

**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

May 13, 2024

**Regular Meeting
In-Person/Zoom**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Branagan, Mrs. Emmetts, Mr. Szabo, Mrs. Tracey, Mr. Dvorsky, Ms. Coriston

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Mattes, Ms. Wills

Chairperson Coriston 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 regular 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 Middletown, New Jersey unless noticed or it is a legal holiday.

The flag was saluted and roll call taken.

Minutes

Mrs. Tracey made a **motion** to approve the minutes of April 8, 2024, seconded by Ms. Coriston.

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

The minutes of March 11, 2024, were tabled until the next meeting due to the absence of eligible voting members.

Mrs. Emmetts asked that from this point forward Mr. Lippencott be referred to as Dr. Lippencott in the minutes.

Bills

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

Secretary: \$255.00

Roll Call Vote: Mr. Branagan, yes, Mrs. Emmetts, yes, Mr. Szabo, yes, Mrs. Tracey, yes, Mr. Dvorsky, yes, Ms. Coriston, yes

At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:06 p.m.

There being no members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:06 p.m.

Correspondence:

-EC 2024 Budget

-Township Committee Minutes - April 2, 2024

-Sussex County Open Space Committee Minutes – February 22, 2024

-Sussex County Agriculture Development Board Minutes – March 18, 2024

-Email from Mayor Chammings – 4/18/24 – Nature Conservancy to remove tree shelters/collect survivability data from 2017 reforestation on Stillwater Township/NJDEP property near Main Street

-Email from G. Dvorsky – 4/13/24 – NJDEP Climate Change/Climate Science link – *Ms. Coriston thanked Mr. Dvorsky for the link, which is a very useful tool.*

Old Business

TREX Program Update:

Ms. Coriston reported she is collecting plastic film from the town hall receptacle two times per week and 600 pounds has been collected to date, with a goal of 1,000 pounds by the end of November. There has been 1,300 pounds removed from the waste stream since the program began at Stillwater School. Mr. Dvorsky asked if there was information available on the process following collection and how much of

the product is recycled. Ms. Coriston stated information can be found on the website NexTrex and almost all of it has been recycled. The school has received a wind chime and garden steps for their past collection and is hoping to receive a bench this year.

Stream Water Study Subcommittee Update (if necessary): No report.

Fishing Line Collection:

Opening day of trout season was April 6th and collection will increase. All lines are to be cleaned of litter/leaves, hooks and lead sinkers. Lead sinkers are to be provided at the meeting for recycling. Mr. Szabo reported the Paradise Fishing Club is holding a fishing tournament on Sunday, May 19th at Swartwood Lake from 6 a.m.-4 p.m. with a \$30 entry fee and 70 percent payout.

NJ Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan (Draft)/Comments & Suggestions Form:

Ms. Coriston stated the draft plan is available for review with a comment form. She stated you can visit the NJDEP website for information on the cross-sector task forces related to climate and the environment. They are tasked with working on action plans, the first of which is the Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan. Data includes the average temperature climb and action suggestions. Mr. Szabo expressed concern with the outcome of these actions, for example banning air conditioning. Mr. Dvorsky suggested visiting the website for a better understanding. It discusses the impact of temperature increase and climate. Mr. Szabo felt he could not easily access the information using a computer and he likes to stay informed. Ms. Coriston suggested Mr. Szabo visit the NJDEP website and join their email list. She will email Mrs. Wunder additional links for the EC, and she will continue to report on any information she receives. Mayor Chamings stated she would print a hard copy of the NJ Extreme Heat Resilience Action Plan Draft for Mr. Szabo to review.

