

SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

VIRTUAL MEETING

MINUTES OF OCTOBER 13TH, 2020

PRESENT: Eric Allen (Chair), Christy Cheever (Vice Chair), Hope Blaythorne, Doug Shaw, Jim Mansfield, Barry Fetterolf, William Birnes, Joe Kubiak (Associate), John Francis (Liaison) and Christine Terranova (Administrator)

I. OPENING OF MEETING

Chair Allen called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 8, 2020

Upon a Motion by Doug Shaw, seconded by James Mansfield, the meeting minutes for September 8th, 2020 were unanimously approved.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Primrose Creek Watershed Association will hold their annual meeting virtually on October 29, 2020 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. A guest speaker will be attending to speak about creating a bird sanctuary in your yard; the watershed will be offering a gift certificate from Wildbirds Unlimited; providing quarry drone footage; watershed updates, etc.

The Aquetong Watershed will hold their annual meeting virtually on October 15th and will have an annual cleanup on Saturday, October 17th.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Chair Allen thanked Jim Mansfield for attending the EAC Summit Meeting last week which included approximately twelve EAC groups from Bucks and Montgomery Counties. A major issue is how Covid is affecting everything including the organization of the meetings by Zooming as opposed to physically attending meetings.

V. DISCUSSION ITEMS

Ready for 100 (Jim Mansfield)

Mr. Mansfield presented an updated summary to say he has continued with the Clean Energy Planning course which recently included energy procurement (different ways to buy your energy) and efficiency (reduce the amount of energy used and simply documenting amount of energy you use on a regular basis will help people to realize how much they are spending to reduce the amount of use). The initiated stakeholder interviews that began with Dennis Carney and Alex Nagy showed that a number of efficiency projects are already done (Township building lights, traffic lights and introducing two new hybrids to the police force every year going forward); the Township has already purchased 15% of renewable electricity; and, a number of areas where direction is limited would be the water and wastewater management and the streetlights. Mr. Kubiak stated that Fieldstone is currently converting their lighting system to all LED lights.

Mr. Mansfield presented a draft baseline of 2019 energy usage analysis for Solebury Township and included the electricity usage of certain areas within the Township. He then presented the usage in 2019 comparing electricity, gasoline, propane and diesel. The real goal is to lower residential, commercial and highway levels. Mr. Mansfield continued to review Solebury's CO2 Emissions.

Liaison Francis stated that the message to reduce usage needs to get out to residents and provide encouragement with some action items.

Ms. Blaythorne suggested to reach out to the homeowners' associations boards within the township to communicate energy efficiency with residents within their developments.

Tuscarora Oil Spill

Liaison Francis has communicated with Mark Fried who has reached out to Shell but has not heard back from Shell to provide an update for today's meeting. Hopefully there will be an update on the situation for the next meeting.

Rules & Regulations (Doug Shaw)

Mr. Shaw spoke with Larry Peseski, HARB Chairman, on September 18th, who stated that he would like to finish the final draft of the HARB Guidelines prior to making any recommended sustainability changes concerning the windows and solar panels within a historic district. Mr. Shaw stated he would be invited to the November HARB meeting to speak on the issue. Mr. Peseski felt that some HARB members would find it difficult to accept this sustainability revision to the guidelines, but he would share Mr. Shaw's document with the HARB committee.

Liaison Francis stated there will be a steering group for sustainability for Planning Commission, the Environmental Advisory Committee and the Board of Supervisors and will hold a Zoom meeting next Wednesday, October 21st, at Noontime to set priorities.

Wild Area Stewardship/Tree City (Hope Blaythorne)

Ms. Blaythorne voiced her concerns about political signs being placed on public land and not being removed in the required time.

Ms. Blaythorne stated that she will be attending a Zoom Birdtown Summit on October 24, 2020, by The Bucks County Audubon, to become familiarized again with the program and will report back to the EAC in December.

Ms. Blaythorne stated that since Arbor Day is in February, 2021, EAC should have a goal by the next meeting of understanding what the next steps will be for Solebury Township to be a "Tree City" in time for Arbor Day 2021.

Ms. Blaythorne asked if there is any update on the quarry and its purchase. Liaison Francis stated that aside from two sink holes that have developed on the Solebury School property, there are currently two potential buyers for the quarry property.

Plastic Regulation and Recycling (Christy Cheever)

Ms. Cheever has been attending a course at Bennington School regarding plastic pollution and the focus on public action. The instructor is an expert on plastic pollution and confirmed a lot of the thoughts that EAC suspected. Only about 9% of the world's plastic waste is recycled and that plastics #1 and #2 are the only ones that are reliably being recycled.

Ms. Cheever stated that an assignment from the instructor was to compose a letter to an editor of a local newspaper regarding something that was either plastic related, recycling related or an environmental issue. In her research, she discovered that the Doylestown Borough Council has just submitted a letter to Governor Wolfe to do something about the moratorium on the plastic bag regulation. Ms. Cheever decided to also draft her letter on the same subject matter and sent it to the editor of the Bucks County Courier Times.

The discussion continued regarding recycling, doing a product boycott to get attention to the issue, recycling bottles and cans for a return deposit in trying to take a more aggressive approach to the problem on recycling.

Deer Management (Eric Allen)

Chair Allen stated that the Township currently has a long-term commitment of a \$70,000/year program with the USDA through the end of 2021.

Liaison Francis stated that it has been budgeted for a drone survey to take place in 2021/2022. There is also \$300,000 for a culling program for two years.

Chair Allen asked Liaison Francis if it would be possible for the Township to back out of the arrangement with the USDA.

Liaison Francis stated that the Township would need to have an alternative proposal in place first before moving out of the current program.

Chair Allen suggested that the Township may want to consider hiring sharp shooters as full-time employees of the Township to work on controlling the deer population.

Chair Allen suggested meeting with the deer subcommittee to discuss future possibilities. Chair Allen has received a lengthy email from a Doylestown Township EAC member concerning the deer management and will be having a conference call on Thursday to try and coordinate efforts with Doylestown Township.

Cold-Tar-Based Sealcoat (Barry Fetterolf)

Mr. Fetterolf spoke regarding his handout that has been distributed to all EAC members regarding cold-tar-based sealant. Mr. Fetterolf questioned whether EAC should try to approach the supervisors to write an ordinance insisting they use petroleum base or just try to educate the consumer to use a more environmental, sensible sealant.

Liaison Francis felt it would be good to approach the Township Manager/Roadmaster to have a conversation about this sealant.

Mr. Fetterolf offered to meet with the Township Manager to discuss the issue.

Mr. Kubiak, Mr. Fetterolf and Liaison Francis agreed that public awareness is a good start to putting the information out there.

Chair Allen suggested to talk to the Township Manager and see what he may suggest as the next step to a solution.

VI. Public Comment

None

VII. Adjournment

Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 8:33 p.m.

Christine Terranova
EAC Administrator
Solebury Township

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