

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2018 AT 7:00 P.M.

**MINUTES OF THE RP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
June 28, 2018**

Chairman Steve Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., it having been duly noted that this meeting is being held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq., notice of which was published in The Record and sent to the Star Ledger as well as posted on the Village bulletin board. Members present were: Peggy Conversano, Jin Ah Jong, Harry Menta, Leslie Olson, Mark Olson, Linda Quinn, Steve Quinn, Asai Maschang, Carolina Espin, Katelyn McGirk, Gloria Rivera. Excused: Guillermo Lopez-Acosta. Absent: Joseph D'Angeli.

Hearing of Citizens: None.

A motion was made by Harry Menta and seconded by Mark Olson to approve the May 24, 2018, meeting minutes. All were in favor of the motion.

Approval of Bills: PO#34165 processed to Treetop Products in the amount of \$,1764.15 for a large message board for Nature Preserve that was agreed upon by all members. It should arrive to the DPW in the next week or two.

Correspondence:

1) copy of letter dated 6/5/18 to Dyan Thiemann, Elementary Coordinator Re: 2018 BCUA Environmental Awareness Challenge Grant. An email will be sent to Dyan Thiemann to ask if she needs anything from the EC.

Old Business:

RP Nature Preserve – The BCOST hearing was held on June 14. Steve thanked everyone who was in attendance. RP was very well represented and it went very well. People spoke very well and it seems that everyone was in favor of the matching grant to RP. The EC should know for sure by August 1 if we got the grant. There would then be \$400,000 to work with at the nature trail with the running of the nature trail, boardwalks and other amenities like signage and things like that along the trail. It would connect to the high school and hopefully, there will be two entrances so it will be a loop. A letter needs to be sent to Eric Koenig to discuss the good news about the nature preserve and his desire for where the entrance should be for the trail in relation to the high school and where parking could occur at the high school.

The EC also did approve the cost for surveying the properties on the eastern boundary for the installation of private property signs. John Anlian is handling this and will probably take care of it after the final word is given on August 1.

Steve has also selected benches after looking at catalogs provided by the DPW. He also selected, based on their recommendation, a couple of choices on trash and recycling containers. Alan O'Grady felt that there should be a trash container and recycling containers there. Mark Olson mentioned that he should also check with Alan because at a meeting with the Green Team the PD mentioned that they recommended switching to clear containers for safety reasons. Steve said he would go down to the DPW to discuss the trash/recyclable containers. Steve said the Jorge Cooke had offered a stone bench for the nature preserve, which he is sure could be used.

Bird Count – The winter count will be scheduled for December 8, 2018. The flyer will mention that the bird count will be cancelled in the event of rain. It will start at 7:00 a.m. at McGowan Park and 9:30 a.m. at Overpeck Park.

Green Business – Jin Ah Jong did a seal for the Green Business program. There were some exchanges of emails on this topic. Mark Olson, Steve Quinn and Harry Menta will work on criteria for a green business certification. Katelyn McGirk said she went to the SJ summit last week. Montclair does it pretty similar to the way RP would like to do it. There is a level one tier and level two is the business is registered through the State's program. Their level one tier is how the EC had discussed making that easier to achieve. Montclair has their own seal and then there is the State seal. The businesses that achieve certification get promoted on the Face Book page because that is how the younger generation follows things. Montclair also had a day or event recognizing those businesses.

Katelyn would like to mention the three businesses that are already registered on the Face Book page. It is significant that RP has three because it is a much smaller town than Montclair. These three are registered at the statewide level. They are still working on a handout to give to every business in RP when they are visited to try to get them to get certified as a Green Business. A pamphlet or flyer to better explain the program needs to be written up so there is something to hand to a business. Mark Olson thought that since there are two levels of SJ, that there should be two levels of the certification. We can award the RP seal and the state seal if they qualify for it. The EC still needs to work on the criteria to qualify for the RP seal and then the State seal. Katelyn would like to work with them on this. She has experience working on the State qualifications. The group will get together to work on the Green Business seal and the criteria to get it.

Newsletter – (Deadlines – August 17 & October 19) There was an exchange about articles. The next deadline is August 17. Joe D'Angeli volunteered to do a bat article that will also be put on Face Book. Steve will write to Joe about that. For the August deadline, Steve said he will write something up about the fishing derby as well as mention the bird count scheduled for December 8. If anyone has any other topic, that would be great. Steve said he could also do something on backyard bird feeding. Leave Grass Clippings, Leave the Leaves and Leaf Mulching are also other fall themed articles that can be sent in. Leslie Olson has some of these articles already.

New Business:

Ridgefield Park Nature Association – Last month a brief discussion was held on forming a group and with new developments with the Nature Preserve, that group would help plan and design the new trail, help advise on the layout of the trail and other amenities and also plan and schedule other activities and do some maintenance down there. Anyone who is a member of the EC or GT is more than welcome to participate in that group. The thought is that like the Community Gardeners, this group would eventually work and grow on its own. Probably sometime late in July, Steve will pull together a small core group to put together the details for this. If anyone would like to participate in that core group, they should let Steve know and he will make sure they are notified when the core group meets. It will be very informal, probably at Steve's house. Anyone interested should just email Steve and he will make sure they are included on the list.

Fall Fishing Derby – Steve has contacted Sergio Radossi and he has assured him he would be back in touch regarding the availability of the Hudson River Fisherman's Association as well as the dates the tide will be high for the event.

Bat Walk – Joe D'Angeli has volunteered to conduct another bat walk on August 26. Steve asked Joe for a rain date because one of the past bat walks was rained out. He also asked for some details because last time the show was at the high school but the place to see the bats was nearer the town pool. Steve thinks maybe he should give the presentation near the place where the bats were. Joe had said he could set up a tent to do the presentation at the location. The EC will inquire about using the parking lot for the presentation. Harry will check with Joe to get info to put on the website.

Weed Warriors – There is an introduced plant that has just gone wild. It is called mile a minute vine. It escaped and has run rampant all over. The entomologist caught one of the weevils that destroys the vine. It appears RP has this weevil that is already working. This is good news for the Nature Preserve.

Two weeks ago, the EC was called by the Clerk's Office because a female duck had nested right outside the police dept. and hatched. There were 12 ducklings in the parking lot. Steve and Linda (with help from some passersby) caught the ducklings and mother and then let them go at the Overpeck Park. Steve and Linda have been monitoring them at the park and every day they are growing bigger and bigger.

The next regular meeting will be July 26, 2018, at 7:00 p.m.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Steve Quinn and seconded by Linda Quinn adjourning the meeting at 7:40 p.m. All were in favor of this motion.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara DeLuca