

**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
Thursday, November 14, 2024  
Regular Meeting**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Branagan, Mrs. Emmetts (via phone), Mr. Szabo, Ms. Coriston

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dr. Mattes, Mrs. Tracey, Mr. Dvorsky

Chairperson Coriston called the meeting to order at 7:17 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 beginning at 7 p.m. 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**

Ms. Coriston made a **motion** to approve the minutes of October 7, 2024, seconded by Mr. Branagan.

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

**Bills**

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

Secretary: \$255.00

Eurofins (Stream Water Testing): \$3815.00

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

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:19 p.m. There being no members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:19 p.m.**

**Correspondence**

-“How to Get a Truly Green World,” (Forbes.com April-May 2024) – E. Szabo

**Old Business**

**40-Year Surface Water Quality Report (1984-2024)/Stream Water Testing 2024: Dr. Lippencott**

Dr. Lippencott reported the stream water testing was conducted and results have been received. Dr. Lippencott, Mr. Branagan, Mr. Szabo and Mr. Dvorsky all participated in the sampling. Dr. Lippencott has an assistant working on statistics and updating the data. He stated he would complete the report by the end of November and have a final version available by the December meeting. He received a call from Randy Sprague, President, Swartwood Lake Watershed Association, inquiring about the data and looking forward to reviewing it. Ms. Coriston noted the EC is looking to early 2025 to finalize the project which will then be posted on the township website.

Mr. Branagan discussed the four wells tested at the landfill. He asked how often it is done and if it was mandated. Mayor Chammings thought they are tested twice per year but she would double check that. It is required by State law for all closed landfills. All testing results are reviewed by the Township Engineer, Van Cleef Engineering and any issues are reported to the Township Committee. Dr. Lippencott explained that the stream water testing results were incorrectly labeled “landfill testing,” as both are done through Eurofins Laboratories. He was unaware the landfill was tested. He offered to review the results if needed. He noted that testing frequency can be reduced over time as long as the results are consistent and there are no issues. Mayor Chammings stated the landfill was closed properly and according to all regulations including capping, fabric, tires, etc. Testing is conducted to make sure the levels at the beginning of the landfill stream are the same at the end. The landfill information can be found on the NJDEP website. The stream extends underground at first and then rises above ground further down. Dr. Lippencott asked if the EC is involved with the landfill water testing. Mayor Chammings indicated it is handled by the Township Engineer, through either the Engineering or DPW budget. Dr. Lippencott noted the State may request different parameters in the future as standards are changing.

### **TREX Program Update:**

Ms. Coriston reported the goal of 1,000 pounds was surpassed with a collection as of 10/4/24 of 1,052 pounds. The new cycle begins on November 15th. In the three years the program has been running, a total of 2,252 pounds have been collected – over a ton of plastic film. She has approximately 75 pounds to begin the new cycle already. The issue with people disposing of beer and hard seltzer cans in the receptacle at town hall has been addressed and has improved. Achieving the goal was officially announced during Spirit Week at Stillwater School and shared on Facebook.

### **Fishing Line Collection:**

All lines are to be cleaned of litter/leaves, hooks and lead sinkers. Lead sinkers are to be provided at the meeting for recycling. Mayor Chamings reported the receptacle at Veteran's Memorial Park has been moved toward the sign.

### **New Business**

**Paulins Kill River Projects Update:** Christine Dunbar, Paulins Kill Watershed Coordinator, Foodshed Alliance – *This item has been moved to the December 9<sup>th</sup> EC agenda.*

### **Site Survey Application:**

Zoning Board (J. Branagan/G. Dvorsky) 984 Route 521, Block 2201, Lot 10

The application was for approval of two principal uses located on one lot. The applicant initially requested confirmation of the pre-existing uses from the Zoning Officer as the property is currently in the process of being sold. Mr. Dixon, Zoning Officer, recommended the property owner appear before the Zoning Board to properly establish the uses and have any approval memorialized.

Mr. Szabo had records pertaining to the history of the property that the township did not have on file. He provided the information to the applicant to present to the Zoning Board. Final approval was granted.

Ms. Coriston made a **motion** to accept the site survey, seconded by Mrs. Emmetts.

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

### **Volunteer/Member Recognition:**

-Dr. Lippencott, Mr. Branagan, Mr. Szabo and Mr. Dvorsky for the stream water sampling.

