

**STILLWATER TOWNSHIP  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION**

**April 13, 2026  
Regular Meeting  
In-Person/Zoom**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Mr. Branagan, Mrs. Emmetts (Zoom), Dr. Mattes, Mr. Szabo, Mrs. Tracey, Ms. Kral, Ms. Coriston

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dr. Lippencott

**ALSO PRESENT:** Committeewoman Chamblings

Ms. Coriston called the meeting to order at 7:05 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**

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to approve the minutes of 3/9/26, seconded by Mr. Branagan.

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

**Bills**

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

Secretary: \$274.00

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

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

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

**Correspondence:**

-3/25/26 C. Dunbar: Floodplain Friday Events – Hyper Humus Walk 4/18/26, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

-4/2/26 M. Coriston: NJ's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan Webinar, 4/14/26, 2-3:30 p.m.

**Old Business**

**Email Report from Dr. Lippencott:**

Dr. Lippencott held a conference call with the Stockton University professors re: Healthy Forest initiative. The call went very well with some exciting prospects for meaningful collaboration identified that will advance our initiative.

Dr. Lippencott requested the facilitation of a brief meeting or Zoom call to discuss collaborating on the surface water sampling and MS4 permit requirements. The meeting should be scheduled for some time in April at the latest as the water testing is a seasonality issue and sample collection and analysis planning is time critical. Integrating the MS4 data needs and compliance strategy would help inform our stream water sampling and discussion.

**EC Discussion - Future guest speakers/presentations:**

Ms. Coriston reported that Dark Sky would be interested in a Zoom presentation and if the EC agrees, this can be scheduled. The presentation is municipal focused and would include model ordinances on light direction and other municipal protections. She will reach out to Steve Mariconda.

Mr. Branagan suggested water sampling as a topic to be considered for the fall, possibly September/October.

Ms. Coriston will also reach out to Mike VanClef, Strike Team, for a presentation on invasive species. He can be specific to our area.

Dr. Lippencott has been in contact with Rich Kelsky and Mrs. Emmetts suggested contacting the Superintendent of Swartswood State Park as well.

Dr. Mattes appreciated Dr. Lippencott for reaching out to foresters and felt the main focus should be reforestation. Mr. Szabo recently discussed reforestation with Mr. Kelsky and asked him what type and size of trees should be planted. Mr. Kelsky is currently waiting for a crate of seedlings he is going to plant.

**Cellco Verizon Wireless (Fredon) – L. Kral:**

The application was carried to the May.

**TREX Program Update: Ms. Coriston**

Ms. Coriston reported TREX has revamped the program reward cycles which will now be quarterly instead of annually.

-A large load has been dropped off in two trips to Kohls so it can be submitted to TREX.

-There is still an unweighed backlog in Ms. Coriston's shed and Ms. Chammings' barn that is estimated at 200-300 pounds total.

-With the assistance of her husband, an additional 118 pounds were weighed at the Recycling Center and is currently in Ms. Coriston's basement.

-Kohl's does not have drop off during the week of April 12-18<sup>th</sup> due to their spring inventory. Drop-off can be completed at 11:45 a.m. on April 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>.

-Newton Weis no longer accepts TREX. Kohls does accept the collection but not in the large quantity Weis did. ACME, Stop & Shop, Franklin Weis and Ocean State Job Lots are all nonviable options. Kohls may stop collecting this summer. The nearest location after Kohls is a "grassroots" partner in Parsippany.

Ms. Coriston will weigh her collection backlog on April 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Chammings will weigh the barn and municipal collection on April 21<sup>st</sup> and transport it to Kohls.

**Fishing Line Collection:** Opening day is April 11<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Szabo reported trout stocking will continue on Thursday mornings during April at Swartswood Lake, Swartswood State Park. He invited anyone interested to participate between 9-9:30 a.m. Local resident Alex Durino and his family attended the last stocking and had a great time.

Mr. Szabo reported his fishing receptacle was full of trash and this has become a problem.

