**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP**

**ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**May 8, 2023**

**Regular Meeting**

**In-Person/Zoom**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**  Ms. Coriston, Mrs. Emmetts, Dr. Mattes, Mr. Szabo, Mrs. Tracey, Ms. Wills, Mr. Dvorsky, Mr. Branagan

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mrs. Tsadilas

\*Dr. Mattes was appointed to the EC by the Township Committee and sworn in by the Municipal Clerk prior to the meeting.

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 regularly scheduled meeting of the Stillwater Township Environmental Commission. 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. Branagan made a **motion** to approve the minutes of 4/10/23, seconded by Ms. Wills.

**Roll Call Vote**: Ms. Coriston, yes, Mrs. Emmetts, abstain, Dr. Mattes, abstain, Mrs. Tracey, abstain, Ms. Wills,

yes, Mr. Dvorsky, abstain, Mr. Branagan, yes

Mr. Szabo arrived at the meeting at 7:08 p.m.

**Bills**

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to approve the following bill, pending availability of funds, seconded by Mrs. Tracey:

Secretary: $240.00

**Roll Call Vote**: Ms. Coriston, yes, Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Dr. Mattes, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Ms.

Wills, yes, Mr. Branagan, yes

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:09 p.m.**

**There being no members from the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:09 p.m.**

**Correspondence:**

-Approved 2023 Budget

-Davies Engineering, LLC, Notice of Intent to File a Treatment Works Approval with NJDEP, 913 Duck Pond Road, Block 3804, Lot 7 – *A pump is required from a new downstairs bathroom to the septic system. County and NJDEP approval is needed and both the applicant and the township are doing their due diligence to ensure that it is done properly.*

*-*Email Article from Mr. Branagan dated 5/3/23 – Tell the EPA: Enact Strong Limits on Mercury Pollution from Coal-fired Power Plants (Make your public comment in support of strong limits on power plant pollution today)

*Mr. Branagan noted this is a good reference when questioned about the biochar ordinance.*

**Old Business**

**Water Safety Fair:**

Mrs. Tsadilas was unable to attend the meeting tonight but wanted to report the Water Safety Fair was a huge success and well attended. There were approximately 197 participants including a Girl Scout Troop from Brooklyn that was camping at the park. There was a Marine Police demonstration, kids contest for a life jacket prize, State Police exhibit, fire department water rescue demo, Stillwater Recreation, CERT, Historical Society, a drowning organization with games and prizes, a Disney movie on water safety and popcorn was served as well as other refreshments and local students assisted with the games. Ms. Coriston composed a press release for the fair. Mrs. Tsadilas wanted to make sure that Mayor Chammings was thanked for her assistance as well as Swartswood State Park. The EC commended Mrs. Tsadilas for all her hard work and a job well done.

**TREX Program Update:**

Ms. Coriston reported 587 pounds of plastic film has been collected to date, exceeding the goal of 500 pounds, and the program may continue through the summer. She noted the Community Center collection receptacle was full of Gatorade bottles and trash. She is not sure of a solution since the receptacle is clearly labeled. She is going to try a different location at the Community Center.

**ANJEC Grant - $1,500:**

Ms. Coriston reported the grant application was submitted for $1,500 in funding to assist in updating the Open Space Plan. Funding awards will be announced by the end of May.

**EPA Consumer Recycling Education and Outreach (REO) Grant Program:**

Ms. Coriston reported no notification has been received at this point.

**Stream Water Study:**

Bob Lippencott was present at the meeting. Following a brief discussion, the EC agreed to form a subcommittee to review water testing to date and determine if any changes need to be made or if the testing should continue in the future. The next water testing is scheduled for 2024. Certified laboratory vs. the EC conducting the tests is being considered and equipment will be needed if it is determined the EC will do so in the future. Mrs. Emmetts mentioned that the Swartswood Lake Watershed Association has a DO meter and there is a good possibility they would allow the EC to use it. The meter is calibrated annually. Mr. Lippencott noted that one-day rentals are also available.

