

River Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Regular Monthly Meeting
December 21, 2005

Meeting Called to Order at 7:00 PM by Gregory Gregory, Chairperson.

Roll Call by Fred Akers, Administrator. The roll call was prefaced with a statement of River Councilor eligibility to vote. Due to the ability of Councilors to make decisions regarding spending of National Park Service funding on municipal projects, he reminded councilors that they must be formally appointed by their municipalities (or GEHWA in the case of the 501c-3's representative) and such documentation must be submitted to the River Council. Fred Akers advised that there had still been no notice from Egg Harbor Twp designating Gary Theno as alternate; all other Councilors and alternates were authorized as current or holdover appointments and eligible to vote.

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Twp), Bill Christman (Hamilton Twp), Rick Coe (Monroe Twp), Ed Curry (GEHWA alternate), Bill Egan (Weymouth Twp), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City), Bud Paynter (Winslow Twp), Joel Spiegel (Folsom Boro), Tom Walker (Corbin City), Marc Thyrring – arrived 8:30PM (Egg Harbor Twp)

Board Members Absent: John Brudon (Estell Manor City), Keith Kendrix (Hammonton City), John Olansen (Upper Twp)

Quorum Present? – Yes

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator), Lynn Maun (Coordinator), Paul Kenney (NPS), Gary Theno (alternate, Egg Harbor 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 and the Atlantic County Library in Mays Landing.

Approval of Minutes: Bud Paynter made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2005 meeting. Bill Christman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Portion: None.

Administrator's Report (Fred Akers): Fred presented the following agenda items for information and/or action:

1. New Watershed Coordinator: Lynn Maun was introduced. She will be continuing the programs and liaison work that Belinda performed for municipalities.
2. Wild and Scenic Partnership event Nov. 1&2: A summary was made by Fred, with thanks to the RC participants who attended this successful event. A handout, *Citizens' Agenda for Rivers*, by American Rivers, was distributed. Paul Kenney noted that Quinn McKew of American Rivers is a key partner for us and the other W&S rivers. The importance of the River Council concept in Partnership river protection was emphasized.
3. Atlantic County Initiatives: Fred presented an update of County efforts to educate the public about water use and reuse (small treatment plants for irrigation with reused waste water) and alternative energy programs (windmill farm and methane collection). He illustrated using the ACUA website.

4. Stormwater Management Update: A handout, *Protecting Our Streams*, by ANJEC, was distributed. Fred presented visual references to Hamilton Mall stormwater management issues after the 1 ½" rainfall in the area from Hurricane Wilma.
5. ORV Issue Update: Fred distributed copies of the final letter from Pineland Preservation Alliance (PPA) to NJDEP, asking that no ORV parks be established on state lands until partnership-recommended guidelines for ORV licensure, registration and enforcement programs are in place. The River Council is a co-signer along with 13 other organizations throughout the state. To address several concerns raised at the last meeting regarding RC's authorization to get involved with this issue, Fred asked Paul Kenney for NPS determination. Paul Kenney advised that National Parks are set up with preservation in mind (as opposed to Forest Service or Bureau of Land Management designations), and that the RC's action is consistent with our Comprehensive Management Plan.
6. GEHR Draft Report done by Pinelands Commission staff: Fred distributed copies of his comments made to the Pinelands Commission (PC) regarding this report. He presented several slides to illustrate the impact of extensive road coverage on the watershed, and noted that all the PC's study sites were near roads. He advises the PC that perceived degradation levels in the whole watershed may not be accurate (due to GEHWA's field research done with Stockton) and more study should be done in less impacted areas away from roadways.
7. AC Expressway / Water Quality: Fred reported on his comments to the PC regarding "ditch clearing" requested by the Atlantic City Expressway along their road in the Babcock Creek subwatershed. Of concern is the impact to "ditches" that are really streams, and runoff that will more rapidly reach Babcock Creek.
8. Marine Fisheries Council / Red Knot Extinction: An update was made on the potential ban on horseshoe crab harvesting and relationship with migrating birds, and significance for the Delaware Bay as well as the GEHR Bay.
9. Hamilton Environmental Commission Hike: Fred will be leading a hike for the EC in the Gravelly Run area after the new year.
10. Website Update: There is now a button on the website for RC news and interest.
11. River Council Bylaws Review: Copies were distributed of the RC Bylaws and the original Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed by municipal, county, state and federal representatives in 1990. Upon a recommendation from Bud Paynter and enthusiastic support from the rest of the members, the RC will plan to take some of its meetings on the road to other locations within the watershed, to share the information and encourage more involvement from local citizens and officials. Presentations can be tailored to the regional area and local officials invited. Bud Paynter and Rick Coe volunteered to head a committee to schedule these meetings and locations. Generally, road meetings will be non-business. The annual notice of meetings should include all possible dates (third Wednesday each month), and locations will be submitted to the newspapers of record as needed.

