

Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River Council
Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes and Joint Meeting with GEHWA Trustees
December 17, 2014

Meeting Called to Order: at 6:37 PM by Gregory Gregory, Chairperson.

River Council Roll Call: by Fred Akers, Administrator.

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Twp.), Brian Camp (Corbin City), David Brown (Egg Harbor Twp.), Jim Owen (Estell Manor City), Joel Spiegel (Folsom Boro), Dick Colby (GEHWA), Bill Christman (Hamilton Twp.), Chris Jage (Hammonton City), Rick Coe (Monroe Twp.), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City), Bill Handley (Upper Twp.), Clark Sprigman (Winslow Twp.), Ralph Bernard (Weymouth)

Board Members Absent: None

Quorum Present – Yes

GEHWA Trustee Roll Call: by Fred Akers, Administrator.

Trustees in Attendance: Julie Akers, Dick, Colby, Jamie Cromartie, Steve Eisenhauer, Elmer Ripley, Clark Sprigman, Pat Sprigman

Trustees Absent: : Ed Curry, Clay Emerson, Sarah Summerville

Quorum Present – Yes

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator), Lynn Maun (Coordinator), Chuck O'Donnell (Alt. Corbin City), Steve Eisenhauer (Alt. Upper Twp.), Walt Vreeland (GEHWA Member and Alt. EHT), Karen Zindell, (Atlantic County Parks), Ron Meischker (Somers Point Harbor Master), Victoria Sterling-Scales Watershed Ambassador, Ralph Cooper (Green Team Upper Twp.)

Open Meetings Act: Greg Gregory stated that the meeting was advertised pursuant to the NJ Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq. Notices were sent to official publications for the River Council – The Courier Post and The Press of Atlantic City. A copy of the notice was posted on the bulletin board of the Fox Nature Center, Atlantic County Library in Mays Landing and the GEHWA website.

Approval of Minutes: Bill Christman made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2014 meeting. Dick Colby seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Portion: None

Education & Outreach Coordinator Report (Lynn Maun)

Schools and Community Outreach: Showed video clips and pictures of: Fernwood Middle School trawl net surveys on the river and Stockton students sampling a streams macroinvertebrates. Also reported on continuation of programs at Fox Nature Center in 2015 facilitated by Atlantic County Parks Employee, Karen Zindell.

Events and Meetings: GEHWA sponsored and/or supported the following events.

GEHWA Fall Adventure: Showed video clip of launching canoes and kayaks from Weymouth Furnace.

GEHWA Member Meeting: Julie and Lynn presented a photo documentary program centered on “Backyard Bugs”.

Items of Interest:

2014 Osprey Banding: Showed video clips from the 2014 Osprey banding season.

Lakes Creek Wetlands Mitigation Site: Showed pictures and videos of the plantings at the mitigation site.

NPS Report (Paul Kenney): A meeting took place on November 9th and 10th between the NPS and representatives from Northeast Regions PWSRs. The meeting took place at the Musconetcong Watershed Association office. The Musconetcong is a PWSR. A key component of the meeting was the review of a policy paper on managing PWSRs.

Old Business: Gregory Gregory inquired about the status of Fox Nature Center being open for meetings in 2015. Fred reported that Atlantic County Parks’ staff person, Karen Zindell, has taken on the responsibility of opening the building for meetings.

Other Old Business: None

New Business:

River Councilor Reports for each Municipality

Buena Vista Twp.: (Julie Akers): Reported under GEHWA Trustees.

Folsom: (Joel Spiegel): The 8th street Bridge has been replaced and is now open.

GEHWA: (Dick Colby): Dick has been assisting in the mapping of a trail from North Jersey to South Jersey. The trail will pass through the Great Egg Harbor Watershed.

Hammonton: (Chris Jage): Chris attended a meeting with Hammonton’s Mayor and Council regarding water conservation. Hammonton has created a water rebate program for homeowners.

