

DENNIS TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes: May 21, 2014.

Regularly scheduled meeting held at 5:30 p.m. at Dennis Township Municipal Building.

Chairman Bob Penrose led the flag salute to open the meeting. The commission observed a moment of silence for recently deceased member, Rick Erwin. The commission then welcomed new member Brad Rosenthal.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: George, Leatherwood, McManus, Penrose, Rebmman, Rosenthal

ABSENT: Slotterback

The committee voted to approve the minutes of the April 16 meeting and Mr. Rebmman indicated that he would contact the webmaster to have those minutes posted to the township website for public consumption.

Guest speaker John Baron, Deputy Director from the Cape May County MUA led off by distributing a series of pamphlets covering various subjects relevant to his topic for the meeting: recycling.

At the request of chairman Penrose, Mr. Baron has left a supply of this literature which is now available at the township building and the museum.

The commission's first specific concern regards possible changes in the manner of handling electronics recycling. According to Mr. Baron, New Jersey passed legislation in 2011 banning these materials from landfills. As a result, the MUA currently accepts electronics recyclables at its transfer stations and Woodbine facility free of charge.

"If it has a plug in it, unless it has a refrigerant, it's recyclable," Mr. Baron said in response to several members' questions as to what constitutes an "electronics recyclable".

In 2013, vendors started charging for or refusing to accept recycled electronics because of market downturns. Responding to increasing costs it has incurred as a result of this development, the MUA contacted local municipalities stating it would no longer accept these materials as of mid-June 2014.

The intent, according to Mr. Baron, was to enroll locals in an effort to lobby DEP and electronics manufacturers to address the issue at their end. The law states that manufacturers must pay the cost of recycling but there is no viable enforcement provision to compel compliance.

Hoping to avoid passing on the increased cost to municipalities in the form of reduced rebates for recycling, the MUA solicited vendors willing to handle the materials, according to Baron. In May, the authority entered into a temporary agreement with Vintage.

Mr. Baron distributed a sheet from the vendor listing items it will/will not accept. Copies of the list are available at the municipal building.

Asked by commission members about problems the MUA experiences with curbside collections, Mr. Baron indicated television sets being smashed to obtain recyclable parts.

“When these come to us without the recyclable part, we treat it as solid waste,” he said.

That can cost the township.

Presently, according to township committeeman Al DiCicco, Dennis picks up e-recycling on bulk trash days. The schedule for this pick-up is on the township website.

Mr. Penrose asked Mr. Baron about items such as light bulbs and batteries. Ms. George noted that information about these and other specific items are described in the literature Mr. Baron has provided.

There was further discussion about what counts as a recyclable toward the township’s rebate and Mr. Baron noted that whenever a township resident brings a recyclable to the transfer station, the township is credited.

Containers for turpentine or fertilizer are NOT recyclable and are considered hazardous waste. The MUA charges \$1 per gallon to dispose of paint.

Mr. Penrose asked how the township should handle e-recyclables, whether it’s preferable to bring the materials to the public works yard or directly to the MUA (if not waiting for the bulk pick-up), Mr. DiCicco noted that there have been problems in the past with items brought to the yard (vandalism/theft). Mr. Baron noted that either way, the township gets credit.

Ms. George asked if the township website could provide links to the appropriate web links on the MUA site. Mr. Rebmann will contact Tom Laughlin regarding this. Mr. Baron also suggested that Lynn Crumblock, a colleague at MUA, might be helpful in this area.

Mr. Rebmann asked how single stream recycling was doing. Mr. Baron replied that there has been a 22% increase in recycling since single stream took effect. Mr. DiCicco raised the question about recycling in schools, noting that they have a “bad reputation” in that area.

“They’ve earned it,” Mr. Baron responded, adding that MUA reps regularly visit local schools. In addition, the authority welcomes school classes to tour facilities and also has literature and films geared to classroom use.