Dr. Mattes emptied his fishing receptacle at Veterans Memorial Park with no issue, only fishing line. He will reset the receptacle at VMP that has been laying on the ground.

**New Business**

**Environmental Commission Volunteer Recognition:**

-Ms. Coriston, her husband, and Ms. Chammings for the TREX program.

-EC members for checking the fishing receptacles.

-Ms. Kral for monitoring the Fredon cell tower application.

-Ms. Chammings for her endless time and service to the community during the terrible dog dumping incident in Stillwater.

Ms. Chammings described the heartbreaking incident and search for the dogs that extended for several days. The Township Committee did a proclamation recognizing all volunteers involved including the Newton Animal Control, the County Sheriff's Officers and OEM, who used drones to locate the dogs, OEM Coordinator Lisa Chammings, Hound Hunters of NJ, Wantage Animal Control, NJ State Police and the Stillwater Fire Department. Almost 50 dogs were found in 12 days.

**Endangered/Threatened Species Sightings:** None reported.

Other sightings: Bears

**2026 Sussex County Trails Grant Program – Veterans Memorial Park (VMP) trail improvement:**

Ms. Chammings provided a partial presentation on the trail grant and proposed improvements to VMP. The completed presentation will be provided to the Sussex County Open Space Committee. The presentation depicted the figure 8 loop of the two trails (active and passive) located at the park, including photos of the passive trail during different times of the year, nature, fishing, educational signs and season round walking.

She reviewed the project highlights and reported she obtained a quote for just under \$13,000 for rehab of the trail, seeding and regrading. This will also allow for the removal of some of the invasives to add a bird watching overlook and small pathway from the parking lot.

The Township Committee will provide a Resolution of Support.

Ms. Kral suggested adding a slide indicating the downside to not improving the trail and the results of such over the next few years. Ms. Chammings agreed to do so.

Ms. Chammings stated the funding is a \$25,000 reimbursement grant, 10% matching, which can be funded through our Open Space Trust.

Mrs. Emmetts made a **motion** to move forward with the 2026 Sussex County Trails Grant application for trail improvements at Veterans Memorial Park, seconded by Ms. Coriston.

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

**At this point, this portion of the meeting was opened to the public at 8:17 p.m.**

**There being no members of the public wishing to speak, this portion of the meeting was closed at 8:17 p.m.**

**Planning Board (PB) Liaison Report:**

-Ms. Chammings reported a lot line adjustment application will be heard at the April Planning Board meeting.

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

-Township Committee introduced the 2026 Budget with the following municipal increase:

\$63 per year/\$200,000 assessed

\$94 per year/\$300,000 assessed

\$126 per year/\$400,000 assessed

The CFO provided a budget presentation at the last meeting which will be available on the township website.

Stillwater School and Sussex County also introduced their annual budgets with increases.

The overall tax bill average increase for a house assessed at \$200,000 will be between \$500-600 per year.

-A public land sale will be held on May 13<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. to contiguous property owners – 40 plus properties available; the list is on the township website. Over an acre the minimum bid will be \$1250; under an acre the minimum bid will be \$500.

-A bond ordinance was introduced to replace two older trucks at the DPW; road improvements (Mt. Benevolence) and \$100,000 to replace fuel pumps/tanks at the DPW.

-992 Fairview Lake Road (Gallaghers) – Hazardous Discharge Fund grant of \$92,000 is moving forward.

**Other Items:**

Ms. Coriston reported April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and pinwheels were planted at the town hall.

Ms. Chammings commended the Recreation Commission for their activities, noting a 70s dance was held at the Community Center this past weekend with 50+ participants.

Ms. Chammings also commended the CERT Program for their Free Helmet Safety event. Over 80 helmets were provided and fitted to participants.

**STILLWATER VOLUNTEERS ARE AMAZING!**

With no further business to come before the Commission, Ms. Coriston made a **motion** to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m., seconded by Dr. Mattes. In a voice vote, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

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Kathy Wunder, Secretary