

**WATERFORD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (WTEC)
MINUTES - December 19th, 2024**

Members: Rick Yeatman - Chairperson, Terry Ciarlante - Clean Communities Coordinator, David Demsey, Craig Buffington, Gabrielle DeSorte, Mike Ward, Jennifer Treloar, Kyle Santos, Charlie Damiani. Bob Doney - Township Liaison

Green Team Members: Rich Casian, Ed Paul, Charlie Damiani

Meeting called to order at 7:04 PM. This meeting was held in the Waterford Township Municipal Courtroom. In accordance with Chapter 231 of the Open Public Meeting Act, notice of the time and place for this meeting was listed in the Central Record and the Courier Post. The Sunshine Rule was announced and the Pledge of Allegiance recited.

Roll Call: Rick Yeatman, Terry Ciarlante, Jennifer Treloar, Ed Paul, Craig Buffington, Mike Ward, & Charlie Damiani. Absent: Dave Demsey, Rich Cassian, Gabrielle DeSorte, Kyle Santos, & Bob Doney.

Reading and approval of minutes: Minutes from the November 2024 meeting were read. Rick asked for a correction to the roll call, Charlie Damiani was omitted. Mike Ward motioned to accept the minutes with corrections Craig Buffington seconded. Motion passed.

Members of the public: Kevin Hassel, a resident of Waterford for four years, was in attendance. He is interested in becoming involved in our activities. Commission members present introduced themselves and discussed the work of the Commission.

Chair's report: (Rick Yeatman) Thanks to Ed, Terry, Rich, and Gabrielle for making our Winter on the Avenue presence a success. Rick also confirmed that Waterford Twp Public Works accepts used and broken batteries. Public Works, located on Burnt Mill Road, is open every Saturday from 9 AM to Noon.

Atco Lake: Rick noted that the trails on the south side of the lake were widened and covered with wood chips. No other news to report.

Clean Communities Report: (Terry Ciarlante) We had 2000 views in the past 28 days, which is up 186%. We have 548 Facebook followers. Our balance is \$54,640.10. Terry needs suggestions for items we should purchase for Spring Clean Up. Jennifer consulted prior minutes and mentioned pails and sturdy trash bags. Ed said we were good on those items. Ed suggested koozies for bottles and cans. Another suggestion was for more stickers.

Rick reported that the last of the street leaf blowers was purchased using Clean community funds. The Commission discussed educational materials. Rick reiterated all of us looking into items for prizes and getting back to Terry.

Township Committee Liaison Report: (Bob Doney) Bob was absent. Rick mentioned that there were two deficiencies on the Clean Communities ledger that Bob needs to review and correct.

Land Use Board Liaison Report: (Mike Ward) There was discussion at the Monday meeting about possibly declaring the area off of the jughandle on route 73 a redevelopment area. Doing so could increase commercial ratables for the Township. Mike also discussed ongoing PILOT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) negotiations with developers.

Trails Ambassador Report: (Rich Casian) Rich was absent, no report.

Old Business: TREX benches. Rick has determined that Kohls in Voorhees (RT 73 & Cooper) accepts TREX recycling. Rick hopes to have more information for us at the January meeting.

Environmental School programs: (Rick Yeatman) Rick had a successful meeting with Waterford School Superintendent M Nolan. They will continue discussing trips and programs they would like to consider. Rick had a discussion with Wharton State Forest Superintendent Chris Ford and Mike Achey from the Fire Service about creating an educational classroom program on forest fires and forest regrowth for 8-10 year olds. Rick asked us for volunteers for a sub-committee to handle this. Charlie Damiani mentioned that learning about forest fires can be scary for children. Charlie will talk to his connections at the Forestry Service for ideas. Rick has also reached out to the Jersey Land & Water Trust, but hasn't heard back from them.

Rick mentioned that due to climate change, we have no guarantee that natural reforestation will result in similar regrowth. Mike Ward noted that at one of his recent meetings, he found out that we are seeing an increase in pine growth and a decrease in oak growth.

Other topics considered for environmental school programs: natural reforestation, pollinators, and organic farming. Per Mike Ward, "kids like bugs."

Pinelands Commission notifications (Mike Ward) nothing to report.

Meeting open to the public - No comments from the public.

Comments from members: Rick advised Kevin Hassel to email a letter of interest to Township Clerk Dawn Liedtka or Deputy Mayor Bob Doney.

Motion was made to adjourn by Craig Buffington, seconded by Terry Ciarlante. The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 PM.

Next Meeting Date: January 16th, 2025.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Treloar, WTEC Recording Secretary