-Mr. Dvorsky and Mr. Branagan for conducting the site survey.

-The EC for fishing line collection.

-Ms. Coriston for the TREX program.

-Ms. Coriston for drafting the letter from the EC to Ms. Dunbar.

-Ms. Coriston for drafting the thank you letter from the EC to Emily Wills for her EC service.

### **Endangered and Threatened Species:**

-Sightings included bobcats, bald eagle, Saw-whet owl and a blue heron.

Bear sightings were also noted.

Ms. Coriston reminded the EC that as a group we need to encourage people to follow the fire ban and to be vigilant as fire conditions are getting very bad.

Mayor Chamings stated the fire between the NJ and NY border has reached 5800 acres.

She reported a shed fire on Main Street was reached and extinguished very quickly.

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 7:51 p.m.**

**Dr. Lippencott** discussed his recent trip to Montana and Glacier Park.

**There being no further members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 7:53 p.m.**

### **Planning Board (PB) Liaison Report:** Mayor Chamings

The October meeting was cancelled and the November meeting has also been cancelled due to the NJ League of Municipalities Conference in Atlantic City.

**Township Committee (TC) Liaison Report:** Mayor Chammings

**10/15/24 TC Meeting:**

- Flood Damage Protection Ordinance was adopted; the Zoning Officer was designated as the Flood Plain Administrator.
- Accepted the resignation of Emily Wills from the Environmental Commission/Planning Board.
- The Zoning Board has been very busy with an average of two applications per meeting.
- The Building Department has also been busy with 38 permits issued for the month of October.
- Construction on a property located on Route 619 has started. An accessory structure will be completed first with a single-family dwelling to follow in the future.

Mayor Chammings discussed her trip bringing the supplies donated by Stillwater residents to North Carolina to aid in the hurricane aftermath. She also loaned them her RTV for their use. The Mayor was overwhelmed by the generosity of the Stillwater community. A trailer was purchased for the trip using OEM grant funding. She provided an overview of the trip and the awful conditions she came across while traveling. People needed food, tents, water, clothing, quilts; and food for their domestic and farm animals. Old Fort, North Carolina was decimated. Most of the donated food went to Helen, GA. She just could not believe the path of destruction she encountered. During her trip she covered 2,300 miles in 80 hours and used \$900 in gas. She thanked Mr. Szabo for his gas donation and noted it came in very handy when she ran low on gas in an area without a working gas station. She received many thank you cards and the Mayor thanked all those who donated. She asked that everyone pray for the people in the affected areas and she quoted resident Diane King..."the power of nature is devastating but the human resolve is rebuilding it." Resident Stacy Michelman just brought clothing donations to the affected area and Tractor Supply sent down livestock fencing. Clean up is really going to be needed as they start to rebuild. The river overtook many homes that cannot be rebuilt.

**11/12/24 TC Meeting:**

- Lead-Safe Ordinance and Salary Ordinance were introduced.
- Approval was granted for a Yuletide Stroll to be held on Main Street on 12/15/24. It is an event expecting more than 100 people and the Historical Society will hold a raffle and have a one-day Social Permit to serve beer from Angry Erik's Brewery.
- A shared service was approved for Animal Control services with Newton.
- There will be a bus trip to Bryant Park on 12/14/24 – Recreation Commission.
- Veterans breakfast will be held on 11/9/24 at the Community Center.
- Middleville Road, Mt. Benevolence Road, and the Community Center, Stillwater Park and VMP parking lots were paved and lined. An additional section of VMP was paved (according to prior plans) for a basketball or pickleball court.

Ms. Coriston commented that the Trunk or Treat was amazing and the Recreation Commission is doing a great job with events. Mayor Chammings thanked Clerk Ingles for coordinating the event.

Mr. Szabo stated he never understood all the aspects of the Recreation Commission until recently. He noted they run senior programs, one of which he attended today with 16 participants and 3 representatives from the Prosecutor's Office who provided a presentation on weapon safety. He commended the RC on their work. He also attended an electronics presentation on cyber-attacks.

Mayor Chammings recognized RC members Tara, Gina and Jen for their senior programs. She credited Mike Scott of the Sheriff's Department for bringing many of the programs to Stillwater.

Mayor Chammings reported that Committeeman George Scott is improving and attending Township Committee meetings by Zoom.

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

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy Wunder, Secretary