

**Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board  
Meeting February 3rd, 2021 online via Webex**

In attendance:

**Officers Present** - Bill Reinert – Chairman, Mike Hogan – Vice Chairman

**Members Present** - Stephen Fielder, Dick Colby, Lisa March, Heather Warburton, Ken Sooy

**Members Absent** - Dan Crum

**Freeholder Representative** – James Bertino - absent

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

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

**Guests**- Rick Dovey ACUA, Greg Seher ACUA

**Old Business:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 PM and the business of reorganization was handled. A motion was made by Mike Hogan and seconded by Dick Colby to keep current positions unchanged with Bill Reinert as Chairman, and Mike Hogan as Vice Chairman. All members voted in favor.

**Guest Speakers:**

Rick Dovey and Greg Seher of the ACUA spoke to the group on various issues concerning community solar. Rick began by providing a brief history of the permitting of the concept 3 years ago noting their project involved a competition for the bid award with the power provided being purchased by the city of Pleasantville. He also outlined some of the parameters, noting the target of the low-to-moderate income group and the fact that the ACUA is a public entity as determining factors.

A brief discussion of the differences between the opt-in and opt-out process was had along with focus on the power delivery process through Atlantic City Electric. Discussion was also had regarding the condition of the power grid and planned upgrades coming soon. Rick and Greg talked about the likely increase in community solar projects as well as the reduction in the cost of electric to the consumer. When asked if the ACUA would be receptive to additional solar projects Mr. Dovey replied they would. He also mentioned the arrival of new alternatives citing “solar condos” as an example.

Rick and Greg concluded with discussion regarding the competition to deliver alternative sources of power through avenues such as offshore wind. There is currently a project in the works off the coast of Atlantic City with focus now on possible locations to bring the power ashore through facilities such as the Beesley’s Point or Oyster Creek power plants. Rick also noted the ACUA is not looking to generate revenue from solar power and groups such as the Atlantic County Economic Alliance are trying to bring more projects to the area with local schools being prime candidates as host sites.

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**Roundtable Discussion topics:**

Group discussion was had on developing a list of invasive plant species that should not be planted throughout the municipalities within the county as well as distributing lists of suggested native species to utilize instead. Focus was on the best way to do this with suggestions of pushing the lists to municipalities as one route while asking that the lists be adopted locally during ordinance revisions as another.

Mike Hogan updated the group on efforts to remove Bradford pears, suggesting girdling as the most effective method. He will be assembling information on invasive plant species and putting something together for distribution to local municipalities in the near future.

Dick Colby reported brisk distribution of his map of Egg Harbor City hikes recently. He also made the suggestion there be some sort of advertisement of needed repairs to the David C. Wood Center distributed at the electronics recycling days held on the 4-H grounds.

Steve Fiedler informed the group of Galloway's participation in this year's Tree Recovery Program with the intent to distribute 1,000 seedlings. He also mentioned the Glenn Park property and the status of invasive species removal there along with the process of turning some of the woody materials into mulch. Mention was also made of his recent meeting with Sustainable Jersey and World Water Day.

Heather Warburton updated the group on a recent lawsuit NJDEP filed against the Department of Defense for their use of firefighting foams at Fort Dix and the FAA Technical Center. The claim points to the contamination of ground water from residual chemicals found in the foam.

Eric Husta provided the group with a brief overview of the purchase of the Lake Lenape West tract while noting the Mares Run access exists as a private lane serving privately held residential lots along the Egg Harbor River. He mentioned the lane's existence prior to the County's purchase of the land and that the lane does not serve as public access to the Lenape West tract.

Bill Reinert discussed his involvement in removing deer from a swamp pink enclosure and noted he would be seeking a speaker from the New Jersey Watersavers Group for next month's meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

**Our next meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday, March 3rd, 2021 at 7 PM via WebEx.**

cc: Dennis Levinson, County Executive  
Jerry DelRosso, County Administrator  
Diana Rutala, Dep. County Administrator  
Maureen Kern, Chairperson - Board of County Commissioners  
James Bertino, Board of County Commissioners – PEAB Representative  
Greg Brookins, Dept. Head Public Works  
All Advisory Board Members