

**Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board**  
**Meeting January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 online via Webex**

In attendance:

**Officers Present** - Bill Reinert – Chairman,

**Members Present** – Dan Crum, Stephen Fielder, Heather Warburton, Dick Colby, Lisa March, Ken Sooy

**Members Absent** - Mike Hogan – Vice Chairman,

**Commissioner Representative** – James Bertino - absent

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

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

**Guests** - Belinda Chester

**New Business:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 PM and the group reorganized for the 2022 year. Bill Reinert was unanimously approved as the Chairman and Mike Hogan was unanimously approved as the Vice-Chairman. It was also decided the group would continue to meet virtually via WebEx until further evaluation on the Covid-19 situation took place. A spreadsheet with the current contact information for members was requested as were samples of the meeting minutes from other county Park and Environment Advisory Boards. Eric Husta agreed to provide the updated spreadsheet and conduct a search for sample minutes for review. Bill Reinert updated the group on his attendance at a public meeting on Bikeway West on 11/10/21.

**Roundtable Discussion topics:**

Steve Fiedler discussed the Sustainable Jersey award for the 8 towns working on his film regarding the Mullica River watershed. He is currently gauging interest in a similar project on the Burlington County side of the river. Mention was also made of the upcoming Friends Along the Mullica virtual webinar dates of 1/27, 2/16, 3/24, and 4/20. Steve updated the group on a Homegrown National Park project currently being conducted by Doug Tallamy and the available free brochure. The website for the project is [Homegrownnationalpark.org](http://Homegrownnationalpark.org). He concluded with an update on various projects he is working on with Stockton University students including an updated environmental inventory (flora and fauna) for Galloway Township and various other planning documents.

Bill Reinert mentioned the retirement of Fred Akers, the administrator of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association. GEHWA has recently hired an assistant to be trained as his possible replacement. He also prompted discussion about sidewalk easements and the responsibility of snow removal and maintenance. Bill informed the group of the upcoming Salem Oak seedling pickup dates in March and May. He finished by updating the group on his trip to the Arizona/New Mexico area and discussing his recent photography on Facebook.

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Heather Warburton updated the group on a recent proposal to develop the city-owned property surrounding a portion of the Egg Harbor City lake. The public attended a recent hearing and the exchange prompted the board to change their votes and ultimately decline the proposal. She also discussed a recent meeting of the American Geophysical Union where there was mention of the fate of the ice sheet holding the “Doomsday Glacier” in place. There is concern the sheet will let loose in turn causing a drastic rise in sea levels as it melts.

Dan Crum mentioned the Health Department has recently named a new department head.

Lisa March mentioned the New York Avenue bridge has been recently reopened.

Dick Colby mentioned his yearly list of possible topics for the board to consider as well as the desire to see some of the minutes from other advisory boards.

Eric Husta mentioned the ongoing projects in Estell Manor Park and Lake Lenape East and updated the group on the details surrounding the construction of the first of seven nodes of columbaria in the veterans cemetery.

Greg Brookins discussed the challenges surrounding the efforts to remove the recent snows from county roads.

Belinda Chester discussed the return of the Master Gardener program which will resume online. She mentioned the program will be looking to add more environmental stewardship as well. Registration can be completed online at the Rutgers continuing education website. The course consists of meetings once per week for 15 weeks and begins on 2/9 while the environmental stewardship program begins 1/25.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:17 PM.

**Our next meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday, February 2nd, 2022 at 7 PM .**

cc: Dennis Levinson, County Executive  
Jerry DeRosso, County Administrator  
Diana Rutala, Deputy 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