

River Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes
June 20, 2012

Meeting Called to Order: at 7:03 PM by Rick Coe, Acting Chairperson.

Roll Call: by Fred Akers, Administrator.

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

Board Members Absent: Rick Foster (Corbin City), Dick Colby (GEHWA), Keith Kendrex (Hammonton City)

Quorum Present – Yes

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator), Paul Kenney (NPS), Lynn Maun (Coordinator), Steve Eisenhower (Alt. 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 April 18, 2012 meeting. Ralph Bernard seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Portion: None

Education & Outreach Coordinator Report (Lynn Maun):

Community Outreach: GEHWA continues to work with and support the programs of the following schools.

Egg Harbor Township: Alder Ave Middle School & Fernwood Avenue Middle School

Egg Harbor City: Cedar Creek Environmental Science Magnet School

Hamilton Township: Mays Landing, St. Vincent DePaul: An update to the science fair Fred and Lynn helped to judged at St. Vincent DePaul. Students winners from the SVDP Science Fair went on to compete in the Jersey Shore Science Fair 2012 held at Stockton College. A total of 800 students with 682 projects from around the region competed in the event. SVDP had one student win 1st Place and three students receive honorable mention. Also of special Note: a total of 39 student projects from Alder Avenue and Fernwood Avenue Schools in EHT were won awards (1st, 2nd 3rd or Honorable Mention). The student from SVDP who won 1st place in the Jersey Shore Science Fair went on to compete in the Delaware Valley Science Fair and won second place in the Medicine and Health category and has qualified to attend the White House Science Fair. A total of 5 students from Alder Avenue and Fernwood Avenue also won awards.

Lynn continues presenting monthly programs at St. Vincent DePaul (groundwater, stormwater runoff, animals, macroinvertebrates and bird watching). The fifth grade will presented a Puppet Show in June to the PreK to 4th grade classes.

Middle Township: Middle Township Middle School held events at Kennedy Park and Beasley's Point

Somers Point: Dawes Avenue School held events at Higbee Beach and the 6th grade cruised on the Duke of Fluke. The cruise was sponsored by GEHWA and GEHRC.

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

Cologne Tract Cleanup: Members of GEHWA and the RC participated in the Cologne Tract clean up event.

ACUA Earth Day: This is a very popular event that is well attended by the public.

GEHWA Member Meeting – Hike for Frogs: This is a popular annual event that was held at Sahara Sands in Monroe Township

Upcoming Events:

Atlantic County Parks: Birding with binoculars program scheduled for July and September.

GEHWA Annual Picnic: The annual picnic and campfire will be held on Tuesday, July 24, 2012 at Weymouth Furnace. From 5:30pm until 9:00pm. RCs are invited.

NPS Report (Paul Kenney): Attended meeting in Connecticut. The rivers in the northeast are facing some of the same issues that we have facing on the Great Egg. Development seems to be picking up. The NJ DEP has had some changes in staff recently.

Old Business:

1. **River Signs:** A handout was included in the RC's packets that list locations for additional signs. Fred would like RC to review the information for discussion at the next meeting. It costs approximately \$190.00 to make and install the signs.

2. **Electronics Recycling:** Information regarding the electronic recycling program recently sponsored by Winslow Twp. is included in RC's packet.

Other Old Business: None

New Business:

1. **Open Space Pilot Resolution Review:** Funding for NJ's PILOT program has been cut since Gov. Christy took office. The RC adopted the following resolution on 12-15-2010 "**Resolution R: 05-2010: A resolution supporting continued open space pilot funding**". A copy of the resolution is included in the RC's packet.

The RC supports updating the 2012 resolution. The new resolution should include a statement that the monies cut by the Christy Administration should be reinstated and that future funding should be indexed to the rate of inflation.

