

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

June 4, 2024 7 PM Meeting

Chairman Keady called the meeting to order, "I call to order the June 4, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Holland Township Environmental Commission. Adequate notice of this meeting was given pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act Law by the Environmental Commission Secretary by:

1. Posting such notice on the bulletin board at the Municipal Building
2. Publishing the notice in the December 21, 2023 edition of the Hunterdon County Democrat
3. And faxing to the Express-Times for informational purposes only. "

All recited the pledge of allegiance.

All were reminded to turn off their cell phones or put them in silent mode.

Members Present: Regina Barna, Mike Keady, Davina Lapczynski, Dwight Pederson, Tony Rizzello, Township Committee Liaison Duane Young, and Land Use Administrator (LUA) Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Excused Absent: David Harrison, and Township Committee Alternate Liaison Bush

Guest: Wes Aber, Michael Witman (arrived at 7:10 pm), Maria Marks and Mrs. Ayers (arrived at 7:13 pm).

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: the approval of the April 3, 2024 minutes was tabled. The May meeting was cancelled due to lack of quorum just before the meeting.

Old Business:

Seedling give-away is April 13, 2024 with Davina Lapczynski picking up the trees on April 11, 2024. All arrived by 8:30am for setup. If we cannot purchase additional seedlings then we may want to add 50 more to our request. Having extra flyers at the distribution event for handout was a nice addition to letting people know about upcoming events. The QR code was a nice addition from the state for planting information. There was a lot of positive feedback.

Arbor Day celebration was Saturday April 27, 2024 at 11 am at the Municipal Building. A Flowering Crab Apple Tree was planted. The annual sign will be ordered when we order the annual tree labels. There was a nice turnout this year thanks to the additional efforts of Larry LaFevre. Additional labels will be considered for trees on the Township property around the municipal building as discussed with Liaison Young and Mayor Bush.

New Business:

Grant for Rails and Trails and Grant for Eradication of Invasive Species

Tony Rizzello reported that the deadline for invasive has passed so that was tabled for a future conversation if a grant becomes available. The Grant for Rails to Trails is a DOT interconnection grant to connect communities. This is for bike or walking trails on the defunct rail road. More discussion took place regarding requirements. The rail is owned by Black River who is bankrupt. Supposedly nothing can be done to the rails at this time.

There was then discussion of a new grant with the National Park Foundation Wild & Scenic for \$50,000.00. The deadline is July 15, 2024. We have two organizations we are working with the rivers. To the north is the Mosconnetcong Watershed and to the west is Lower Delaware. Tony Rizzello and Dwight Pederson both representatives of the 2 waterways will discuss. Alan Hunt who was previously with MWA is now with the

National Park Foundation so he may be a good contact to discuss this with. Hunterdon County keeps exploring Ag Tourism that ties to Hunterdon County Economic Development. More information to follow.

Subcommittee:

Trails – Regina Barns and Tony Rizzello – Reminder, the next lecture in the series is the walk and talk at O’sakame Preserve on June 19th at 2pm. LUA Kozak and member Rizzello will work together to invite Lower Delaware as Tony Rizzello will also be talking about the Lower Delaware grant and the signs and benches that have been installed as part of the grant. Tony Rizzello will be working on the final requirements of the grant. LUA Kozak will work on the final requirements for reimbursement.

Community Forestry Management Plan – Tony Rizzello, David Harrison, and Secretary Kozak
CFP 2024 Goals (as outlined by Member Harrison)

1. Arbor Day Tree Planting
2. Submit 2 tree or forest related articles to local and regional newspapers and Township website
3. If feasible, apply for Tree City USA re-certification
4. Track hours and expenditures for CFMP
5. Complete annual training requirements - 8 CEUs
6. Identify and Label individual trees on Township properties
7. Continue and improve outreach efforts at community events
8. Reevaluate hazard trees and update the list
9. If funding available, apply for and execute a township seedling giveaway
10. Begin Strategic planning and goal development for third CFMP and evaluate the successes and failures of the second CFMP
11. Apply for Green Communities funding for the creation of the third five-year CFMP
12. Map and complete baseline surveys on properties with conservation easements
13. Implement removal of invasive species on township owned land if CSIP (Community Stewardship Incentive Program) funding is received to implement the program.

LUA Kozak requests everyone to keep track of their hours pertaining to trees for the whole year. LUA Kozak will resend everyone the tracking sheets which are also available upon request. This is important for our annual report. Please keep track. Also, LUA Kozak reminded everyone that if they participate in a CEU program to please send her any confirmation of attendance so she can work with the state to make sure we receive the proper credits.

Tree Labels – Dwight Pederson will continue to work with LUA Kozak to see if revisions are needed for the website.

Keep track of any participation in webinars, especially if for Community Forestry. Please submit all support to LUA Kozak for tracking with the state.

