

**Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Meeting Minutes
June 16, 2004**

Meeting Called to Order at 7:15PM by Creed Pogue

Roll Call by Fred Akers:

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Township), John Brudon (Estell Manor), Bill Christman (Hamilton Township), Rick Coe (Monroe Township), Creed Pogue (GEHWA), Joel Spiegel (Foslom Borough), Marc Thyrring (Egg Harbor Township) and John Olansen (Upper Township)

Board Members Absent: Bill Egan (Weymouth Township), Greg Gregory (Somers Point) and Keith Kendrix (Hammonton).

Quorum Present? – Yes

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator), Mary Vavra (National Park Service); Gary Theno (Alternate for Egg Harbor Twp.)

Proceedings

Creed Pogue 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.

Approval of Minutes

Bill Christman made a motion to approve the minutes from the April 21, 2004 meeting of the River Council. Joel Spiegel seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Public Portion

Julie Akers made a motion, which was seconded by Bill Christman, to open the meeting to the public. Motion carried. No members of the public were present. Julie Akers made a motion, which was seconded by Bill Christman, to close the public portion of the meeting. Motion carried.

River Administrator Report

Fred Akers distributed a report on his activities to all River Council members by e-mail prior to the meeting. Fred mentioned that he will be exploring ways to update the Dock Study that was conducted by the National Park Service in cooperation with Atlantic County to get a handle on the level of development occurring in the tidal section of the river since 1995.

Fred also reported that the first annual “Day at the Bay” festival held at Kennedy Park in Somers Point was a resounding success on many levels. Fred and Belinda Irizarry represented GEHWA and the River Council and had an opportunity to talk with many people, including elected officials from all levels of government.

National Park Service Report

Mary Vavra reported on NPS activities in the river corridor. NPS is experiencing budget constraints as the fiscal year winds down. A number of permits for small projects have been reviewed and approved over the course of the last few months. Mary also mentioned that the NPS hired a summer intern who will be working with GEHWA to design an organizational brochure.

Old Business

Watershed Signage Update

The firm being used to furnish and install the watershed awareness signs is Highway Technologies, Inc, an authorized state contractor. It was noted that since Highway Technologies, Inc. is an approved state vendor, no additional quotes from other vendors are necessary. Approximately 40 signs can be purchased with the amount of money available. A motion was made by Bill Christman to approve the vendor to produce the signs. Marc Thyrring seconded the motion. *Roll Call Vote:* Julie Akers – yes; John Brudon – yes; Bill Christman – yes; Rick Coe – yes; John Olansen – yes; Creed Pogue – yes; Joel Spiegel – yes; Marc Thyrring – yes. Motion carried unanimously.

The sign placement listing was reviewed and comments were offered for additions and deletions. All the locations are at stream crossings within the federal boundary. Additional signs for Piney Hollow Road were suggested along with four undesignated signs for future use. A motion was made by Marc Thyrring to approve the list of signs, adding one for Piney Hollow and the purchase of four undesignated signs. Bill Christman seconded the motion. *Roll Call Vote:* Julie Akers – yes; John Brudon – yes; Bill Christman – yes; Rick Coe – yes; John Olansen – yes; Creed Pogue – yes; Joel Spiegel – yes; Marc Thyrring – yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Fred will coordinate the placement of signs and work to get them installed.

Monroe Bridge Project

Fred Akers reported on the status of the proposed bridge location near the Blue Hole in Monroe Township. Rick Coe and Fred met on site on 5/30 to look at the proposed location and Fred has started the process of proposing the project to the State for permission since they are the landowners of record. Rick reported that there is a great deal of interest in this site at the local level for its historic value and a bridge will provide access from one side of the river to the other.

Barge Removal Contract

Gary Theno reported that he visited the barge to determine the best approach to its removal but raised questions regarding liability issues since there is no owner of record. Gary reported that there are specific procedures that must be followed for vessels with registered ownership. The abandoned barge has been floating down the river for about a year. Rick Coe clarified the motion made in the April 21st minutes stating that the purpose of the motion was to reimburse for out-of-pocket expenses only. Removal of the barge would not be on a contract basis. A motion was made by Rick Coe to clarify the previous motion made and recorded during the April 21st meeting to recognize the volunteer efforts of Gary Theno and reimburse him for out-of-pocket expenses up to \$4,000 based on submitted receipts. . This motion was seconded by Bill Christman. *Roll Call Vote:* Julie Akers – yes; John Brudon – yes; Bill Christman – yes; Rick Coe – yes; John Olansen – yes; Creed Pogue – yes; Joel Spiegel – yes; Marc Thyrring – yes. Motion carried unanimously.

Rick agreed to draft a legal public notice regarding the removal of abandoned property along the river in an effort to reach the possible owner(s).

River Tour for Municipal, County and State Officials

A date for the river tour for government representatives was discussed targeting a weekend in September. Fred will check with the Duke O' Fluke about availability.

Gary Theno offered to take River Council members on a tour for a first hand view of the river and its environment on July 21st at 6PM. A motion was made by Rick Coe, and seconded by Joel Spiegel, that the

River Council will meet at Hidden Mill Marina on 7/21 at 6PM for a tour of the river. Motion carried unanimously.

River Council Work plan

The work plan was accepted by the River Council after questions were raised and answered.

Clean Vessel Act

Fred Akers reported that there was a Clean Vessel Act Committee made up of several organizations to try to increase interest in controlling sewage along the State's waterways. The committee decided they needed 220 pumpout stations throughout the state and they are now looking at the Great Egg Harbor Bay and Ocean City as target areas to promote a pumpout boat and additional pumpout stations. Fred is advocating a pumpout boat on the bay and is exploring ways to make this happen. Fred will follow-up on this issue and report back to the River Council at next meeting.

Gary Theno reported that there is potential liability associated with a pumpout boat and this should be a consideration when making a decision. Gary suggested that pumpout facilities at marinas are more viable options. A discussion ensued about designating the river as a "No Discharge Zone" whether waste is treated or untreated. This process will be discussed later.

American Planning Association (APA) Stormwater Conference

This conference will be at Stockton College on August 10th and is a great opportunity for the county and municipalities to learn more about stormwater management. Fred Akers and Atlantic County will be helping with logistics at this event. Julie Akers made a motion to contribute a nominal amount (\$100) to donate to NJ APA for the conference and to reimburse the cost of attendance for any River Council or municipal representative who wanted to attend. The motion was seconded by Bill Christman. *Roll Call Vote:* Julie Akers – yes; John Brudon – yes; Bill Christman – yes; Rick Coe – yes; John Olansen – yes; Creed Pogue – yes; Joel Spiegel – yes; Marc Thyrring – left meeting. Motion carried.

New Business

Adams Branch

Bill Christman has been working with the Hamilton Township Planning Board to gain their support of the work being done by Fred and NJDEP on this project. The knowledge gained through the study of Adams Branch is being used by the Planning Board to make decisions. Bill also suggested that Fred plan a walk of Adams Branch for Planning Board members to educate them about the stormwater issues that exist in this area. Bill also reported that the Adams Branch project has enabled the planning board to make sound decisions about development for the area. Bill will talk with planning board members to decide the best time for a tour.

A motion was made by Rick Coe and seconded by Joel Spiegel to adjourn the meeting at 9:15.