Monroe Twp.: (Rick Coe): Rick reported that Monroe Township has a new mayor.

Somers Point: (Greg Gregory): Gregory deferred his report to Somers Point Harbor Master, Ron Meischker. Ron spoke about working with GEHWA and Stockton regarding the removal of derelict crab traps that are in the bay

Weymouth Twp.: (Ralph Bernard): Ralph reported that the Absecon Island Power Squadron collected 20 bags of trash from the river

GEHWA Trustee Reports:

Julie Akers: Julie mentioned that a memorial brick was placed in a walkway in Hamilton Township in honor of Belinda Irizarry.

Steve Eisenhauer: Steve is working on a “River Trails” sign project with Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River. They will be modeling their project after the one GEHRC/GEHWA just completed with Atlantic County Parks

Elmer Ripley: Elmer will be working on the renovation of the museum.

Clark Sprigman: Clark suggested that signage be installed at the headwaters of the Great Egg Harbor in Berlin. There was wide support for his idea.

Other New Business: None

Administrator’s Report (Fred Akers)

- 1. Osprey Colony Monitoring and Banding Program:** The Osprey had a very successful year both statewide and on the Great Egg.
- 2. National Wild and Scenic Rivers Report:** Twelve rivers in 7 states share in the appropriation from congress. PWRSSs annually work to get congress to increase the appropriation. The Northeast Regional Director has gotten involved with PWSRs programs and funding, and wants to insure that the program moves forward into the future.
- 3. Disney Nature Impact Grant/Project Update:** GEHWA received a \$22,600.00 Disney Nature Impact grant. To date 5 trawl survey trips have been completed bringing a total of 150 students out onto the river. The cost of the boat is higher than expected due to the longer trip when traveling upriver.
- 4. Regional Directors Call to Action Grants Application:** Regional Director, Mike Caldwell, has provided competitive grants that are open to PWSRs. Fred has written two grants: one for 3 student trawl trips in June of 2015, the second is for 8 student trawl trips in 2016
- 5. Derelict Crab Pot Removal Grant Application:** Stockton College would like to partner with GEHWA to recover derelict crab traps from the Great Egg and to educate the public about ways to prevent the loss of gear. The derelict crab traps are located using Dual-Frequency side scan sonar. A grant application has been submitted for this project. It is a two year program.
- 6. EHT Scullville Volunteer Fire Department Fire Boat Project:** Fred received a call from the chief of the Scullville Fire Station thanking him for his support regarding the purchase of a fire boat.
- 7. American Littoral Society SpillSpotters.net to add GEHR:** Walt Vreeland went to a Spill Spotters workshop and approached Fred about getting involved. Two sites on the Great Egg will be located and included in the network. Proposed sites are: the Kennedy Park Boat Ramp, the BL England Plant, and Mosquito Landing which is downriver from Yank Marine.

8. River Trails Grant/Project Update: The new signs have been installed.

9. Open Space Resolution and Ballet Measure Update: Fred was invited speak to Hammonton Township Council which then passed a resolution in support of open space. The Open Space ballet measure passed in every county of the state.

10. Atlantic County Volunteer Recognition: The Watershed Association and Lynn Maun have been recognized by Atlantic County for their volunteer work.

11. Sahara Sands Motorized Closure Project: At one time Sahara Sands was proposed as an ORV park. Nothing was done with the site and the site has been subject to vandalism by ORVs. Annually GEHWA has held a Frog Walk at Sahara Sands. This year, vehicles parked at the entrance to the WMA were vandalized. After reporting the vandalism of both Sahara Sands and personal property the state has barricaded the property from motor vehicle traffic.

12. Species of Concern: A handout was included in the RC packet regarding “Managing Forage Fish in the Mid-Atlantic Region”.

13. Lawsuit: The River Herring listing lawsuit is slowly moving along.

14. Other Items of Interest: None

Adjournment: Upon motion by Ralph Bernard and second by Bill Christman, the meeting adjourned at 8:25PM.