**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP**

 **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

 **February 8, 2023**

 **Regular Meeting**

 **In-Person/Zoom**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Ms. Coriston, Mr. Szabo, Mrs. Tsadilas, Ms. Wills, Mr. Dvorsky, Mr. Branagan

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mrs. Emmetts, Mrs. Tracey

Mr. Branagan called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the statement that this meeting is in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act. This was a rescheduled meeting of the Stillwater Township Environmental Commission due to the holiday. 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.

**Minutes**

Mr. Szabo made a **motion** to approve the minutes of 1/9/23, seconded by Mr. Dvorsky.

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

Branagan, yes

**Bills**

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

 Secretary: $240.00

 2023 ANJEC Membership (9 members): $470.00

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

Branagan, yes

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:05 p.m.**

**There being no one from the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:05 p.m.**

**Correspondence: -**Resolution 2023-28 Township of Stillwater Establishing Committee Departments

-Citizen Leadership Form: David Mattes

*Dr. Mattes was present at the meeting. He submitted a Citizen Leadership Form and is interested in serving on the EC. Dr. Mattes stated he is semi-retired and now has the time to devote to the community. He owns a local farm, has a biology degree, and is part of a family-owned ecology business based out of Central America. Mr. Szabo indicated he has known Dr. Mattes for many years as a physician and a friend; and has welcomed him several times as a guest speaker for the Taxpayers Association. Dr. Mattes is interested in environmental matters and has been involved in a dam issue and in communicating with the State of New Jersey. Mr. Szabo felt Dr. Mattes would be an asset to the EC.*

Mr. Branagan made a **motion** to recommend to the Township Committee the appointment of Dr. Mattes to the EC, seconded by Ms. Coriston.

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

Branagan, yes

**Old Business**

**Biochar Update:**

Biochar Ordinance 2023-02 was adopted by the Township Committee on February 7, 2023. Mr. Branagan thanked and commended Ms. Coriston for her work on the matter. The ordinance may be the very first of its kind. Enforcement of the ordinance would be complaint generated. The EC recommended that a copy of the ordinance be sent to each lake association located in Stillwater, including Fairview Lake, Lower Crandon Lake, Paulinskill Lake, Plymouth Lake and Swartswood Lake. Ms. Chammings suggested using the cover letter originally sent to the Township Committee from the EC written by Ms. Coriston. The EC felt the letter should come from the Township Committee, and Ms. Chammings agreed to work on it with Mrs. Wunder and the Municipal Clerk. The EC also discussed having the Township Journal cover the passing of the biochar ordinance. Mr. Branagan suggested using a press release and sending it to ANJEC as well. The EC agreed. Ms. Coriston would check their website for submission guidelines. Following the discussion, Mr. Branagan made a **motion** recommending a letter be sent with a copy of the biochar ordinance to the five lake associations within the township, seconded by Mr. Szabo.

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

Branagan, yes

**TREX Program Update:**

Ms. Coriston reported the program is doing very well. Last year there was a total of 498 pounds of plastic film collected at the school and this year already 398 pounds have been collected to date. The collection is on par to double that of last year.

**Stream Water Testing 2022:**

Mr. Szabo, Mr. Branagan and Mr. Lippencott visited each testing site and photographs were taken. The Stream Water Study was provided to Mr. Lippencott for his review. Mr. Branagan will contact Mr. Lippencott to schedule him to speak at a future EC meeting.

**Fishing Line Collection**:

All line is to be cleaned of litter/leaves, hooks and lead sinkers. Lead sinkers are to be provided at the meeting for recycling.

**New Business**

**EPA Consumer Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) Grant Program: Ms. Coriston/Mrs. Tsadilas**

Ms. Coriston provided a presentation on the grant application process which is done through the use of a rubric and is due 2/15/23. Grants awards will be announced in April and funding will be distributed in October. Ms. Coriston provided an overview and breakdown of the grant which is based on a point system. Mr. Szabo questioned the appropriateness of the political undertones of the grant and referred to his two concerns voiced at the last meeting with respect to the first bullet point to Reduce Emissions that Cause Climate Change, noting there is no proof to support this and the third bullet point, Promote Environmental Justice and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State and Local Levels. Ms. Coriston noted objectives can be chosen in the application rubric and she will steer away from those subjects in order to address his concerns.

