

WENONAH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
December 14, 2016

Following the annual Volunteer Appreciation Hour, Chairman Scott Barnes called the Wenonah Environmental Commission to order at 7:40 in accordance with the Open Public Meeting Act at the Jack C. Sheppard Sr. Community Center.

ROLL CALL	PRESENT	ABSENT
Scott Barnes (Chair. / Planning Bd. Rep.)	X	
Sharon Ceravolo	X	
Maria Ceravolo	X	
Bob Bevilacqua	X	
Rich Dilks (Sec.)	X	
Dave Kreck (V. Chair.)		X
Julie Ream	X	

Associate Members Present: Dave Coates.

Public Guests Present: none.

The minutes of the Nov. 9 meeting were approved: (Motion: Bevilacqua, Second: Ream, AIF)

Chairman's Report: Scott Barnes.

Review

Clean Communities day 11/12. Scott noted we achieved the 10 volunteer threshold for receiving CC grant money. Rich reported the Borough has forwarded a voucher for \$494.04. The WEC will receive the funds in the next few weeks.

Turkey Trot table. Nov. 25. Rich maned a table for the WEC during run registration at the Presbyterian Church. Bob noted participation in the Run increased this year from 101 to 125.

Dog injury on trail. Karen Sweeney contacted the WEC reporting a walker's dog was injured when caught on the sharp edges of a felled tree on a trail near Wenonah Lake. Rich contacted the walker and was told where the hazard was. Rich and Bob went out and removed the section of log then reported back to Karen the hazard was removed.

Near-Term Projects

Mantua Creek Trail Improvements. There was considerable discussion on the trail improvement project on Mantua Creek Trail near W. Cherry St. and on what method should be used on the muddy section- boardwalk or rails and stone. Maria offered to help Dave Kreck with the project, which will be undertaken as an eagle scout project by Jack Costantino. Bob said we need to decide on what method to use before we can direct Jack how to proceed. Maria suggested a combination of the two methods, using the boardwalk where tree roots make placing rails difficult. Bob said he would confer with Dave. He also estimated that a 38" wide boardwalk (four 2x8's) would cost about \$8-\$10 per ft. Both Bob and Sharon said the trial needs to be assessed in both wet and dry conditions to determine the placing of the improvements. Maria suggested it would be beneficial for us to learn the techniques of making the board sections for use on other trails as well. The cost of the materials and whether the WEC would need to contribute financially also need to be determined.

Lions Club Donation- Low section of Eldridge Trail. Sharon suggested remedying the flooded parts of the Eldridge Trail with a boardwalk raised above the water level would be a better project than the MCT observation deck. Bob emphasized the Eldridge Trail is one of our most important and used trails and should be our priority. Julie said the Lions should come to our meeting or we go to theirs so we can discuss this directly. Sharon said we need to develop a

plan before proceeding. Bob said the existing small bridges on that section of trail will likely need to be elevated and that the trail may need to be closed there while the work is done. Bob said we would need a wide boardwalk trail there and estimated that a 38" wide trail would cost about \$10 per ft. Bob said we need to do an onsite evaluation before speaking with the Lions. Available WEC members will meet at Comey's Lake on Sunday 12/18 at 1 PM then evaluate the trail section. Bob also reported he and Tommy joined John Forren (in a wet suit) at the beaver dam and John cleaned debris from the flow pipe on 11/25.

Cub scouts. Julie said cub scout leader Bill Ricci contacted her about any opportunities for service projects for the cub scouts, age 8. Maria suggested a trash cleanup at Wenonah Lake.

Kiosk Plaques. Julie reported both plaques are done and she informed Jennie McQuaide of the Woman's Club plaque. Julie said we should wait until warmer weather to attach the plaques.

Beaver activity. Scott noted beaver activity at the RR trestle. Beaver activity and tree gnawing has also been observed at Comey's Lake. There seem to be too many trees for wire wrapping to be effective and we could paint some trunks in spring. Bob said early winter is a peak activity time for the beaver as they are gathering their cache for the coldest months. Scott noted Mayor Dominy has suggested a naming contest for the beaver pond on Eldridge Trail.

Trail Maintenance.

