

**Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board
Meeting May 1st, 2024 at the Canale Training Center**

In attendance:

Officers Present - Stephen Fiedler, Co-Chairperson Alex Perri, Co-Chairperson

Members Present - Dick Colby, Dan Crum, Emma Witt,

Members Absent - Mike Hogan, Ken Sooy, Lisa March, Belinda Chester

Commissioner Representative - Andrew Parker -present

County Staff - Greg Brookins, D.H.P.W. - present

Secretary - Eric Husta, D.D.P.R. – present

Guests: Nicole Lambert, Program Coordinator, Special Events, Atlantic County Parks

Old Business: None

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 PM and a flag salute was conducted. The minutes from our April meeting were approved.

Presentations:

Nicole Lambert presented a slide show explaining the new programs currently being conducted within the park system. These included a variety of events geared toward both children and adults covering the fields of recreation and environmental education.

Recent programming has included, history hikes, nature walks, orienteering, craft classes, and single day events such as a Halloween festival and Easter egg hunt.

Nicole's presentation concluded with discussion on future goals such as incorporating the greenhouses and pollinator garden into future environmental education programs.

General Discussion topics:

Discussion was had on the NJDEP's Visiting Vehicle Use Map. Steve Fiedler introduced a resolution urging the County Commissioners to support the VVUM. After considering updates from Commissioner Parker, it was decided a vote would be taken on the group's position of supporting the language of the resolution at this time. The vote passed unanimously but consideration was given to the idea of writing a formal letter to the Commissioners in lieu of a resolution.

The group talked at length about offshore wind as well. Commissioner Parker explained his position on the topic as well as noted the discussion on offshore wind will persist for the foreseeable future.

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Alex Perri updated the group on a recent coin drop that generated \$1,500. The funds will be used toward the Absecon Green Team's community garden. There was also discussion on the NJ State Long Trail and the remaining parcels needed to make the trail contiguous through our county.

Dan Crum provided the group with details on a cat that died from Tularemia it contracted from a rabbit it had captured. He also noted seeing a large black snake on his property recently.

Steve Fiedler noted the May meeting of the Native Plant Society will be held at the Glen by the Bay property. Details on date and time will follow shortly.

The evening concluded with a brief discussion on whether the group should take a field trip or hold a meeting in June to focus on agenda topics for the fall season. For now, it looks like we will be holding a meeting on June 5th at the Canale Training Center.

The meeting adjourned at 8:53 PM.

Our next meeting is currently scheduled for June 5th, 2024 at 7PM at the Canale Training Center in EHT.

cc: Dennis Levinson, County Executive
Jerry DelRosso, County Administrator
Maureen Kern, Chairperson - Board of County Commissioners
Andrew Parker, Board of County Commissioners – PEAB Representative
Greg Brookins, Department Head Public Works
All Advisory Board Members