

Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River Council

Regular Meeting Minutes

April 21, 2004

Meeting Called to Order at 7:10PM by Greg Gergory, Chairperson

Roll Call by Fred Akers

Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Township), Bill Christman (Hamilton Township), Rick Coe (Monroe Township), Bill Egan (Weymouth Township), Greg Gregory (Somers Point), Keith Kendrix (Hammonton), John Olansen (Upper), Creed Pogue (GEHWA), Joel Spiegel (Folsom Borough), Gary Theno (Egg Harbor Township Alternate), and Dick Colby, (GEHWA Alternate/Treasurer)

Board Members Absent: Representative for Corbin City, John Brudon (Estell Manor), Andy Mair (Winslow Township), Marc Thyrring (Egg Harbor Township, alternate present)

Quorum Present? – Yes

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator)

Proceedings:

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 and the Atlantic County Library in Mays Landing.

Fred Akers welcomed John Olansen, newly appointed representative from Upper Township.

Approval of Minutes

Julie Akers made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 16, 2004 meeting of the River Council. Bill Christman seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Portion

There was no one from the public.

Administrator Report

1. Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers: Fred Akers handed out the joint rivers' Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2005, which seeks \$1.64 million, and provided background and an update on the funding process. Although Congress appropriated a partial increase (to \$900,000) in the FY 2004 budget for the eight (and growing) Partnership Rivers in the program, it is still not enough to cover all their individual budgets. Each river receives equally about \$100,000, although they have different sizes and needs. (The GEHR CMP calls for an annual budget of \$255,000.) At this point, Fred has communicated GEHR budget needs and accomplishments to our U.S. House and Senate representatives, and continues to work with reps from the other partnership rivers on the east coast. Fred asked Rick Coe for Rob Andrews' fax number, as he has not been able to get any response from the Gloucester/Camden County US rep.

2. Coastal Issues hearing hosted by NJDEP, 4/19 at Stockton College: Fred submitted comments as they pertained to existing programs affecting the GEHR. Greg Gregory also made comments, thanking

Congressman Frank LoBiondo and Senator Corzine (who were present) for their support of W&S, and promoted the River Council.

3. Open Space: Fred handed out two information pamphlets issued by the Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) for municipalities regarding the benefits of open space preservation and how to prepare an Open Space Plan. Weymouth, EHT, and Monroe Townships currently have an Open Space tax in their municipalities. The role of the River Council can be to assist municipalities in open space plan development, support and advice to local planning committees, and finding sources of funding. Dick Colby suggested participation in the 7-year review of each municipality's master plan, which has a mandatory open space component. Greg Gregory commented that open space acquisition could be the River Council's legacy.

National Park Service Report: **no report.**

Old Business

Watershed Signage

Fred distributed a metal sign to each member to show to local municipal committees and councils. Signs and mountings will be ordered when the River Councilors determine suitable locations for placement, and the stream name sign list can be finalized for the order. Fred distributed a table, "Stream Name Sign List By Municipality", with recommended name signs and quantities for each of the 12 member municipalities. Each River Councilor was requested to verify approval for the final locations and the names and quantities for each respective municipality.

River Council Webpage

Fred provided a copy of the page as it appears on www.gehwa.org. Corrections to names were recommended, and suggested additions were to add the names of alternates, add a hot link to contact Fred for viewers seeking additional information, and add a schedule of meetings.

