-The board secretary position has been advertised with two applications received at this point.

**Township Committee Liaison Report**: Committeewoman Chammings

-A moment of silence was held at the December 6th meeting for the passing of Tonya Stark. The Township Committee and Recreation Commission have proposed a memorial garden in her honor at the Community Center with native plants being donated. Mrs. Stark was very involved in community service including the Historical Society, Planning Board, Recreation Commission and Environmental Commission.

-The Township Committee is continuing to move forward with tax foreclosures.

-A proclamation was read designating December 6th as Timmy Lee Fisher Day.

-DPW Supervisor Josh Raff has resigned and will be taking a new position in Hardyston. He was an asset to the township.

-DPW Position for Mechanic/Truck Driver has been advertised.

-Ms. Chammings recommended the appointment of Kevin Carhart as Deputy Office of Emergency Management Coordinator.

-An EC liaison to the Planning Board is needed as Mr. Branagan will be leaving the position as of December 31st. Ms. Chammings asked EC members to consider taking the position.

With no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Dvorsky made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m., seconded by Mr. Szabo. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy Wunder, Secretary