Bill Handley made a motion to support a renewal of the 2010 resolution. Rick Coe made an additional motion that the renewed resolution should also include a statement that the monies cut should be reinstated and future funding should be indexed to the rate of inflation. Copies of the resolution should also be sent to members of congress and other government officials. Clark Sprigman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

River Councilor Reports for each Municipality

Buena Vista Twp.: (Julie Akers): Julie and Fred found Tiger Salamanders in Buena Vista Township. Fred will contact the NJDEP regarding the find so that they can investigate the site to confirm and document the find.

Egg Harbor Twp.: (David Brown): Eagles and osprey have been observed on the river

Estell Manor City: (Jim Owen): Jim reported that the county may purchase Lenape Farms. He also reported that the Estell Manor side of the GEHR may soon have river access.

Folsom: (Joel Spiegel): Joel is not sure of the timeline for the 8th street bridge replacement. Joel plans on contacting the engineer in an effort to learn the details of the work to be done. The dam at Penny Pot has had a partial failure and Penny Pot Lake has lost water as a result. The local homeowners are not happy. Folsom's Elementary School recently held its Environmental Pledge Program which involves the 1 & 2 grade students. This program is sponsored by the Folsom Environmental Commission. The initial program was started by Belinda. Each student signing a pledge receives a turtle tee shirt.

Hamilton Twp.: (Bill Christman): Hamilton Twp. is still waiting for the Hamilton Mall to fix the basins.

Monroe Twp.: (Rick Coe): Rick has a potential Boy Scout project near the retention ponds next to the Williamstown Middle School. Fred will work with Rick to assess the project.

Somers Point: (Greg Gregory): Greg noted that the following fish were recently caught at Jeffers Landing: striper, croaker, catfish, oystercracker, and flounder. Greg stated that this reflects on the overall health of the river. He also has observed Osprey catching fish.

Upper Twp.: (Alt. Steve Eisenhower): The Natural Lands Trust is interested in assessing Kennedy Park. The Dodge Foundation has a Municipal Parks Program that funds this type of work.

Weymouth Twp.: (Ralph Bernard): Ralph has observed eagles and otters on the river

Winslow: (Clark Sprigman): Clark would like to see signage installed in Berlin designating the headwaters of the GEHR.

Other New Business: None

Administrator's Report (Fred Akers):

1. PWSRs Letter to Obama and VP Biden: The PWSR's letter to President Obama and VP Biden was also sent to 18 Senators and 46 Representatives.

2. Patcong Creek Bulkhead Issue: A homeowner bought a property with an unauthorized bulkhead on Patcong Creek. He made a petition to have the bulkhead authorized. It was denied. He asked for the support of the GEHR Council. His request was denied.

3. English Creek Bridge Replacement: The state owns a piece of property that is part of the Tuckahoe WMA which is adjacent to English Creek. A small portion of the property has been given to the municipality so that work on the bridge replacement can progress.

4. Hamilton Preserve Dumping Issue: Martin Rapp who manages the Gravelly Run Hamilton Preserve called Fred regarding trash and boats dumped on the property. Rapp plans to block vehicular access to the property. Fred stated that Pine Barrens Tree Frogs have been identified on the property.

5. River Herring Update: Fred attended the Mid Atlantic Fishery Council meeting that was held recently in New York. The council is recommending changes to Amendment 14 that will help to protect river herring and shad. It was also determined that a new amendment "Amendment 15" was needed to help accomplish this.

6. Frogs and Salamanders: Fred has led many Frog walks this year. He and Julie have discovered possible habitat for Tiger Salamanders.

7. New Bridge Somers Point: Fred is keeping a digital history of the new route 52 causeway bridge.

8. Eagles and Osprey: The RC has installed 15 new platforms over the past several years. Fred is getting ready to start banding the 2012 chicks. This is the second year that a Bald Eagle has used an Osprey Platform for a nest.

9: Other Items of Interest: None

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Bill Christman and second by Bill Handley, the meeting adjourned at 9:03 PM.