

Roxbury Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2020

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:45 pm.

Attendees:

Present: Linda Alnemy, Anne Gale, Jackie Vitiello, Tricia Fragale, Bill Benkendorf

Absent: F. Hall

Public: None

Matters presented by the public: Not Applicable

Matters presented by the Commissioners:

- B. Benkendorf reported that he knows of a gentleman that lives in Roxbury that may be interested in becoming a commissioner – Steve Ricucci. Asked that he be contacted for discussion and/or invited to the next meeting.
- T. Fragale made a recommendation that, while we are short two commissioners, that 3 commissioners be considered a quorum so that meetings can occur on a monthly basis. There has been a quorum issue for several years, resulting in several months of no official meetings where minutes.
- F. Hall asked if the Commissioners had any additional recommendations before going to Council for assistance in filling open positions. T. Fragale suggested Clint Robinson who has volunteered with the EC in the past and takes on his own environmental projects in town. A. Gale suggested a possible neighbor or folks on the gardener's list as possible options. It was also suggested that we refer to the stream clean up sign up list for possible candidates. J. Vitiello suggested a request for potential candidates in the local paper.
- B. Benkendorf indicated that he would like to see the monthly EC meetings held earlier than the usual 7:30 start time. L. Alnemy agreed. After discussion, a vote was taken and all were in favor of moving the meeting start time to 7pm, at least as a test. F. Hall texted the Town Clerk regarding the intended change. J. Vitiello indicated that she would report it to the Township for updating in next year's calendar if the group opts to stick with the earlier start time.
- B. Benkendorf posed a question on contamination at the bottom of Mine Hill. He recently had his drinking water wells tested and the company that did the testing told him, since the wells weren't in use any longer, that they shouldn't be used and should be closed.
- L. Alnemy reported that she is happy to see that 10 towns in NJ have banned plastic bags and that the State is thinking of initiating a state-wide ban. Wegmans also banning plastic bags at their stores.

Administrative Business:

- Rotating secretary for 2020 schedule to be established.
- Website – EC needs to get garden/event info upon the website. We need to know what we need to do for that info to get back up on the garden page of the Township site. F. Hall to reach out to R. Kuncken.

Budget Update: T. Fragale indicated that she had not received the Roxbury Township budget request for 2020. It was presumed that the budget would be kept the same (\$5000), as with

previous years. An updated accounting report was not provided by finance at the end of 2019; T. Fragale to contact finance. T. Fragale reported that all receipts issued to her for 2019 had been submitted to finance and reimbursement had been made.

- A. Gale inquired if the money from her family's donation was fully utilized for its intended purpose (small critter fencing and compost/mushroom mulch for the garden). T. Fragale reported that she would need to contact finance to confirm if any monies from the donation remained.

- J. Vitiello indicated that the annual application for the Raritan Stream Clean Up should be arriving soon and is expected to be \$300 again this year. She also indicated that the ANJEC renewal and annual dues form was in the mail she collected and will be provided to T. Fragale for processing.

Planning Board Update: No formal update. J. Vitiello (Planning Board Liaison) indicated that one of the Habitat for Humanity Homes on Main Street had been completed and was waiting on a certificate of occupancy; the new zip line/tree top adventure facility on Mt. Arlington Road appears complete but is waiting on their state license; and that the Ledgewood Mall construction is underway and moving along.

Fenimore Update: No significant update available. F. Hall indicated that the iron sponge installation was delayed by approximately 1 year; he is not sure why and is seeking clarification. NJDEP was in town recently to speak with J. Shepard (Township Manager) briefly about the site. F. Hall indicated that the possible reduction of monitoring stations was discussed. NJDEP reportedly changing out monitors per the ASTDR recommendations and may not want to reinstall all of the location. F. Hall indicated he needs to talk about the timeframe of water monitoring with the NJDEP; the Township did not get a report on the water monitoring.

Ongoing Projects

- Suckasunny Day – new ideas sought for 2020 event

- Public Outreach/Education – T. Fragale indicated she is interested in spearheading the creation of the long discussed environmental center at the garden/apiary property. Seeking to work with B. Douglass (Recreation Commissioner); F. Hall indicated he would discuss with the recreation committee.

- Owl boxes – L. Alnemy indicated that she issued a PO request to T. Fragale earlier in the day.

- Streams/Waterways:

– Stream monitoring results report coming out on January 18; presentation will be at Fairview Far if anyone is interested in attending.

– Stream Clean Up 2020 will take place at Black River Pond again this year, on April 18, 2020.

- Monofilament bins – no report

- Community Garden:

– Water is off; R. Blood (DPW) to be contacted to turn on in the spring.

– B. Benkendorf provided plants what were put in for the permaculture garden in the fall. He indicated he may have more he can provide.

– Total garden donations to social services for 2019 was ~268.5 lbs.

– Plot markers – L. Alnemy reviewed. It was decided that the best option at the garden would be a 1.5 foot post with metal plot number. L. Alnemy to contact volunteer contact with the selection and a request for the intended cost and schedule of this project.

- Permaculture Garden:

– A group from the local Lutheran church volunteered at the garden and planted the

donated plants. They were hosting a 7-day event and they used the community garden as one of their day's work.

- Community Apiary:

- Social service sent a thank you note for money/honey donations from Suckasunny Day.

- May need new electric fence this year.

- Non-motorized push mower needed. B. Benkendorf indicated he may have one he can provide.

Close of Meeting – 9:23 pm (T. Fragale motioned; A. Gale seconded the motion; All in Favor to close the meeting)

Next Meeting – February 13, 2020 **New Time – 7pm**