

**Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board
Meeting April 4th, 2018 at the Canale Training Center**

In attendance:

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

Members Present - Steve Fiedler, Dick Colby, James Galvin, Elmer Ripley, Ken Sooy, Heather Warburton

Members Absent - Jill Miles

Freeholder Representative – James Bertino – present

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

Secretary - Eric Husta – C.P.S. - present

A motion was made to accept the minutes from our November meeting. The motion was seconded and carried.

Guest speaker:

Fred Akers, Administrator of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association, was a guest speaker for the evening. Fred discussed the proposal he has been working on to have a critical property in Hamilton Township purchased through Green Acres funding along with a County match of open space funds. The property is at the end of Second Avenue and is comprised largely of wetlands.

Fred also discussed the potential for the County to acquire 35 acres adjacent to the 700 acre Cologne Tract in Hamilton Township. He has been in contact with County Administration regarding the property and is currently attempting to get a letter of support from Hamilton Township officials in order to move the acquisition forward.

Further discussion was had regarding the County's open space plan and the use of the open space tax funds. Fred also cited a strong migratory run of river herring present in the Egg Harbor River right now. Eric was asked about the status of the fish ladder and whether it was open. (*The status was verified and it had already been opened.*)

Discussion topics:

Mike Hogan updated the group on Wharton State Forest ATV damage and noted the State had recently closed some access roads. He also mentioned a cleanup of Chew Road in Hammonton and asked for County assistance in removing the bagged litter.

Dick Colby presented various maps and other pieces of information regarding the history and current status of the Clarks Landing area along the Mullica River. He and Steve Fiedler opened a thorough discussion of the ownership, history, and condition of the area as well. Steve detailed the special use permit he was issued by the State to clean up the property with assistance from

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the ACUA. He also presented the group with his investigation of the ownership of the parcels in and around the Clark's Landing Area. Steve mentioned he would like the County to look into the issue of ownership before proceeding with a request to make some basic improvements to the property including signage, trash pickup, and the addition of minimal parking. The constant use of the property was noted and the feeling was the area would benefit greatly from some attention and care. There was also discussion regarding NJ Lands Trust and their holdings as well as the historic cemetery on the property.

Elmer Ripley mentioned he received a map from Maine dated 1872 showing the Second Avenue property, previously discussed by Fred Akers, as an island. He also mentioned evidence of a recent fish kill (possibly gizzard shad) in the river. Elmer also noted the metal sign in Gaskill Park needs to be repainted. Eric Husta mentioned the wood sign at Gaskill Park was recently blown down in a heavy wind storm and the County was in the process of getting a new one made.

Ken Sooy discussed a recent application in Galloway for a new borrow pit.

Greg Brookins noted the Public Works department is winding down from snow duty.

Eric Husta mentioned the expansion of the Lake Lenape West campground was in the process of opening for the year. As part of the new project, the park system will be utilizing new dumpsters which are now completely covered to comply with new DEP regulations. Discussion was also had regarding the free tree seedling giveaway parks has participated in in the past and how the 5 year superstorm Sandy recovery effort has become an ongoing effort with some new partners involved.

New member Heather Warburton introduced herself and asked about public exposure for the group including the use of Facebook. Further discussion was had regarding the parks and public communication, web information, and getting the word out about parks and the board in general.

Discussion was also had regarding the process by which a Pinelands designee is chosen and the role the Board of Chosen Freeholders has in the process.

Bill Reinert discussed the discovery of a new tick in Hunterdon County, New Jersey. He also mentioned an upcoming tick survey in May. Horseshoe crab surveys will be in full swing from the end of April until June. Bill also mentioned the construction of oyster reefs in the Delaware Bay and the group discussed shellfish harvesting and the presence of pollutants as well.

Motion to adjourn was made at 9:11 PM.

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The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 3rd 2018 , at 7 PM at the Canale Training Center in Egg Harbor Township.

cc: Dennis Levinson, County Executive
Jerry DelRosso, County Administrator
Diana Rutala, Dep. County Administrator
Frank D. Formica, Chairman - Board of Freeholders
Alex Marino, Board of Freeholders – PEAB Representative
Greg Brookins, Dept. Head Public Works
All Advisory Board Members