

River Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes
December 19, 2012

Meeting Called to Order: at 7:08 PM by Dick Colby, 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), Dick Colby (GEHWA), Bill Christman (Hamilton Twp), Chris Jage (Hammonton City), Bill Handley (Upper Twp), Clark Sprigman (Winslow Twp.), Ralph Bernard (Weymouth)

Board Members Absent: Rick Foster (Corbin City), Joel Spiegel (Folsom Boro), Rick Coe (Monroe Twp), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City)

Quorum Present – Yes

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator), Paul Kenney (NPS), Lynn Maun (Coordinator), Steve Eisenhauer (Alt. Upper Twp.), Lou Harvey (Buena Vista Twp.), Carlton Montgomery (PPA)

Open Meetings Act: Dick Colby 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: Julie Akers made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 17, 2012 meeting. Jim Owen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Portion: Carleton Montgomery, PPA, distributed the “State of the Pinelands to members of the RC. He expressed his concern that the Pinelands Commission does not adequately protect the GEHR and GEHW within the Pinelands. Carleton also distributed the “Barnegat Bay LID”.

Lou Harvey, Buena Vista Twp. – Mr. Harvey wanted to attend a RC meeting.

Education & Outreach Coordinator Report (Lynn Maun)

Schools:

Fernwood Avenue Middle School: Jim Thoms’ 7th grade classes held environmental outdoor classroom activities on the Duke of Fluke during October, 2012. Through a variety of scientific tests they hope to assess the health of the bay. GEHWA continues assisting during these trips.

St. Vincent DePaul School: Lynn will be working with Leslie Lombardo’s 5th grade class throughout the school year.

Mainland Regional High School: GEHWA helped Mainland Regional High School with their special needs class during an eco-cruise on the Duke of Fluke on Wednesday, October 24, 2012. The Watershed Ambassador for WMA 15 also participated.

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

GEHWA Member Meeting: Fred gave a presentation on Tuesday, November 28th about the history surrounding the headwaters of the Great Egg Harbor River and Watershed.

ANJEC 39 Annual Environmental Congress: Fred, Julie and Lynn attended the 39th Annual Environmental Congress held in Edison, NJ on Saturday, October 20, 2012.

NPS Report (Paul Kenney): Paul is pleased to announce that Joe DiBello is now the NPS representative on the Pinelands Commission. Funding for 2013 for the Partnership Wild and Scenic program has not been determined at this time.

Old Business:

1. **River Signs:** Fred has identified a company that can make the roadway signs. The company is Garden State Highway Products, Inc. The cost for materials is approximately the same as it was for the previous signs. The cost would be \$89.40 each
2. **NPS Pinelands Letter:** The RCs received an email and hard copy of a draft letter to be sent from the RC to Dennis Reidenbach, Northeast Regional Director of the NPS. Some changes have been made to the draft document. Fred reviewed the four bullet points. It was suggested that the mayors of the local municipalities also sign on to a letter requesting that the Pinelands Commission recognize the need to protect the National Wild and Scenic Rivers within the Pinelands. One issue of special concern is lack of attendance at the Pinelands Commission meetings by the NPS Pinelands Commission member. Discussion followed.

Bill Handley made a motion to send the letter with the following corrections: 1. Change the number of meetings missed to fewer than half and 2. Change the wording from oversight to involvement. Ralph Bernard seconded the motion.

Jim Owen moved to amend the motion to leave in the actual number of meetings missed, Chris Jage seconded the motion

Roll Call Vote was taken on the motion to send the letter with changes: Jim Owen, Yes; Clark Sprigman, Yes; Chris Jage, Yes; Bill Handley, Yes; Julie Akers, Yes; Dick Colby, Yes; Bill Christman, Yes; Ralph Bernard, No; David Brown, No. Motion passed.

A Roll Call Vote was taken on the amended motion: Jim Owen, Yes; Clark Sprigman, Yes; Chris Jage, Yes; Bill Handley, Yes; Julie Akers, Yes; Dick Colby, Yes; Bill Christman, Yes; Ralph Bernard, No; David Brown, Yes. Motion passed.

Fred is to send the letter with the appropriate corrections to the NPS and he will also work on requesting that the local municipalities also send letters to the NPS. Fred proposes that this be done with a resolution.

Other Old Business: None

New Business:

River Councilor Reports for each Municipality

Buena Vista Twp.: (Julie Akers): The Buena Vista Planning Board is continuing to hear testimony regarding a proposed cluster development. This would be the first to occur in a rural development area within the Pinelands since the Pinelands Commission first initiated its clustering rules.

Egg Harbor Twp.: (David Brown): There is a lot of debris in and around the river from hurricane Sandy. He has pulled two big docks from the river. He has also found a barge up on the banks that floated in on the high tide from the storm.

Estell Manor City: (Jim Owen): No report.

GEHWA: (Dick Colby): Dick stated that in the past GEHWA visited the local municipalities and presented a slide show as a way to garner support for the Wild and Scenic designation. He feels it would be beneficial to go back and revisit those municipalities with a new program. Dick would like the local RC for that municipality to be present during the presentation. Paul offered to be present if the local municipality is interested.

Hamilton Twp.: (Bill Christman): Bill reported that Hamilton Township will not issue a Permit of Occupancy for the new development at the Hamilton Mall until the basins at the mall are working properly. He also stated that he has never seen the river so high as it was from the storm surge and full moon from Hurricane Sandy. Bill observed many dead fish once the tide receded. He also reported that there are tires in the river close to his property

Hammonton: (Chris Jage): Chris reported that Hammonton did not lose power and only lost a few trees during the hurricane. Hammonton has approved a Forestry Plan and will be doing an inventory of hazardous trees.

Upper Twp.: (Bill Handley): Bill stated that Upper Twp. experienced road flooding and limited house flooding. Tuckahoe and Highway 50 were flooded. He said there are problems with a property owner on Mill Creek denying canoe/kayakers the right to paddle past his property.

Weymouth Twp.: (Ralph Bernard): Ralph stated that there is something in the river upriver from Spoonies. He will investigate this spring. He reported that the river was very salty during the Sandy. Ralph also reported that Absecon Island Power Squadron collected 15 bags of trash on the river prior to the hurricane.

Winslow: (Clark Sprigman): Clark thanked Fred for pictures from the storm. He did not see the water level at New Brooklyn Lake any higher than from previous storms.

Other New Business:

None

Administrator's Report (Fred Akers): Due to time constraints Fred's report was postponed until the next meeting.

Adjournment:

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