

River Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting
June 20, 2007

Meeting Called to Order: at 7:15 PM by Gregory Gregory, Chairperson.

Roll Call: by Fred Akers, Administrator.

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Twp), Bill Christman (Hamilton Twp), Rick Coe (Monroe Twp), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City), Joel Spiegel (Folsom Boro), Tom Walker (Corbin City)

Board Members Absent: Dick Colby (GEHWA), Bill Egan (Weymouth Twp), Keith Kendrix (Hammonton City), John Olansen (Upper Twp), Jim Owen (Estell Manor City), Bud Paynter (Winslow Twp), Gary Theno (Egg Harbor Twp)

Quorum Present: No

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator), Paul Kenney (NPA), Lynn Maun (Coordinator)

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: Postponed approval of the minutes from the April 21, 2007 meeting; did not have a quorum present.

Public Portion: No members of the public were present.

Administrator's Report (Fred Akers):

BSA Troop 79 Tuckahoe WMA Cleanup Event April 21: On April 21 the troop concentrated their clean up efforts on the sides of the impoundment roads within the wildlife management area.

Egg Harbor Twp. School Program: The River Council helped in the initial formation and continuation of the Egg Harbor Township Schools' "Adopt a Stream" Catawba project, which is now in its seventh year. It is an annual program that the students participate in. This year's event, which was held on May 16th, was the first year that GEHWA had a table at the event. GEHWA's table was one of 42 stations that the approximately 1000 students could visit.

Somers Point School Program: In June the 4th and 6th grade students from the Dawes Avenue School participated in an activity day at Kennedy Park. GEHWA helped to organize and lead the activities. The sixth grade class took a cruise on the Duke of Fluke. The River Council funded the \$250.00 for this event from the Elmer Gregory fund.

BayFest: On April 28th GEHWA tabled at Bayfest in Somers Point. Approximately 24,000 people attended.

Belinda Irizarry Award: On May 22nd GEHWA presented the 1st annual award of \$500.00 from the Belinda Irizarry Memorial Fund to Victoria Schmidt.

Folsom School Pledge Program: The Folsom Environmental Committee presented their “Environmental Pledge Program” at Folsom School on April 20th, as an Earth Day project to the 1st and 2nd grade classes. Belinda Irizarry started the program about 10 years ago and the Folsom EC continues to present it every two years.

River Council Sign Update: The sign installer has the supplies to install the signs and has the installation on the schedule for June 28th.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Action in Atlantic County: Atlantic County qualified as a federal disaster area after the April storm. Funds will only be distributed to government agencies, not to individuals.

Unexpected Refuge Update: FEMA money will also be used to repair the damage to Unexpected Road resulting from the April storm. Fred showed slides of the damage to, and temporary repair of, the road.

The refuge would like to purchase an additional 37 acres. \$2,000.00 is needed for an appraisal. A quorum is not present, action on this was held over to the next meeting.

ORV Bill A-4172 to be introduced to Transportation and Public Works Committee: Various groups, including GEHWA have been working to have ORV laws that would require, at “Point of Sale”, all ORV’s to be registered and have tags.

Three Pond Branch Land Preservation: GEHWA is writing a proposal to permanently preserve 1000 acres of undeveloped critical habitat for threatened and endangered wildlife species and wildlife species of conservation concern in the Pinelands headwaters of Three Pond Branch, Deep Run and Indian Branch. BVT owns approximately 400 of those acres.

Pinelands Commission Update: GEHWA attended a meeting with the Pinelands Commission science staff. The staff was not aware of the state’s 2006 water quality report. It showed that many of the HUC 14’s in the Pinelands Preservation area did not attain water quality standards for pH and aquatic life.

Adams Branch Update: The Hamilton Mall basins have been drained. Possibly, this was a result of the April storm and the fear of future flooding. The Pinelands Commission will not approve further development at Hamilton Green until the basins there are fixed.

Garden State Preservation Trust Update: Governor Corzine supports the following referendum that will be on the ballot for the November elections: The “Green Acres, Farmland, Blue Acres, and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2007”, authorizes the issuance of \$200 million in bonds.

Watershed Institute Grant Application (\$20,000): GEHWA is seeking a Watershed Institute Grant to support GIS analysis of Land Use, dams, and Flood Prone Areas within the watershed. GEHWA is requesting the support of the RC for this grant proposal. A quorum is not present, a resolution cannot be passed.

Partnership Wild & Scenic Rivers Update: 25% of the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers' budget was cut for fiscal year 2007. GEHWA will receive \$75,000.00. The fiscal year is from October 1, 2006 to September 30, 2007.

NPS Report (Paul Kenney): \$247,000.00 was cut from the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers' budget for 2007. The 2008 Congressional Markup Committee has added 1 million dollars to the program overall. Three rivers have been added on, the Mustconetcong, Wekiva, and Westfield.

Old Business: None

New Business:

River Councilor Reports:

Buena Vista Twp.: Julie Akers suggested that the RC continue to support municipal projects. The land conservation and preservation goals of Unexpected Wildlife Refuge could be a recipient of that support. Further discussion on this topic was tabled until the next meeting.

Hamilton Twp.: Hamilton Mall Management is seeking approval from the Hamilton Township Planning Board to hold entertainment type events in the parking lot of the mall. Bill Christman reported that they were scheduled to appear before the Hamilton Township Planning Board three times, but cancelled each time.

Hamilton Township's Flood Management Committee would like to work with Fred on flooding issues. The Planning Board and Township Committee will make a formal request to Fred for his assistance.

Somers Point: Greg Gregory had a great time helping with the Dawes program at Kennedy Park in June. He enjoyed helping with the seining station.

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Bill Christman and second by Rick Coe, the meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.