

**Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board
Meeting February 2nd, 2022 online via Webex**

In attendance:

Officers Present - Bill Reinert – Chairman,

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

Members Absent - Heather Warburton, Belinda Chester

Commissioner Representative – Andrew Parker - present

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

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

New Business:

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 PM and the group unanimously approved the minutes from our January meeting. There was group discussion on Dick Colby’s list of possible topics for 2022 and members were asked for their input on the topics they were most interested in discussing as well. The development and connection of bikeway west was the top choice for many members and extensive discussion was had on the topic. The group also took a moment to introduce themselves to Commissioner Andrew Parker, the new Commissioner representative for the board in 2022.

Roundtable Discussion topics:

Steve Fiedler noted bikeway west was one of his top choices for topics to consider this year and also updated the group on statewide and local plastic pollution reduction efforts. He stressed the need to get the word out and noted enforcement actions will reside with the County Health Department.

Ken Sooy’s top choice of discussion topics was invasive plant species and the development of a “Do Not Plant List” for local residents. Ken also updated the group on a recent Galloway Township ordinance requiring commercial establishments over 25,000SF to provide charging stations for electric vehicles.

Dick Colby listed community solar as his top choice followed by groundwater pollution mapping as his second. The idea of mapping the pollution is of particular concern in his hometown of Egg Harbor City, where groundwater pollution has extensively impacted the town’s ability to locate and utilize sources of fresh groundwater. He also suggested the idea of trying to engage an NJDEP representative to speak on the topic.

Lisa March listed the expansion of the bikeway as her topic of choice as well.

Dan Crum agreed on the importance of the development of bikeway west and added the idea of possible hydroelectric power at Lake Lenape as another topic of discussion. He briefed the group on the public meeting regarding the reconstruction of the dam and noted there were presentations scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, February 8th.

Mike Hogan noted bikeway west, invasive species, and electric vehicle charging stations in parks as his topics of most concern. He updated the group on his recent purchase of an electric vehicle which prompted discussion

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of available charging station locations. Greg Brookins noted the county already had two charging stations, one at the public works building in Northfield and a second at the Mays Landing branch of the county library, both being available for use free of charge. Dick Colby noted it would be great to see this service provided at all county library locations in the future.

Bill Reinert mentioned the bikeway west project as his greatest topic of concern and mentioned inviting John Peterson to speak on the subject at next month's meeting. Greg Brookins and Eric Husta agreed to coordinate the invitation.

Commissioner Andrew Parker introduced himself to the group and provided an update on the status of ACUA's landfill space and their possible future plans to address the situation. He also gave a comprehensive overview of the development of a new Law Enforcement Activities Program (LEAP) in Egg Harbor Township. Officer Bertino is leading an effort to develop a local property near McKee City that will include a park consisting of amenities such as basketball courts, pickleball courts, and various hiking trails. He also provided a brief overview of the history of Colonel John McKee, the wealthy African American philanthropist who ultimately founded McKee City and left his fortune to his community rather than his family members. Mention was also made of an upcoming local program highlighting this history.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:27 PM.

Our next meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday, March 2nd, 2022 at 7 PM via WebEx.

cc: Dennis Levinson, County Executive
Jerry DelRosso, 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