

**ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
APRIL 19, 2016**

The Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) met for its scheduled meeting on April 17, 2016 in the Upper Merion Township Building. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by a pledge of allegiance to the flag.

ATTENDANCE:

John Weilnau
Christopher Kaasmann
Sandra Moskowitz
Brittany Grala
James Laughlin
Janet Serfass, Staff Liaison

ABSENT:

Kathryn Vaccaro
Sal Sonsino
Greg Waks, Board Liaison

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made to approve the March 15, 2016 meeting minutes. Chris Kaasman motioned. Sandy Moskowitz seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

Board of Community Assistance (BCA) Grant Extension:

In response to John Weilnau's inquiry about the purchase of more trail markers, Janet Serfass said that the new grant request was forwarded to the BCA. She commented that the trail markers looked good.

PA American Grant for bottle-filling unit:

John informed members that we were not able to submit in time some of the items needed for the PA American Water Grant's deadline of April 1. John referenced PA American Water's recommendations for future grant applications: (1) include a more exact operation and maintenance figure, (2) eliminate some of the sport teams' expenses by eliminating the sale of water; (3) eliminate loss of income by promoting the sale of re-usable water bottles. James Laughlin offered to obtain an operation and maintenance figure from a contact at a local township. John identified the Park and Recreation Board's suggestion to do a survey to determine whether the bottle-filling unit benefits the Township. Members agreed that the bottle-filling units benefit the Township. The EAC will circulate a questionnaire.

Earth Day:

The great event will start at 10:30 on Saturday, April 23, at the Township Building. Paper handouts will be available. Janet will place the material for Earth Day in the Park and Recreation office. Two rain barrels will be raffled off. John volunteered to be a judge at the Earth Day Poster Contest. He will also bring a back-up table.

Due to frost concerns NorView Farm would prefer to hand the free plants out at their greenhouse.

The 2016 Hazardous Waste Disposal schedule is available on the Township's Website.

Paper Shredding and Tire Disposal:

Sandy Moskowitz noted that our State Representative Tim Briggs is holding a shredding event on Saturday, April 23 at Harriton High School.

Meadows:

A Weed Ordinance proposes installation of meadows in some areas of the Township. Something similar to this was successfully done in Chester County. A case study was circulated to members. Janet informed members of the possible cost of a Stormwater permit, if required, for meadows and rain gardens. Members felt that the \$400 fee would discourage residents. In response to group discussion and questions, Janet answered that Best Management Practice options are in place. She suggested asking the Park and Recreation Board if there are any park areas where a meadow can be implemented. Several members offered to research maintenance costs and savings by contacting key people in ours and other townships.

Clean the Parks / Schuylkill Scrub scheduled for May 14 from 9:00 a.m. to Noon:

John asked members to help out with this well-attended event. A large number of volunteers are needed. Sign-up will be available on-line. Hand-outs will be available assist in the clean-up of three locations. Township Park will be headed by the Farmers' Market. The EAC is partnering up with the Schuylkill Action Network to clean up the watersheds of Crow Creek where it touches Sweetbriar and Walker Park. The EAC will be working with the Schuylkill Action Network on a new, pilot program for sorting trash and to find out what type of trash is being thrown out. Janet requested lots of pictures of participants getting in the creek. The Park and Shade Tree Department will collect the trash on Monday.

Joint Meeting:

The EAC will meet with the Board of Supervisors at 8 p.m. on April 28. John commented that his PowerPoint presentation, which represents EAC 2016 and consists of 10 slides, will be e-mailed to the members.

John referred to the work we are doing -- the bottle filling station, the weed ordinance, the park's clean-up -- as having to do with water. He suggested including the MS4 requirements in our goals and objectives; adding a goal that specifically says what we do for requirements; and updating the EAC's Mission Statement. Janet asked members to wear business casual.

NEW BUSINESS:

Goats:

Tina Garzillo, chair of the Park and Recreation Board, informed Chris that Bob White Farms is getting a bunch of goats to feed on invasive weeds. She needs to feed the goats a lot of water and asked if the EAC could donate rain barrels. Chris asked members for suggestions in case the rain barrels were not available. The Township has committed to fill whatever they find to hold the water. Group discussion indicated that the rain barrels may not be the proper container. Janet offered to look into the matter.

Tires:

Chris commented that the clean-up of the tires on Beidler Road consisted of placing them in an open dumpster.

Impervious:

Chris went to Hershey Gardens and noticed that half of their parking lot consists of paved drive aisles and half is a lawn. Short, white lines on the paved aisle direct motorists to park on the lawn. Chris considered this a really neat way to mitigate impervious but questioned whether it is a good management process since it kills the grass. He asked, "How can we de-pave places to make them better and decrease storm-water runoff?" Initially, Janet considered it a great idea, but that it can become a fire issue if the grass gets tall, adding that it may be good idea in a lower use area.

EAC Logo/Facebook Page:

John commented that we don't have a logo. Janet agreed that the EAC should have its own logo. To set a logo and Facebook page up through the Township contact Don Herbert (dherbert@umtownship.org)

Banner:

Sandy commented that she designed and redesigned our banner. Janet commented that it could be a great little contest for next year's Earth Day.

Grants:

Janet provided members with a form that the Township provides to anyone applying for a grant. A grant request must be submitted to Sally Slook for her review before it can be considered by the Board.

ADJOURNMENT: John asked if there were any announcements: Sandy motioned to adjourn. Chris seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

John Weilnau, Chairman

Minutes Approved: 05/17/2016

Minutes Entered: 05/18/2016