

NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY, APRIL 21, 2022 AT 7:00 P.M. in court room (ONE WEEK EARLY)

**VILLAGE OF RIDGEFIELD PARK
MINUTES OF THE GREEN TEAM
March 24, 2022**

Leslie Olson called the meeting to order at 7:01 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: Veronica Leone, Guillermo Lopez-Acosta, Janet Malool, Harry Menta, Leslie Olson, Daniel Raftery, Dyan Thiemann. Absent: Diane Mancini, Berlinda Rodriguez, Ex Officio Members. Excused: Dennise Santana, Nicole Terrarosa, Daniele Fede, Christopher Gibbons, Janet Harris, Rita Raftery, Gloria Rivera. Guests present: Commissioner Olson, Stephen Mazzella and Mr. Savino's seventh grade civics class.

Mr. Savino was present with his seventh-grade civics class, who wanted to ask the Green Team questions about getting recycling started in their school. Commissioner Olson told them he would be happy to answer any questions they had while he was present at the meeting but had to take care of one piece of business first.

Commissioner Olson advised the GT that he was present to advise them on the use of Google for correspondence. He said that the Google account can be used for working documents but all correspondence should be sent via the official GT account through the Village. It is not advisable to use the Gmail account for official correspondence. The Village account will keep a record of everything sent and received through it.

Commissioner Olson explained to the students that the Green Team's job is to get the SJ certification for the town. He then gave a brief explanation of SJ and the tasks involved to get points toward certification. The Village is currently certified as Silver. Certification. The GT provides education and outreach for sustainability issues within the Village. There are many things done in the Village that are part of SJ but they were never written down so the GT coordinates these sustainable actions done by the town and suggests new ones as well. The GT promotes recycling in the Village and has expanded it greatly since it was created five years ago.

The students prepared a list of questions on recycling. They said recycling is not really done properly at the middle school and high school, because they have witnessed some practices where recycling is not done. They asked about suggestions for recycling. The GT told them they need to raise awareness of the importance of recycling. Try to put recycling bins in the school and follow the path of the recycling bin. The students were told once trash goes in a recycling bin, it is contaminated and can't be recycled.

Another suggestion for the students was to make themselves examples for their classmates by recycling and teaching others what should and shouldn't be recycled. Commissioner Olson told the students if the school wants to make a change, we can make a change. Commissioner Olson is the Commissioner of the DPW and he will have a DPW truck come down to the school for recycling if they are serious about doing it.

The GT will help with a food audit and recycling bins. He'll get them immediately for the schools. If the school wants a commitment from the GT, the answer is "yes" the GT will help. Chair Leslie Olson told the students that if they need a person, she will be it and others are also available if they are serious about making a change. Students were told there is no age limit to be a member of the GT so students are very much welcomed.

The GT said they will send Mr. Savino info on ANJEC, the Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions to get on the mailing list and learn of events and grants available for schools. If the school or the GT do a SJ action, both groups get credit if it is an approved action. The GT would love to work with the students on actions. Commissioner Olson spoke to Middle School Principal Dyan Thiemann during the meeting and will get recycling containers to the schools.

Dan Raftery, is an associate member of the GT, who picks up plastic bags for recycling. He said he would add the middle/high schools to his route if they started recycling plastic bags. The GT explained to the students that it works with other communities to recycle bags and EPS (Styrofoam). Leslie Olson explained the plastic bag process to the students and how they end up in Englewood at a baler purchased by several towns in the Bergen Hub. The GT is always looking for volunteers to remove tape and labels from things so they can be recycled.

The students asked if there were any other stakeholders they should partner with? Recommendations were the Environmental Commission, RP Nature Association, Adopt-A-Park program, RP Arts Association – just a few good examples of who they can work with.

Stephen Mazzella was present at the meeting to talk about his role as the new coordinator for the Village's Facebook account, twitter and Instagram. His job is to run, create and maintain content to the Village's social media accounts. He advised everyone that they can submit articles (no more than 1,000 words) on events or advise him of events to post on the various sites.

The minutes of the February 24, 2022, were approved on a motion by Veronica Leone and seconded by Janet Malool. All were in favor of the motion.

Payment of bills: None this month.

Hearing of Citizens: None present.