Tea house. Bob noted he has the fence section for near the amphitheater but has not yet installed it.

Break Back Run Trail. Sharon reported she, with help of husband Bill, son Dan, Mike McIntyre and Mike Sheehan installed a new bridge over a small stream near the Maple St. entrance of the trail. Sharon also noted an access trail to BBR off a driveway near the corner of Jefferson and Buttonwood is blocked by a fallen tree. We would need to determine that the blocked section is on conservation land before proceeding to clear it.

Mantua Creek Trail. Scott reported a tree is over hanging the trail on the MCT island. It is not top priority but will need to be removed at some point. Maria noted the pot holes on MCT downstream from Clay Hill are a hazard and suggested a minor rerouting around them or placing boards on top.

Monongahela Loop Trail. Julie noted the high section is fine but the low section is flooded and impassable.

Eggert Tr. Maria noted the metal trail sign seems to be missing. Rich has a replacement sign if needed. Maria also suggested a sign there stating ATV's are prohibited.

Bridge Survey. Scott said Frank did a bridge survey some years ago and we need to update it with current information. Scott said he would take on the project.

Trail Assessment Project. Maria suggested we undertake a trail assessment (last done in 2009) and presented an assessment form we can use for standardizing the report data. Sharon said we need to prioritize our projects and Scott said we should include trail marker notes on the form. WEC members will each take a trail section for the assessment. The trail assignments are:

Scott- MCT from the island to Marion Ave.; Garden Trail

Rich & Sharon- Break Back Run Tr.

Sharon- Dilks Pond Tr.

Dave Kreck & Dave Coates- MCT Mantua Ave. to the island.

Bob- Comey's Lake & tea house.

Julie- Eldridge Tr. and Monongahela Loop Tr.

Maria- Wenonah Lake & Camels Back Loop.

TBD- Monongahela Brook Tr. & Glen Tr.

Maria will distribute a map with the trail assignments listed.

2017 Budget Request. The Borough has asked us for our budget request for 2017. Scott noted we have \$1725 from our 2016 budget still unspent. It was agreed we would request those funds be encumbered and rolled over to 2017 to fund the proposed trail improvements on Mantua Creek Trail and at Clay Hill. It was further agreed that we would again request \$6500 for our 2017 budget.

Comey's Lake/Dilks Pond duckweed-algae control. Rich reported Princeton Hydro has sent out its proposed contracts for 2017. There are very modest increases for this year. Comey's Lake would cost \$3015 and Dilks Pond \$1800 plus a \$150 DEP permit fee. Total cost would be \$4965. It was agreed we would contract with Princeton Hydro again for the coming year.

WEC Activities Calendar. Scott proposed a draft activities calendar which was adopted. It schedules the 5 mile hike for Jan 28 and the moonlight hike for Feb. 11. Rich will forward a copy to the Borough.

Scott noted Rich's term on the WEC is expiring. Rich agreed to be reappointed.,

Associate Members. The list of assoc. members the Borough keeps was revised by Scott and agreed to. The current associate member are: Mary Ellen Bush, Chuck Forsman, John Forren, Tommy Lombardo, Dave Coates, Pat Duncan, John Mullens and Don Miller.

Planning Board. Scott reported a developer may be interested in the Wenonah Meadows property.

Tree plantings. Dave Coates inquired whether the WEC does tree plantings. It was noted we have planted seedlings in the past but had a low survival rate. We are still open to appropriate tree plantings. Bob noted he has numerous Am. Holly seedlings we could have. Perhaps they could be used to replace some beaver felled trees.

Beaver Sign. Julie will continue to work on the beaver sign. We will discuss the purchase of the poster shelters for multiple signage purposes in the conservation area.

ANJEC. The WEC has again declined to join ANJEC (cost \$300 per year).

Rich reported Sarah and Scott A. Barnes will be making a \$250 contribution to the WEC

Bob thanked both Sharon & Maria for the bridges/boardwalks they installed.

Friends of Wenonah Trails Account.

No expenses:

Deposits: Trail Guide sales \$38.00

Current balance: \$\$8,790.10

MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:21 PM. (Motion: Bevilacqua, Second: Ream, AIF)

Minutes respectfully submitted,
Rich Dilks, Sec.