Review of Obligated Funds

Fred distributed a list of the currently allocated projects:

- a. \$3000: Somers Point Information signs – One Atlantic County-prepared info sign will be installed at Kennedy Park. Leftover funds in this category can be applied to installation of kayak racks in Kennedy Park and Drag Island. Fred and Gregory will try to get this done before the Bay Day event on 6/13.
- b. \$6000: Watershed Signage – in progress (partial spending).
- c. \$3000: Monroe Footbridge -- Rick Coe indicated that this project is still on.
- d. \$ 500: Weymouth/Estell Manor Plantings -- Per Weymouth Environmental Commission member Mike Hogan, the Township has already covered this cost. A motion was made by Bill Christman, second by Bill Egan, to delete this obligation. All in favor, with Creed Pogue abstaining.
- e. \$1000: Fish Report – in progress (\$1000 represents remaining half of funding).
- f. \$ 1000: Hamilton Clean-up -- \$1000 has already been given as an advance, with a balance of \$1000 remaining. Bill Christman and Fred are working with Ingrid Perez to apply the advance to a recent clean-up. With the upcoming grant work (in association with Stockton College) to be conducted on Adams Branch, this balance may be able to be applied to necessary clean-up there.
- g. \$7011: Municipal Assistance -- Weymouth Township has already been compensated from this general funding: \$975 for a GIS printer. Weymouth has also hosted the first of its scheduled training sessions to other interested communities who wish to learn more about GIS.

Emergency Management Update

Bill Egan, chair of the subcommittee, reported on his meeting with Wally Shields, EHT Volunteer Fire Dept. Communications in case of an emergency on the river are already in place; call 9-1-1 (or *CG will go

directly to the Coast Guard. Bill and the subcommittee will continue to find out the coordination efforts and communication between different towns along the river. Already, several marina owners have advised local fire departments on how to access their launch ramps during off hours if they need emergency access to the river. A verbal request for funding to purchase 1- or 3-season exposure suits was made by the Fire Dept, at an approximate cost of \$900 each (3-season). There was general agreement that a formal written funding request would be favorably considered by the Council.

New Business

Nominate and Elect Vice Chair

The resignation of Vice Chair Andrew Mair (due to relocation) was accepted. A nomination was made by Bill Christman, second by Rick Coe, to elect Creed Pogue as Vice Chair. Creed accepted. All in favor, with Creed abstaining.

River Council Budget and Workplan

The need to identify river projects that accomplished goals of the CMP was discussed. Larger project proposals can be planned and ready to go, so funding opportunities outside of nominal NPS funds can be sought. Fred asked that any project proposals to be considered for budget funding in 2005 be completed by September/October. Gregory felt that good projects were ones that emphasized education and awareness (e.g. signs, info CD's, puppet shows, events, tours) and that it was important to recognize the leveraging capability of the W&S funds. Gary Theno suggested that River Council promote the installation of pump-out stations at feasible locations along the tidal river. Cost per unit installed is about \$4000 average. A motion was made by Gregory, second by Keith Kendrix, to consider paying 50% of this cost for participating pump-out hosts. No vote taken, pending further information. Gregory appointed Gary Theno to be chairman of a subcommittee to look into a pump-out promotion. Gary will contact other marina owners for interest, and Fred will back up the River Council promotion with a letter. A second project suggested was abandoned barge removal. Gary Theno has a tugboat capable of removing floatable barges, and he will provide a quote to Fred after he looks at specified barges. Creed Pogue motioned that a contract amount for removal and disposal be approved, not to exceed \$4000, and this action could take place on a timely basis without further approval from the Council prior to the next meeting in June. Bill Christman seconded the motion. Discussion of Gary Theno receiving funds for services followed. It was determined that a contract with a River Council member was justified, because charges would be to cover expenses and salaries of workers, without profit. A roll call vote followed; all affirmative, with Gary Theno abstaining.

River Tour for Municipal, County, and State Officials

A river tour will be scheduled tentatively for August aboard the Duke o' Fluke. Invited will be three attendees from each municipality, along with local and state representatives. The boat holds 45. A motion was made by Creed Pogue to authorize the expenditure of up to \$500 for this trip, second by Julie Akers. All present were in favor.

Announcements

Greg Gregory will submit general Public Service Announcements to the local radio station, which will broadcast as often as possible. Also promoted will be the upcoming Day at the Bay festival.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Rick Coe. Motion was seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9PM.