Correspondence:

- Email dated 2/25/22 from Lauren Skowronski Re: Local Health Assessment TA Application
- Email dated 3/1/22 from ZB Re: 2 Applications – One is from Lexington Equities, LLC to construct a mid-rise mixed-use development on 36-46 Mt. Vernon Street, Block 64/Lots 20, 21, 22 & 23 and the second is from Laicom, LLC to construct an additional building and operate three businesses at 313 Bergen Turnpike, Block 146/Lot 1.
- Email dated 3/2/22 from Nynfa Sucuzhanay, Field Rep Eye Health Re: Health Fair Accommodations

Reports:

Financial: Nothing new to report.

Recycling – Plastic Bags & EPS: Dan Raftery said the pick-ups are going smoothly at the church, library and DPW. The hardware store will be skipped until construction is done on the nearby apartment building because the workers are using it as a garbage container. Veronica Leone also picks up plastic bags. Mark and Leslie Olson handle the EPS.

Public Arts Master Plan: There is nothing new to report.

Bergen Hub: Leslie said their topic of issue at this time is EPS recycling.

Newsletter:

- **Deadline and distribution dates as follows:** The Spring Newsletter usually is delivered around the 3rd week of March; Summer Newsletter -around 3rd week of June; Autumn Newsletter - around the 3rd week in Sept; and Winter Newsletter - around the end of Nov.
- Ideas for future articles – Leslie has written down ideas for future newsletters so there will always be something ready for the deadlines. Articles can also be posted on Facebook and the Village website as well.

Old Business:

Sustainable Jersey: There are 145 points that have expired on 12/31/21. Updates on those actions:

Environmental Commission – Barbara DeLuca, Steve Quinn - **Done**

Green Team – Leslie Olson -**Almost Done**

Green Business Recognition Program – Veronica Leone and Leslie Olson (Gina the Bakers, Baked Merengue, Coach's Corner, Rising Sun) Harry Menta and Rita Raftery said they could also visit businesses.

Community Outreach and Education – Nicole Terrarosa/Leslie & Veronica Partners – 3 projects: Monarch Pledge, Clean-Up Day, Bee Grant with library

Innovative Community Project 1: Welcome Packet – Dennise Santana

Emergency Communications Planning – Janet Malool

Vulnerable Populations Identification for Emergencies – Janet Malool

Energy Tracking and Management – DPW

Community Garden – Janet Malool

Tree Maintenance Program – STC

Recycled Paper – Leslie Olson/Harry Menta* (need to get copies of purchase orders)

Prescription Drug & Safety – Leslie Olson has last year's information. /Harry Menta*

Extreme Temperature Event Plan – Leslie is working on trying to write up a plan so the action can be submitted.

Green Your Green Fair – needs to be done after the Green Fairs

Support Local Businesses – Janet Malool and Nicole Terrarosa will look at this action.

Buy Fresh Buy Local – Janet Malool and Nicole Terrarosa will look at this action.

There is a new local health assessment action that Leslie and Barbara are working on. They will get together to do a one-page memo to Commissioner Gerken to explain what is expected from the Board of Health for this action.

New Business:

Calendar: There are several upcoming events that members should take note of.

March 31 (Moonachie) & April 3 (Bergen Community College) – Hazardous Waste Collection Days

April 23 –

Main Street Clean-up Day – girls scouts and family will be picking up on Main Street, entry of town. They are also invited to clean their own blocks.

Shredding Day – at DPW 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Second Chance Toy Collection – at DPW, members needed 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

April 30 – Arbor Day Ceremony

April 30 – 5th Anniversary of the Community Garden – will be giving out seed packets

Next month, the GT will discuss composting. The names of businesses for BYOB should be on Facebook and the GT page of the website. Harry Menta is waiting for the flyer and what can be recycled for the Second Chance Toy Collection so he can post on the website. Dyan Thiemann said to send her any flyers that go out on events and she can post them on the school sites as well.

Daniel Raftery asked if there was an update on the proposed bus depot. The Village lost the lawsuit so the bus depot will be coming eventually.

The GT should find out if the newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

Alkaline Batteries: Leslie has a collection container for alkaline batteries only. A flyer advising everyone that they can now recycle alkaline batteries will be sent out in the schools and posted on social media and the Village website.

A motion was made by Veronica Leone and seconded by Harry Menta to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 p.m. All were in favor of the motion.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 21, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. in the court room. (One week earlier)

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara DeLuca

cc: Commissioner Mark Olson
Michael Savino, Civics Teacher

Barbara DeLuca