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Davina Lapczynski and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak –
The Township will hold its public hearing for The Tree Removal and Replacement Ordinance at the scheduled meeting of June 5, 2024 and will adopt after the public hearing. This ordinance is required by the NJDEP in order for Holland Township to qualify for a Tier A Stormwater Permit. This was a requirement with the reassignment of Tier A from Tier B.

Highlands Conformance – Mike Keady and Dwight Pederson. – Changes to the regional master plan with focus on warehousing is something the Highlands Council focused on. LUA Kozak reported that Holland Township received approval for moving forward with Phase 2 of Taks 8 – the Water Use and Conservation Plan. More information will follow as updates are available.

Community Education and Outreach – Dwight Pederson, and Regina Barna –

The EC webpage is: <http://www.hollandtownshipnj.gov/bds-committees/environmental-commission>. Everything will first go to someone on Community Education and Outreach for review and then to Secretary Kozak for distribution to the website or Facebook.

Guest Lecture Series is under Community Education and Outreach

As a reminder please share with the public that an area to sign up for the lecture series email list is on our website. To be informed about upcoming talks or with speaker ideas, sign-up here

[Speaker Series Email List](https://cities.formstack.com/forms/holland_ec_cont) (https://cities.formstack.com/forms/holland_ec_cont)

The 2024 series is:

January 10 2024 – Know the Bear Facts.

April 24, 2023 – Trees how to plant and care for them

July 17, 2024 – Birds of Holland Township

Regina Barna reported that the presentation on how to plant trees went well. The speaker was interesting and stayed to work with anyone who wanted to ask additional questions.

Topics for 2025 speaker series was discussed. The over view of past topics include: tree walks yearly, birds, state of recycling (scheduled for September). Popular events included the Highlands hiking trail as well as the talks on the coyote and the bear. More animal talk suggestions included: bees, bobcat, snapping turtles, snakes and amphibians, bats. Other topics circled back to the invasive species. Wes Aber mentioned that he established contact with Wild Ridge Farms in Alpha who is interested in doing a talk in Holland. We can also update our website about invasives. Guest Wes Aber also has a contact from Hawaii that speaks at the NY Botanical in February or March that is interested in participating in our lecture series when in New York. Wes Aber is working with Regina Barna on scheduling. Guest Maria Marks also mentioned that she has been working with Regina Barna with the September talk and thought another topic of interested could be sustainable farming/food insecurities. One group she looked at that has speakers is: America's Grow a row – Feed the Hungry or look at the link: <https://americasgrowarow.org/> Some highlights from the website include:

“THE SEED WAS PLANTED...

From Humble Beginnings

In 2002, after seeing a plea from the Flemington Area FoodPantry requesting that local gardeners donate surplus produce, Chip Paillex and his daughter Kyra, who was four years old at the time, happily gave the excess vegetables they cultivated from their family garden to the food pantry. That year Chip donated 120 pounds of fresh produce from his home garden to the food pantry.

When Chip saw the need for fresh fruits and vegetables at local food pantries, he became inspired to grow more produce to feed the hungry. Today, Grow-a-Row is a thriving 501(c)(3) nonprofit with 423 acres over four farm locations that donates farm fresh produce to feeding organizations across the nation and educates people facing food insecurity by teaching them how to eat healthy. In addition, we are a Volunteer Destination Center with more than 10,000 volunteers harvesting on the farm each year.

TOGETHER, LET'S

End Hunger.

Food is a basic human need, yet every day, thousands of families struggle to put food on the table. Across the nation, 44 million people, including 13 million children, face food insecurity. Some families experience very low food security, a more severe form of food insecurity, where households report regularly skipping meals or reducing intake because they could not afford to buy food.

Education for Adults

We offer education for adults as well. Our team offers presentations to community groups, universities, and healthcare organizations for adults. Lessons take place on the farm, virtually, or at your organization.”

This will be explored and more information to be provided in the future.

Inventory of Fauna and Flora (Bio-Diversity)subcommittee - David Harrison, Dwight Pederson, – Nothing new to report. Discussion took place with the EC subcommittee and guest Aber.

Waterway Subcommittee –

Musconetcong River Management Council – Dwight Pederson –.Nothing new to report as it was mentioned in the above with regards to the Mill.

Lower Delaware Wild and Scenic – Tony Rizzello – Nothing new to report.

Holland Township Sustainable Jersey Green Team – Davina, Mr Keady, Liaison Young –Nothing new to report.

Public Comment: a thank you was said for all who attended the meeting. Wes Aber mentioned that he has spare weevils for anyone that wants to help reduce the invasive mile a minute. He is doing a case study on his property with the added weevils he obtained. Wes Aber also reported that he went to O’sakame Preserve and the native weevils are taking care of the invasive.

Board Comment:

There were no comments during board comment.

At 8:10 pm Tony Rizzello made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary