

WATERFORD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (WTEC)

MINUTES – DECEMBER 16, 2021

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM. This meeting was held in the Senior Center. The Sunshine Rule was announced and the pledge of allegiance recited.

Members: Kelly Andrews, Pat Butenis, Terry Ciarlante, Gabrielle DeSorte, Ed Paul, Harleigh Pino, Art Shaw, Mike Ward

Liaison: Rick Yeatman

Green Team: Craig Buffington, Richard Casian,

Roll Call: P. Butenis, R. Casian, T. Ciarlante, E. Paul, A. Shaw, M. Ward, R. Yeatman

Excused: K. Andrews, C. Buffington, G. DeSorte, H. Pino

2. **Minutes from November meeting:** A. Shaw moved to approve, T. Ciarlante seconded. Minutes were approved.

3. **Open to Public:** None present.

4. **Chair's report: Winter on the Avenue** was a great success with a very good turnout. Our trivia wheel was the draw for our table and we gave out about 100 reusable shopping totes. Someone has suggested the event be renamed the Waterford Winter Festival which is more descriptive and we liked the idea. Our request to buy a **new trailer** was approved and the chair will notify us when volunteers can transfer the contents from the old trailer which will be turned over to public works. We need a new lock and are getting quotes to put our name and logo on the new trailer, either with a wrap, paint or vinyl lettering. E. Paul will remain as chair for the time being but we were urged to continue thinking of a **successor**.

5. **Clean Communities:** T. Ciarlante reported that we have spent all of our 2020 balance and have \$15,277.09 in our **2021 account**. We should keep \$10-12,000 in reserve. We also have \$6000 in our Township allotment. We discussed how the township hired someone last year to pick up litter, at \$15.00 an hour, on a part-time basis, but came to no conclusion about renewing this activity. Our FaceBook page continues to attract readers with positive comments.

6. **Township liaison:** R. Yeatman reported that **Covid-19 cases** were skyrocketing in the township and they were monitoring the schools and municipal employees. The Department of Environmental Protection emailed its listing of 276 White Horse pike as a **contaminated site** (likely soil and water) with a possible impact on regional ground water.

7. **Land Use Board liaison:** M. Ward reported that the **Atco Dragway** owner has filed a lawsuit challenging the township's denial of the application from Insurance Auto Auctions. He attended a meeting of the **Pinelands Municipal Council** where townships discussed their need for more financial support from Trenton to meet increasing environmental regulations and unfunded mandates. Some townships, with large areas of protected forests, cannot increase commercial ratables to derive additional tax income. Earlier state subsidies have been phased out and smaller, less wealthy communities are facing what they feel is an unfair burden. The **Pinelands Commission** hopes to be back in its office (New Lisbon) next month which should speed up the processing of pending applications. Delayed action on applications sometimes results in the applicant moving ahead with the proposed project, without waiting for approval. At a recent county farm board meeting, the impact on native ecology from the exploding **deer population** was discussed. Deer eat oak acorns which means fewer oak trees, changing the vegetation profile of the area. The authorized hunting of deer has not kept the population in sufficient check and there are not enough butchers to process the deer which are killed.

8. **Trails ambassador:** R. Casian had shared a photo of trash that was dumped on a trail and reported finding two more dumping sites on Swamp Road, near Burnt Mill. We discussed the problem of trucks dumping construction and other waste in the forest and the possibility of installing cameras to catch such vehicles and providing the license plate numbers to the police. M. Ward and R. Yeatman will raise this with the township council.

9. **New Business:** We agreed to postpone discussion of the April 2 SJLWT cleanup, our April 9 Spring Cleanup and the April 23 War Memorial Committee event until our January meeting.

10. **Pinelands Commission notifications:** None received.

11. **Comments from the public:** NA

12. **Comments from members:** None

13. **Adjournment:** T. Ciarlante moved to adjourn and A. Shaw seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:00.

Next proposed meeting date: January 20, 2022