NPS Report (Paul Kenney): Paul gave an update on the status of the federal budget ("flat"), with the possibility for cuts. He reviewed the status of several development applications on which the NPS has commented.

Old Business

1. Watershed Sign Update: Fred reported that he is still getting the runaround from NJDOT. Greg Gregory suggested that Congressman VanDrew be contacted to help expedite.
2. Belinda Fund Update: There is \$1,500 in this fund so far. The goal is to have the principal exceed \$5,000 so that interest proceeds can fund a grant or scholarship each year in her name. GEHWA will communicate progress and awareness of annual events to the donors through a separate mailing list.
3. Other Old Business: none

New Business:

1. Enviroscope Demonstration and Promotion: Lynn Maun explained and demonstrated the different lessons about Point and Non-point pollution that can be taught to youth and civic groups with this model. Councilors are encouraged to pass the word to interested audiences about the availability of this education and outreach effort.

2. Introduction of 2006 River Council Budget: Copies were distributed but not discussed in detail. Councilors were reminded about availability of 2006 Planning Grants through ANJEC. Fred will check on the eligibility of Estell Manor and Corbin City to apply for these grants since they do not have Environmental Commissions.

3. River Councilor Reports

-- Egg Harbor Township: Marc Thyrring and Gary Theno presented a copy of the resolution appointing Gary Theno as alternate for 2005. The documentation was accepted by Fred Akers. He will be mailing out designation forms to municipal mayors and clerks for appointments that need to be made and/or renewed, and requested that all Councilors assist by following up. Gary Theno reiterated the expressed need for funding to go to EHT EMT's for equipment.

-- Monroe Twp: Rick Coe asked for consideration of additional funding in the budget for the Blue Hole Bridge project connecting Monroe and Winslow Twps.

-- Corbin City: Tom Walker reported a concern about possible RC objections to Corbin City's Office of Smart Growth application for increased development potential. Fred responded that comments on the general OSG application process had been made by GEHWA. Tom reported that Corbin City's main goal in applying for greater development was to be able to have 1-2 adult restricted housing areas. He noted that 85% of Corbin City is owned by the State and receives no taxes on this land. There is a deficit of \$5-7000 per student, and the development is needed to offset these costs. He also inquired about receiving grant funds for his municipality from the RC, specifically for revisions to their stormwater management plan and for another clean-up grant for Ed Kenney and the Boy Scouts.

-- Hamilton Twp: Bill Christman reported that HT is in the process of revising its master plan.

-- Winslow Twp: Bud Paynter reported that officials would be changing in January in Winslow, and he was planning to meet with mayor and Environmental Commission.

-- Somers Point: Greg Gregory indicated that there would be a change in SP officials too.

-- Weymouth Twp: Bill Egan reported that a new member of his Twp's Committee was Mr. Craig of Testwell Craig, and that he would like to be involved with us (source of info for aquifer and water issues).

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Greg Gregory and second by Marc Thyrring, the meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.