She still needs information from the DPW Supervisor and CFO to complete the application. Both have indicated it will be provided by this Friday. There has been an issue with submitting the application as it must be done through Grants.gov and SAM.gov. The township has both but for some reason they are not properly synced to link together. Ms. Coriston will be meeting with the Municipal Clerk to try and rectify the issue and she provided the following timeline at this point:

•9-part narrative to be completed by 2/10

•Budget to be completed by 2/13

•Entire proposal is slated for review, upload and submission on 2/14

The timeline is based on the DPW completion of their section for the narrative and budget, and the SAM.gov and Grants.gov accounts being properly synced.

Ms. Coriston’s presentation included the following outline:

The Environmental Commission is seeking an EPA Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) grant to create a comprehensive town-wide recycling education program that will:

•Fund the creation of a Recycling Toolkit that includes up-to-date multi-media web-based and printed educations materials.

•Fund the development and delivery of that Toolkit to all residents, plus all community groups that use the town’s facilities.

•Support the planning and execution of in-person recycling education events and attendance at tabling events like vendor fairs and Fall Festival to raise recycling awareness.

•Allow for the purchase of new and upgraded recycling equipment, such as bear-proof receptacles for town-owned facilities and accompanying signage.

•Expand/upgrade the tools, materials, and equipment that support the recycling efforts and recycling education at the school.

•Increase opportunities for collaboration between the towns, the school, and the residents-at-large.

•Cover the costs of outside consultants/public speakers and contractors, train-the-trainer button, employee reimbursement, volunteer mileage and expenses, etc.

The umbrella goal of the grant proposed is to unify and streamline our township’s recycling efforts through a standardized educational campaign and upgraded facilities/equipment to measurably reduce the volume of recyclable materials entering the solid waste stream.

Quick specs:

•The grants come from a $30 million funding pool.

•A minimum of 20% of that pool is earmarked for rural communities.

•Each grant award is a minimum of $250,000 (up to $2 million)

•Awards are a lump sum that must be used within three years of receipt.

**Volunteer/Member Recognition**:

-Ms. Wills for serving as Planning Board liaison.

-Mr. Branagan and Mr. Szabo for visiting the water testing sites.

-Ms. Coriston and Mrs. Tsadilas for their work on the REO grant application.

-Ms. Knott for her assistance with the grant process.

**Endangered and Threatened Species**:

-Bobcat at Swartswood Lake; Mr. Szabo provided a photograph of the bobcat.

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 8:28 p.m.**

**There being no members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 8:28 p.m.**

**Forest Management Plan:**

Mr. Szabo referred to his prior mention of the State not coming through on certain items, projects and environmental issues the EC has talked about. He spoke about a plan he recently found in his EC records entitled “Statewide Resource for Forest Management,” which is from ten years ago; and he expressed his frustration with being informed that nothing included in the ten-year plan has been implemented and zero funding has been allocated. Mr. Szabo stated it is because of issues like this that he is more conservative than many and it is why he brings such subjects up and provides articles that are argumentative when it comes to environmental topics. He tries to provide the flip side of an issue and other point of view or angle to be considered.

**Planning Board (PB) Liaison Report:** E. Wills

-Reorganization of the Planning Board: Chairperson – Bob Pierce; Vice-Chairperson – Don Donofrio

-A very qualified candidate was interviewed for the position of Board Secretary

-Appointments: Joe Vuich, Board Engineer; Bill Haggerty, Board Attorney

**Township Liaison Report:** Committeewoman Chammings

-ADR visited 992 Fairview Lake Road, an additional tank was located and a study will be done by David Lott which will be funded through a grant. An additional OPRA was filed with the NJDEP and 2,000 more pages were provided. The property is now classified as a brownfield (abandoned gas station). Habitat for Humanity has approached the township about the property in the past. An in-rem foreclosure cannot be done until any property issues are remediated.

-Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program: Advisory Committee needs members from community boards.

-SC Water Quality Management PAC needs a representative from Stillwater. They still have Ian Blanchard listed, with Cindy Tracey as the Alternate. Mrs. Wunder will contact Mrs. Tracey to inquire if she is interested in serving as a regular member.

-The roof is being assessed at the Community Center and the architect is putting together a proposal for bids.

-A “free library” has been discussed for possible locations (town hall, Community Center and Recycling Center).

-In-rem foreclosures continue to move forward.

-Paul Hawkins resigned as the Recycling Coordinator; Joe Funari will fill the position.

-Jacob Keiner was hired as the new mechanic and started this week at the DPW. He will also serve as the new shop steward.

-An ordinance was introduced with respect to new state mandates with regard to rentals and lead testing in structures built prior to 1978, landlord registration and proper insurance coverage.

With no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Szabo made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:56 p.m., seconded by Ms. Coriston. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy Wunder, Secretary