New Business

ANJEC Fundamentals for Effective Environmental Commissions:

Ms. Coriston attended the in-person ANJEC seminar on April 13th in Somerville. A presentation was provided by the Readington EC Chair, who spoke about their ERI, the cost of which was \$25,000 contracted through Hydro Princeton. There were roundtables including resources, site surveys and stormwater. ANJEC also has a library at their office where you can check out books, etc. Impervious surfaces were discussed with respect to warehouses, as well as turf surfaces. Mr. Dvorsky commented that the amount of land that is being committed to warehouse construction across the country is enormous and it is mostly farmland. Towns are proactively putting ordinances in place to address this issue. Mayor Chamings stated Stillwater does not have the infrastructure to support this, but she will definitely make a note of it. Mrs. Emmetts stated golf courses are technically impervious surfaces and are not good for recharge. She commented that construction in Florida is booming. They are drawing on an aquifer in such huge amounts that salt may infiltrate in the future. They are also burning areas to clear the land.

Abigail Looney was present and commented that the tree removal is not a good idea as it causes less oxygen. One of her favorite places to dance, the Sheraton International Hotel in Mahwah, has been demolished and is being replaced with a warehouse.

Volunteer/Member Recognition:

-Ms. Coriston for her attendance at the ANJEC seminar and her work on the TREX program.
-Mrs. Emmetts and Mrs. Tracey for their attendance at the COLA meeting, which included a Paragon presentation on water evaluation. Mrs. Emmetts felt it was a sales pitch seeking customers and was surprised COLA would allow it. The company, which does harvesting and dehumidifying, is interested in managing issues not eliminating them. Mrs. Tracey agreed with Mrs. Emmetts' perspective on the presentation. It was noted that Paragon also does not obtain any permits, the client is responsible for doing so.

Endangered and Threatened Species: None

Mr. Szabo mentioned that he saw 40+ loons on Swartswood Lake recently.

Mr. Branagan referenced the last NJDEP application notice received by the EC. He obtained the copy sent to the Clerk and it was the same 8 1/2 x 11 map that was sent to the EC, difficult to read.

At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:46 p.m.

There being no members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:46 p.m.

Planning Board (PB) Liaison Report: Mayor Chamblings

-A member of the public appeared before the board to speak about the Neighborhood Commercial Zone located in downtown Stillwater and the challenges of rebuilding businesses and longtime residents not wanting change.

Township Liaison Report: Mayor Chamblings

- Minisink Press donated a color copier and printer to the township.
- Garage Sale Weekend will be held on 5/17 and 5/18.
- Stillwater Fire Department will hold a fund drive on 5/17 and 5/18.
- A contract was awarded to the SC Sheriff's Department for patrols in the township.
- A part-time employee was hired at the DPW – Kyle Kavanaugh.
- Community Center events can be found on the Stillwater Township website.
- A code book codification issue is being addressed as some ordinances are not online and are not up to date.
- JCP&L continues to trim trees, only accessing driveways that are primary lines (top line of the transformer). Stillwater is located in Zone 3 and most lines are not primary. JCP&L is working diligently to address tree issues. This round of funding is for Ash trees only. Mr. Branagan asked about stump removal. Mayor Chamblings stated the DPW will pick up the stumps once the trimming and tree removal is completed.
- Five township-owned properties will be placed for sale to adjacent property owners. In-rem foreclosures are stalled pending the court case.
- Main office receptionist Danielle LoCascio resigned. Currently advertising for 20 hours per week for her replacement.
- A Trinity Solar representative had a peddler license stripped due to aggressiveness toward customers.
- 992 Fairview Lake Road will be demolished, hopefully by the end of the summer. Two quotes were received: Pierson Excavating \$16,000 and Sterline \$19,000. Once demolished, the underground storage tank will be removed and may be eligible for hazardous discharge funding.
- Sandy Hull will provide a presentation on the Delaware National Water Gap Recreation Area designation change at the May 7th Township Committee meeting. A resolution will be on the next Township Committee agenda.

Mr. Branagan asked about the old hotel located on Old Foundry Road and he expressed concern with the cars, trucks and mowers on the property. Mayor Chamblings stated the last time the vehicles were checked they were registered. She noted the property is not properly maintained.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Wunder, Secretary