**WATERFORD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (WTEC)**

**MINUTES - November 21st, 2024**

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

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

**Meeting called to order** at 7:03 PM. This meeting was held in the Waterford Township Municipal Courtroom. The Sunshine Rule was announced and the Pledge of Allegiance recited.

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

**Members of the public**: None present

**Reading and approval of minutes:** Minutes from the September 2024 meeting were read and approved. (Motion, Kyle Santos, Second, Terry Ciarlante) We did not have a quorum for the October meeting.

**Chair’s report**: Congratulations to Terry Tomassone-Ciarlante for receiving a Mayor’s award for her steadfast efforts as our Clean Communities Coordinator. Terry also heroically assisted an elderly man recently whose car was disabled on the Atco Avenue railroad tracks.

Our 9/21 Fall shredding event and our 10/5 Fall Litter Clean-up were both very successful. We also set up at the Brotherton Octoberfest on Atco Avenue the afternoon of 10/5, and attended the Atco Assembly of God Annual Family Fall Fest on 10/19.

**Atco Lake:** Per Rick the lilypads are dying due to change of season. Deputy Mayor Bob Doney reported that on November 19th, Camden County adopted a resolution to adopt the deed for Atco Lake. Rick also noted that Camden County has widened the trail on the left side of the lake.

Rick announced that Charlie Damiani has been appointed to the Green Team by the Township Committee. Welcome back Charlie!

**Clean Communities Report**: Terry Ciarlante: Account balance is $54890.00. Social media report: our Facebook page has 544 followers, 28.1% men, 71.9% women. Our top post was the leaf schedule. Terry also provided a breakdown of our followers by town as follows: Atco - 193; Voorhees - 57; Winslow - 41; Hammonton - 24; Sicklerville - 19; West Berlin - 17; Mount Laurel - 16; Berlin - 15; Medford - 14; and Philadelphia - 8.

We ran a Facebook ad for our 9/21 town clean up and our 10/5 shredding event.

Rick reported that Public Works has received their leaf blowers purchased with Clean Community funds. We discussed permitting the purchase of an additional leaf blower. A motion was made by Craig to permit Public Works to purchase another leaf blower. Seconded by Kyle, motion was approved.

**Township Committee Liaison Report:** Bob Doney: Bob reported that the Township Committee is working with TRIAD, a grant writing company. They are based in Vineland and are paid hourly. They will host a kick off meeting with town businesses to help identify more opportunities for grants. Our township engineer also writes grants for us. Bob reports that there are 2-3 grants that are highly probable, with more in January. Bob reported that the most important next step is establishing a process with TRIAD and local business owners.

Ed inquired who pays the fee for TRIAD; Bob answered it will be a new budget item.

Bob also reports that the Township Committee has hired a new QPA. (Qualified Purchasing Agent)

Bob stated that he would like to see if there is grant money available for expanding the Township Municipal Building. He also wants to see if there is grant money available for digitizing our records. Of note is that police records would have to be digitized here, on Township premises.

Upcoming Township events: (Bob Doney, cont’d) 11/29 - Tree lighting and dedication event at Lions Park. 12/7 - Winter on the Avenue.

Bob is working on the budget and reports he is “ahead of the curve.”

**Land Use Board Liaison Report:** Mike Ward. UFP received approval to put up a shed to protect wood products. There was also an agreement to put in a retention pond on and offsite to remediate the effects of putting in unapproved millings.

**Trails Ambassador Report:** Rich Casian: Rich reports lots of deer. There were a number of forest fires in early November, and the deer are seeking water. Rich also reported seeing lots of bucks. His son also took a picture of a bald eagle, which we will post on our Facebook page.

Rick discussed the local efforts to thank fire fighters, and reported that no structures had been destroyed

Bob asked if it would help to have more cameras with a subscription service. Rich will research the cost and report back for the December meeting. Rick asked if it would be worthwhile to ask the township solicitor about legal concerns with web based cameras. Gabrielle and Ed stated that there is no expectation of privacy.

**Old Business:** TREX benches. Rick made lots of phone calls trying to ascertain the viability of doing this program. We will need to bundle and take recycling items in to collection points. Home Depot is supposed to be a collection point, but when Rick called them, they knew nothing about it. He hasn’t been able to determine the closest collection point. The consensus of the Commission was to table this item. Battery boxes. Jen reported that after researching this further, it looks to be a money pit. Bob mentioned that Andy Wade recycles batteries, and he will discuss recycling with him. Mike Ward made a motion to table the battery boxes; Gabrielle seconded. The Commission voted to table.

**Environmental School programs:** Rick spoke to Superintendent Nolan. Programs and trips discussed were forest fires - cause, effect and reforestation; a schooner trip, and a trip to the Philadelphia Museum of Natural History. The superintendent will get back to Rick within thirty days on trips and programs they’d like us to fund.

**Pinelands Commission notifications** - Mike Ward: nothing to report.

**Meeting open to the public** - No members of the public were present.

**Comments from members**: Mike Ward discussed the DEP’s REAL program. (Resilient Environments and Landscapes) He suggested we all look it up. Mike expressed his concern that Waterford Township could be adversely affected by broad rule making. He reported that the NJ Farm Bureau posted a 45 page protest to the REAL program. Bob inquired about the effective date; Mike stated that the comment period ended on 11/7, and the DEP would like this in place in early 2025.

Mike also reported that Steve, the owner of the local car wash, patented a new conveyor system for car washes. He would like to see us have a prototype here.

Gabrielle asked if we could do a mailer to elicit reports about illegal dumping. She showed a mailer sent out by Wharton as an example. Ed stated it would be easier if we gave people a way to upload photos. Rick mentioned we could do a bulk postcard mailing.

Rick mentioned that Winter on the Avenue is 12/7, and we need to be there by 3:30 to set up.

Charlie Damiani stated that the Louden volunteers will be distributing literature with fire numbers and the Pacific alert system.

Craig Buffington stated the American Legion moved its flag disposal to 11/30.

**Motion was made to adjourn** by Terry Ciarlante, seconded by Craig Buffington. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

**Next Meeting Date: December 19th, 2024**

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Treloar, WTEC member