Mr. Rebmann asked about the availability of grants for schools to set up and maintain recycling programs. Mr. Baron referred him to Ms. Crumblock and Rebmann will contact her for information.

Mr. DiCicco added that he and commission chairman Penrose will meet with Dennis School Superintendent_____ at an unspecified future date. He invited Mr. Baron to join them. Once the meeting is scheduled, Mr. Rebmann will inform Mr. Baron.

Mr. McManus observed that it was a good idea to “get the school on board now” so they’ll have a working program in place for the next school year.

Chairman Penrose noted that public works supervisor Vernon Champion informed him that the local school appears to be recycling. Public Works collects from separate containers. However, there was still some doubt among commission members about the effectiveness of the school effort.

The second guest listed on the night’s agenda, Jo Ann Sopchak from Cape May County Tech, was unable to appear due to a conflicting appointment at the college where she is an adjunct professor. She was scheduled to discuss possible work with her horticulture class at the municipal garden.

However, Dennisville resident Gordon Engel addressed the commission on that subject. A former commission member, Mr. Engel was involved in developing the original garden. He discussed current conditions at the site, specifically, the status of various native plantings. He suggested that an application of “terra grow” available from the MUA, might be beneficial as part of initial restoration efforts.

Related to this, Ms. Leatherwood indicated that she is working to arrange for a group of local students to volunteer with planting at the garden. She showed commission members literature from an area vendor specializing in native plants. Mr. Rebmann will contact the vendor for more information.

Mr. McManus, president of the Master Gardeners Program at the county’s Rutgers Extension Center has contacted Roberta Nuss, a Girl Scout leader from Dennisville. The troop is interested in planting the garden boxes near the township museum. Mr. Rebmann will help with this work, including opening the museum for the troop’s use.

The commission next discussed the Anderson application to the local Land Use Board, scheduled for a hearing the following night. Mr. Rebmann summarized the current application, which specifically requested a waiver from the township requirement to provide current survey maps.

The commission agreed that the application presents no environmental impact issues warranting commission action.

Mr. DiCicco updated the commission on the status of the outdoor wood boiler ordinance. It is presently tabled by township committee pending review by the board solicitor. One

reason for tabling the measure was to examine into reasons a similar ordinance passed by Lower Township, was later rescinded.

Mr. Rebmann pointed out a significant difference in the ordinances, namely that Lower's banned the devices outright while Dennis intends to provide regulatory guidance and procedures for obtaining approval for a device.

Mr. Rebmann had provided information about the history of Lower's failed ordinance, which Mr. DiCicco suggested might be helpful in moving it "forward".

Mr. Penrose asked who would actually enforce the ordinance.

"Building inspector or code enforcement," Mr. DiCicco replied, depending on the circumstances. He added that he would place the ordinance for first reading at the next committee meeting.

Ms. George asked if someone from the commission, Mr. Penrose or Mr. Rebmann, should address committee. That would happen if requested by committee.

Ms. George then led a discussion of the Forestry Management Plan, indicating that someone from Public Works must participate in addition to a commission member. Mr. Rebmann will contact Mr. Champion with the agenda for the June meeting, inviting him to attend.

Ms. George informed commission that she is "core trained" but that all commission members must participate in educational programs encouraging public awareness on the importance and proper maintenance of trees. As part of that effort, the commission will participate in National Night Out (first Tuesday in August) at the Recreation Center. Chairman Penrose will contact Rec Director Kim Herron for info.

Ms. George will contact the Tree Federation about literature and other materials. Mr. Rebmann will scan in an "assessment inventory" tree list he'd found at the museum. He will forward this to members.

Ms. George and Mr. Rebmann volunteered to attend National Night Out.

Ms. George explained how volunteer hours are earned and applied toward obtaining grant money. Mr. Rebmann will contact Jackie Justice about a previous grant the township applied for in this area.

There being no public comment or further discussion among commission members, Mr. Penrose asked for motion to close the meeting which was seconded and passed.