

River Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting
December 20, 2006

Meeting Called to Order: at 7:12 PM by Gregory Gregory, Chairperson.

Roll Call: by Fred Akers, Administrator.

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Twp), Rick Coe (Monroe Twp), Dick Colby (GEHWA), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City), Joel Spiegel (Folsom Boro), Gary Theno (Egg Harbor Twp), Tom Walker (Corbin City)

Board Members Absent: John Brudon (Estell Manor City), Bill Christman (Hamilton Twp), Bill Egan (Weymouth Twp), Keith Kendrix (Hammonton City), John Olansen (Upper Twp), Bud Paynter (Winslow Twp)

Quorum Present: Yes

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator), Paul Kenney (NPS), Lynn Maun (Coordinator), Karl Billerts (Public)

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: Tom Walker made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2006 and October 18, 2006 meetings. Joel Spiegel seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Portion: Karl Billerts, who lives within the upper reaches of the Great Egg Harbor Watershed, shared his concerns about development and the impact it has on the river from stormwater runoff. Karl is an avid canoeist and belongs to the SJ Canoe Club. He has volunteered to present a slide show depicting his adventures on the river.

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

1. Save the Bluff Project Update:

Fred presented a brief slide show on the work done on the Bluffs. The River Council and GEHWA continue support of the Dawes Avenue School "Save the Bluffs" project. GEHRC recently received a \$1,500.00 donation from the Bayfest Committee for the Bluffs project. During a fall survey approximately 60 of the bushes that were planted in the spring had died and needed to be replaced. On November 7th and 14th, the 4th, 5th and 6th grade classes replaced dead bushes, cleaned up trash, cut down Japanese Knotweed and placed 15 cubic yards of mulch around all the bushes.

Special Note: The 15 cubic yards of mulch spread on the bluffs by the students from the Dawes school for their Save-the Bluffs project was donated by the **ACUA**.

2. **Osprey Platform Project:** A Boy Scout from Troop 55 will be erecting 5 Osprey platforms on the Tuckahoe for his Eagle Scout project. Fred received a GIS map from Ben Wertz NJFWS locating existing platforms and possible locations for new platforms. The scout will be responsible for funding and contacting private landowners for permission to erect a platform on their property. Greg Gregory is willing to pay for a platform. Greg also mentioned that Ben at Peter Lumber may donate the lumber at cost for the project. Fred has two platforms that the scout can have if he runs short of funds. The plan is to erect the platforms by the end of February or the beginning of March. Tom Walker expressed concern about locating the platforms close to an area with significant human activity.

3. **Upper Township Middle School:** In December Fred and Lynn went to the school and did groundwater and stormwater runoff demonstrations using the Groundwater Model and the EnviroScape. They did six 30 minute presentation to a total of 360 students.

-It was suggested that a program could be developed that would aid in Teacher Certification.

-The RC was also informed that Fred and Lynn want to do presentations in the schools.

4. **Monroe Township Open Space Committee:** Fred is a voting member and is up for reappointment. He reported that Monroe is having a difficult time purchasing open space. The committee proposes areas for acquisition but the local politicians do not approve them. Fred referred to the "2007 Planning Grants for NJ Municipalities and Counties" handout. He stated that ANJEC had sent this information to municipalities. It is a source of funding for projects such as a Natural Resource Inventory, etc.

5. **Rutgers Meeting:** In December Fred and Lynn met with folks from Rutgers at the Eco Complex in Bordentown. Four areas of common interest were discovered. Rutgers has the tools to help GEHWA develop protocols for the water assessment work that is done. They can also help with quality control so that the data collected can be used by other organization or agencies. A potential project may result in a collaborative effort to minimize the impact on Maple Run from a county drainage ditch. We are also working with the new Watershed Ambassador on her water quality assessment of Maple Run. ACUA hosts the ambassador for the Great Egg Harbor Watershed.

6. **February Reorganization:** Fred advised that the River Councilors for Buena, Hamilton, and Estell Manor are up for reappointment. He has sent letters to those municipalities.

7. **Draft Budget for 2007:** A handout was provided with the proposed budget for 2007. Fred was pleased to report that the River Council had \$7520.00 in expenditures and an income of \$3,680.00 for 2006. Much of the income was from donations to the Elmer Gregory Fund and Dawes school "Bluffs" project from Somers Point Bay Fest.

8. **Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Update:** Fred reported that there was a meeting of the Wild and Scenic River Partners at the NPS office in Philadelphia. One of the primary benefits of the Partnership is the joint lobby to Congress for funds. One of the items discussed was an earmark for funding for the Westfield River which does not have congressional designation as a Wild and Scenic River. A concern is the lack of funding for the Musconetcong River that has recently received congressional designation as a Wild and Scenic River.

Tom Walker suggested writing to the Congressional Budget Office and General Accounting Office regarding the earmark for the Westfield River.

NPS Report: Paul Kenney has requested that the solicitor review whether or not a 2(a)(ii) river can receive funding under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. He is questioning the legitimacy of the request to give funding to the Westfield River which is a 2(a)(ii) river. To date the review has not happened.

Old Business: None

New Business:

Tuckahoe WMA Impoundment Roads: In the past John Brudon has expressed concern regarding trash along the roads in the Tuckahoe WMA. Ed Kenney from Boy Scout Troop 79 in Seaville would like to clean up the trash on these roads in March as a fund raising project for the troop. The troop will schedule two days for the cleanup along both sides of the road. Fred will get Lee W. to pickup the trash.

A motion was made to approve \$500.00 for the cleanup: by Tom Walker, and seconded by Rick Coe. A roll call vote was made: Julie Akers YES; Tom Walker YES; Rick Coe YES; Dick Colby YES; Greg Gregory YES; Joel Spiegel YES; Gary Theno YES. Motion carried

River Councilor Reports:

Corbin City: Tom Walker reported that the Planning Board has completed the public comment period for the revisions to the Master Plan. Many approvals are still needed prior to the final approval. The Board is planning on 300 ft. buffers. There is no change in the ¼ mile conservation zone that protects the GEHR. *Of special interest:* Tom stated that 47% of the students in Corbin City are Special Ed.

Egg Harbor Twp.: Gary Theno expressed concern over the proposed Lands and Waters Subject to the Public Trust Rights rule, N.J.A.C. 7:7E-3.50, and the Public Trust Rights rule, N.J.A.C. 7:7E-8.11. The proposed rules, in essence, state that any property, public and private, that has used public money for improvements and/or purchase must allow public access across that property to a waterbody 24/7.

Folsom Boro: Joel Spiegel reported that Folsom's Environmental Commission has joined ACUA's Adopt-a-Highway program. On November 5th they had their first cleanup along Mays Landing Road. All the equipment was provided by the program. They are waiting for a sign to be erected that designates that section of highway as adopted.

Somers Point.: Greg Gregory reported that there are many changes in the town's government. All new representatives will be replacing the incumbent governing body

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Gregory Gregory and second by Tom Walker, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.