

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

September 4, 2019 7 PM Meeting

Chairman Keady called the meeting to order. I call to order the September 4, 2019 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 13, 2018 edition of the Hunterdon County Democrat
3. And faxing to the Express-Times for informational purposes only.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance. All were reminded to turn off their cell phones or put them in silent mode.

Members Present: Jerry Bowers, Ted Harwick (arrived 7:45 pm), Mike Keady, Susan Meacham, Ray Note, Dwight Pederson, and Township Committee Liaison: Robert Thurgarland and Secretary Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Absent: Henry Gore and David Harrison

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Minutes: The July 10, 2019 and the August 7, 2019 minutes were approved. A motion was made by Susan Meacham and seconded by Jerry Bowers to accept the minutes as presented. All present were in favor of the motion. Motion carried. .

PennEast Pipeline update: Susan Meacham and Mike Keady – PennEast is seeking water permits from NJDEP. Susan Meacham stated that this is a good time to get the project defeated. We are waiting to see if the NJDEP has deemed the application complete (a copy of what was submitted is available for public viewing in Trenton as well as each municipality involved). The DEP Bulletin has not stated that the application is available for comment. We do not know the start date for comment. She is working with HALT and CAPP to determine the final date for comments. Ideas are circulating for people to submit comments. The belief is that the township should also provide comments asking the DEP to protect our water. The DEP should evaluate water and Land Use Impact. Some old comments to FERC can be reiterated. The NJ Rate Council has already stated that there is no necessity for this project. Chairman Keady thinks that Holland Township should talk about drilling under the Delaware River in Holland Township as being the major concern. Susan Meacham stated that her belief is that Penn East has not done due diligence and that FERC has just rubber stamped this and hopes that the DEP will not move forward with this project. The local groups will have boiler plate letters for people to customize and send out. Addresses will be provided.

Route 519 Widening Project –Detour is happening. Speed limit is being enforced. Be careful, be smart, be safe, and be respectful. The bridge on Route 173 in Bloomsbury is closed.

Community Day & Green Fair – September 7, 2019. Hours of operation 3pm till 8pm. The materials are gathered for loading into Chairman Keady's car this evening. Dwight Pederson and Mike Keady will arrive with the materials between 2:00 pm and 2:15 pm. The set up crew will consist of Susan Meacham, Ted Harwick, Dwight Pederson, Jerry Bowers and Mike Keady. The booth will be staffed from 3 to 8 pm. The tear down will take place after the fireworks which should be at about 8:30 pm. Once the layout is received from Director Neglia, Secretary Kozak will distribute. The NJ beekeepers will be at our event. The Brownies will be helping with the ANJEC Stormwater Education games and will be helping in shifts. The Library will not do their yearly book sale. Dwight Pederson will work with Secretary Kozak regarding posters.

Discussion of Ordinance on clean-up of abandoned solar facilities - Jerry Bowers attending the Township Committee Meeting on September 3, 2019 and the Township Committee is interested in reviewing its existing ordinance on renewable energy. The emphasis would be on requiring the applicant for a major solar installation to post a bond covering the cost of decommissioning. The purpose is to avoid the derelict site being left behind after usefulness is extracted. Many years ago the Environmental Commission helped with the creation of the existing ordinance. The Attorney's at the time did not think requiring a bond for decommissioning was viable. Jerry Bowers investigated the options and sent a memo to Mayor Bush with his findings and proposes that we should move forward amending the existing ordinance. The Township Committee asked Liaison Thurgarland to work with the Environmental Commission in establishing a subcommittee to review the proposed ordinance as drafted by the Township Attorney. All were in favor of creating a subcommittee which will consist of Jerry Bowers, Mike Keady and Susan Meacham. Secretary Kozak will forward the draft ordinance to the subcommittee who will review and make comments and suggestions. The subcommittee will forward to Secretary Kozak, who will forward to the Township Committee for consideration.

