

DENNIS TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes: June 18, 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.

ROLL CALL:

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

ABSENT: Slotterback

The committee voted to approve the minutes of the May 21 meeting and Mr. Rebmann indicated that he would contact the webmaster to have those minutes posted to the township website for public consumption.

First guest, Zachary Nickerson, Watershed Ambassador from Americorp. He has been doing freshwater quality surveys at two stream sites in Dennis Township. His program is conducted under the auspices of DEP. One of these, the Dennis Creek tributary above Johnson's Pond experiences what he calls an "unusual spring algae covering".

Mr. Hoff noted that there had been problems in the past with this waterway, attributable to sewage emanating from the Woodbine State School (Developmental Center). Mr. McManus added that there had also been past problems with the irrigation system at that site.

Mr. Nickerson said that he submits his survey data to DEP and EPA for review and, if needed, action from that end.

Mr. Rebmann asked if either of those agencies ever follow up on his survey results. He also asked if similar "testing" was conducted at lakes and bogs in the township.

Ms George pointed out that testing had been conducted at Magnolia Lake, near her family's property in Ocean View.

Mr. Penrose and Mr. Rebmann requested a copy of Mr. Nickerson's report once it is completed.

Vernon Champion, Dennis Township Assistant Public Works Supervisor was the second guest to speak.

Asked about his department's participation in the township's forestry management plan, Mr. Champion indicated that, at present, no public works employee has been "core trained" in that area.

Ms. George noted that Public Works is already doing a number of the tasks that would satisfy requirements of the plan. Mr. Rosenthal added, and Mr. Champion agreed, that “keeping track of these efforts” would be helpful and will do so in the future.

The next core training session in Cherry Hill (the closest location for township) takes place in October. Ms. George, who is already core trained (along with Mr. Rosenthal) plans to attend.

Mr. Champion indicated that he will look into the requirements of the training and, schedule permitting, may attend as well.

Mr. DiCicco noted that it would cost \$100 per attendee.

Mr. Rosenthal added that there is potential grant money available to help the township meet the plan’s requirements.

Ms. George reminded the commission that the current report ends this year. It was conducted by a “DEP approved arborist” at a cost of \$3000.

Mr. Rebmman asked what is done for the money.

Ms George answered that the arborist meets with involved parties, reviews relevant materials, and completes the report that is submitted to DEP for review/approval.

Mr. Rebmman asked if soliciting quotes to do the work would be required. Mr. DiCicco recommended doing so.

Ms. George stressed the importance of submitting a complete and accurate report, noting that DEP closely reviews it item by item.

“Our current report is a template,” she noted advising each commission member to secure and read a copy.

Mr. Penrose suggested that a complete new report might not be necessary.

“We need the professional more as a guide perhaps, to update the existing report than to do an entirely new report,” he said.

Ms. George agreed, adding that input from bodies such as this commission is essential “to tell them (DEP) what we anticipate and need in the future”.

Mr. Penrose noted that Mr. Champion and Public Works employees know the township’s “hot spots”. Mr. Rebmman indicated that he’d be willing to undertake the actual writing of the report, with input from fellow commission members and other “professionals”.

Mr. Rosenthal suggested that the Cape May County Planning Board may have a copy of the township’s last tree survey (for reference purposes). Mr. Rebmman will email them about this possibility.

Moving on, Mr. DiCicco said that he is trying to set up a meeting with DT School Superintendent Mark Miller. Recycling at the school will be one of the topics. Mr. Penrose had previously expressed interest in joining that meeting. He said that he had “informally” examined the recyclables container outside the school and it appeared there was a problem.

Mr. Champion indicated that the school was recycling with separate bins for trash/recyclables but that there have been some problems with materials being commingled.

“If it isn’t done right, the MUA can cite us,” he said.

Mr. McManus asked if the MUA did presentations for school staff. Mr. Rebmann will contact Lynn Crumbock at the MUA to find out.

Mr. Penrose suggested using clear plastic bags for recycling vs black bags. Mr. McManus pointed out that any suggestions about supplies should be forwarded to the school before any ordering for supplies for the new school year.

Discussion continued with Mr. Champion about electronics recycling, much of it reiterating points raised with MUA Deputy Director John Baron during his visit at the May commission meeting.

Commission members raised the question of the township hiring its own vendor to handle electronics. Mr. Rebmann questioned the economics of such a move. Mr. Champion confirmed that residents can, with a call to Public Works, arrange to bring e-recyclables to the Public Works garage during regular business hours.

Mr. Rebmann, speaking on behalf of the township museum, thanked Mr. McManus for arranging with Roberta Nuss, Dennisville Girl Scout leader, to have the troop help with the garden at the museum. Mr. McManus noted that the gardens still needed mulch. Mr. Champion replied that the mulch can be obtained from the MUA. Mr. Rebmann will email him to arrange delivery. He, Miss Leatherwood, and Mr. McManus will spread the mulch after it’s delivered. Rebmann will draft letters thanking the scouts. Mr. DiCicco asked that the letters be forwarded to Jackie Justice for the township committee.

Regarding the municipal garden, the commission agreed to set a “work date” to perform what members feel is a first step to rehabbing the garden, as suggested by Mr. McManus: clean-up.

He added that contacting local nurseries and landscapers for donations of native plantings can follow, with the planting to be done in the fall. Mr. Rebmann is drafting a letter to send out to a list of vendors the commission is developing. Mr. McManus volunteered to safe keep any donated plants until they are needed.

The commission will participate in National Night Out in August. Ms. George showed a banner she felt would be appropriate. It will be used at NNO, members agreed. So far, Ms

George and Mr. Rebmann will attend. Mr. Rebmann will contact Kim Herron, Recreation Supervisor, concerning space arrangements.

There was discussion about participation in fall event in Upper Township with that community's Green Team. Members agreed to consider this once more details develop.

Mr. DiCicco updated the commission on the outdoor wood boiler ordinance. It has been tabled pending consideration of enforcement provisions. He said that township solicitor Jeff April has expressed concern that a number of municipalities that had passed such ordinances have since repealed them. Mr. Penrose will contact Mr. April to learn more. Commission members stressed the need to enact an ordinance as there is presently nothing to regulate the installation these devices.

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.