Mr. Szabo made a **motion** to formally accept detailed recommendations from Bob Lippencott and to form a subcommittee consisting of Mr. Branagan, Mrs. Emmetts, Mr. Szabo and Mr. Lippencott to review said recommendations and form a final report, seconded by Mrs. Emmetts.

**Roll Call Vote**: Ms. Coriston, yes, Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Dr. Mattes, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Ms.

Wills, yes, Mr. Branagan, yes

**Review of Minutes of 4/10/23:**

-Mr. Branagan and Mr. Szabo visited Block 2701, Lot 10 – Franciscan Charities Missionary property. Mr. Branagan was concerned with the proximity of wetlands to the farm itself. Mr. Szabo noted he is frustrated with trying to obtain information from the State and felt if the EC followed up with the State they would not have any knowledge or information on the property or know if the NJDEP has visited the site. Mr. Branagan agreed to contact the NJDEP and he expressed concern with tree removal, soil being moved on the property, wetlands proximity and silt washing into the wetlands. Ms. Chammings questioned the accuracy of the block and lot and explained the 2.94 acres noticed is not the farm, it is land located across the street from the farm that Franciscan Charities is trying to develop with a house and outbuildings. She noted any concerns can be reported to the Zoning Officer for his review. Mr. Szabo questioned if it was the responsibility of the EC. Ms. Chammings suggested contacting the property owner to address the concerns. Mr. Branagan and Mr. Szabo both agreed the owner has only improved the property and keeps it meticulous. Mr. Dvorsky questioned if the concerns would be addressed during the required permit process to develop the property. Ms. Chammings agreed and noted at this point they are only applying for a Letter of Interpretation to establish the existence or not of wetlands and buffer setbacks if required. Board approval may also be necessary. Mr. Lippencott offered his assistance with the matter.

-Mr. Branagan asked if the pet waste issue at Veteran’s Memorial Park (VMP) is being addressed by the Township Committee. Ms. Chammings stated the Committee is currently reviewing the pet waste ordinance and she noted animals are permitted at the park but must be leashed. She added that this issue falls under the new State stormwater mandates requiring an ordinance addressing clean up when an animal leaves waste in a public area. She noted that disposal is also being addressed by the Township Committee.

**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**

**Volunteer/Member Recognition**:

-Mrs. Tsadilas: Water Safety Fair

-Ms. Coriston: ANJEC Grant Application

-Mr. Szabo/Mr. Branagan: Site visit to Franciscan Charities Missionary property and also for installing the bat house at VMP.

-Mrs. Emmetts/Mr. Szabo: Participation at the Water Safety Fair

**Endangered and Threatened Species**:

Mr. Branagan reported Red-shouldered Hawk sightings.

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 8:05 p.m.**

**There being no members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 8:05 p.m.**

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

-The Township Engineer reported on the Stormwater Designation A and how it relates to the Planning Board. Members will have to attend a training on the topic.

-Dean Voris was appointed as a member of the Planning Board.

**Township Liaison Report:** Mayor Chammings

-A Swartswood Lake delinquent tax lien was redeemed.

-Wildlife feeding on public property ordinance has been tabled.

-100 plus people attended the last Township Committee meeting re: noise ordinance. Everyone in attendance was very respectful and the Committee rescinded the ordinance which stemmed from a neighbor dispute. The two neighbors have agreed to work out a solution to the noise issue.

-Contracts were awarded to: Farmside, janitorial services, Sheriff’s Office patrols, and two phases of Mt. Benevolence Road.

-A person to place liquor license was transferred from the former Boathouse to 911 Swartswood Deli; package goods to be sold.

-Kathy Wunder has been hired to purge the Building Department records.

-$71,000 grant will be used to fix the exterior, flooring and minor items at the Community Center.

-Planet Networks is requesting a right-of-way across Stillwater Park.

Mrs. Emmetts reported that friends of hers have complimented the Recreation Commission (RC) on their programs being held at the Community Center. Ms. Chammings commended the RC. Mrs. Emmetts briefly discussed the unfunded State mandate, Stormwater Tier A designation.

With no further business to come before the Commission, Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 p.m., seconded by Mr. Szabo. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy Wunder, Secretary