Musconetcong River Management Council – Dwight Pederson reported that he attended the August meeting at the River Resource Center in Asbury (MWA). A river festival is being held at Centenary College in September. This organization is also looking to host a fundraiser at the local organic winery, Villa Milagro. More details on the open-to-public event will be available. Permits are still being sought for the removal of the Bloomsbury Dam. The removal of the Dam will be just that and will not include sediment removal. The theory is to remove the Dam and let the sediment wash downstream. There is no news on the Warren Glen Dam. The Hughesville Dam needed some repair work. Holland Township approved Wild and Scenic designation for the Musconetcong years ago but Pohatcong held things up. Now Wild and Scenic provides an extra layer of review in the application review process. Because of Pohatcong, Holland does not have the ability to have applications reviewed by the National Park Service as part of Wild and Scenic. Pohatcong is currently on board with being designated Wild and Scenic and together the two municipalities have tried to become part of Wild and Scenic. The Secretary of Interior usually signs off on this. According to MWA, we will only have one chance at the designation so they are waiting for a change in the political climate. This means our designation is tabled at the moment.

Holland Happenings Newsletter – All organizations have been asked to submit an article. The deadline is September 6th. The plan is for the newsletter to be distributed in late November. Chairman Keady submitted an article on behalf of the Environmental Commission. Pictures from Community Day will be submitted by Chairman Keady on Monday, September 9, 2019 after Community Day on the 7th, as agreed.

Sub-Committees:

Trails – Ted Harwick, Jerry Bowers and Ray Note. Nothing new to report.

Community Forestry Plan – Ray Note, David Harrison, Ted Harwick, Henry Gore (emeritus) and Secretary Kozak

Community Forestry Plan Grant - The Holland Township Community Forestry Plan 2014-2019 expires at the end of 2019 and the Green Communities Grant from the DEP has been awarded to Holland Township. The subcommittee will need to meet to work on the Plan in order to work with Arborist Ron Farr. The Plan will need to be submitted to the DEP for approval for the next five years. Consideration should be given on how to educate the public on invasive species.

Tree Inventory Update – The subcommittee is still working on this project with Arborist Farr. The data collection being entered into the system is still being refined by Dwight Pederson who has tweaked the system for us to enter the data being collected into an Excel spreadsheet that could then be entered into iTree. The data entry can be done when we are on hold with continuing to gather field data. The schedule has been to continue the tree inventory on Wednesdays, as permitted. All are welcome to help participate in the tree inventory. Please provide your vehicle information so we can supply the information to the police as requested. Also the Spotted Lantern Fly, (SLF) is in Holland Township. People are encouraged to use the HOTLINE. Arborist Farr reached out to the USDA and we now have a contact that is helping us. The USDA will treat your property if you sign an authorization document.

Girl Scout Silver Award - - Elizabeth Tamaro. Nothing new to report.

Highlands Conformance – Jerry Bowers, Mike Keady and Dwight Pederson.

Highlands Council Environmental and Economic Sustainability Grant Awards Program update:

No news to update other than Secretary Kozak is still working with Maser and the Highlands Council.

The Retention/Detention basin inventory is still an important project but the priority projects are the Waste Water Management Plan, The Water Use and Conservation Plan, The Master Plan Reexamination and the Affordable Housing/Fair Share Housing Plan. Subcommittees for the Reexamination Plan and Affordable Housing/Fair Share Housing have been created to work with Planner Green. Plans will be available for review once created. The process for public comment will be thru the Planning Board.

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Jerry Bowers, Susan Meacham and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as Secretary – Nothing new to report

Community Education and Outreach – Jerry Bowers, Dwight Pederson, and Susan Meacham – Nothing new to report.

The EC webpage is: <http://www.hollandtownshipnj.gov/14-ec/46-environmental-commission.html>. Please send any additions or corrections to Secretary Kozak for posting

Inventory on Fauna and Flora subcommittee - David Harrison, Dwight Pederson, Ray Note and Henry Gore (emeritus) – Nothing new to discuss.

Public Comment: No one is present in the public.

Go Hunterdon will be hosting its annual Awards Breakfast on September 13, 2019 at the Farmhouse in Hampton. Holland Township will be receiving an Award from Sustainable Jersey. Please let Secretary Kozak know if you are interested in attending so she can follow the process to register.

At 8:35 pm Jerry Bowers made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

Environmental Commission Secretary