

River Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes
April 20, 2022

Meeting Called to Order: at 6:34 PM by Greg Gregory, Chairperson.

Roll Call: by Fred Akers, Administrator.

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Twp.), Carol Foster (Corbin City), David Brown (Egg Harbor Twp.), Jim Owen (Estell Manor City), Greg Conway (Folsom Boro), Dick Colby (GEHWA), Bill Christman (Hamilton Twp.), John Keenan (Hammonton), Rick Coe (Monroe Twp.), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City), Bill Handley (Upper Twp.), Bill Egan (Weymouth)

Board Members Absent Clark Sprigman (Winslow Twp.)

Quorum Present – Yes

GEHWA Trustees in Attendance: Julie Akers, Dick Colby, Carol Jones, Paul Ludgate, Bill Stuempfig

Others Present: Fred Akers (River Administrator), Brooke Handley (Assistant River Administrator), Paul Kenney (NPS), Lynn Maun (Coordinator), Tom Baum (Alt. Egg Harbor Twp.), Lynnee LoCicero (Alt. Hammonton), Bill Reinert (Alt. Somers Point), Bill Stuempfig (Alt. Upper Twp.), Paul Ludgate (Alt. GEHWA)

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 GEHWA website calendar.

Approval of Minutes: Bill Christman made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2022, meeting. Bill Handley seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Portion: None

Education & Outreach Coordinator Report (Lynn Maun)

In Schools, Nature Center, and Outdoor Classroom: Reaching out to teachers regarding programs for Spring 2022.

Williamstown Middle School – Monroe Township: Lynn has completed 4 of 7 days teaching the 5th grade students from Williamstown Middle School about water quality, stormwater runoff and groundwater. To date 441 students have been educated.

Middle Township Middle School Indoor/Outdoor Classroom: Lynn is scheduled to teach Bill Handley's Beach and Boat Life class in an indoor/outdoor classroom program on April 26, 2022.

Hammonton Middle School: Lynn is scheduled to provide programs for 7th grade students on May 3, 2022, at Hammonton Middle School.

Dr. J.P. Cleary Elementary School – Buena Vista Township: Julie and Lynn will provide programs at the Nature Center for Cleary Elementary School's 3rd, 4th and 5th grades on May 20, June 2 and June 6, respectively. Julie will lead orienteering and Lynn will provide a program inside the Nature Center. This is a new school.

North Main Street Elementary School - Pleasantville: Lynn is scheduled to teach the 3rd grade students from N. Main Street Elementary School from Pleasantville at the Fox Nature Center on May 26, 2022. This is a new school

Jordan Road School – Somers Point: Fred, Brooke, and Lynn will provide programs at Kennedy Park for the 5th and 6th grade students from Jordan Road School on June 1 and 10, respectively.

Middle Township Middle School Outdoor Classroom at Corson’s Inlet: Fred, Brooke, Lynn, and Steve Eisenhower will provide a diverse program for Bill Handley’s students that will include kayaking, seining, nature walk and birding on Tuesday, June 8, 2022.

GEHWA YouTube Channel: GEHWA has developed a YouTube Channel. Brooke explained how to subscribe and distributed a handout.

Events, Meetings and Continuing Education:

Upcoming Events and Meetings: Fred, Brooke and Lynn attend a variety of continuing education programs.

ACUA Earth Day Celebration: The 2022 ACUA Earth Day celebration will be held on Sunday, April 24, 2022. We will table at this event.

Folsom’s 1st Annual Green Day Event: Folsom’s Green Day Event will take place on Saturday, April 30, 2022, at First Beach at Braddock Lake, in Collings Lake. We will table at this event.

1st Annual Captain May Day: The Hamilton Historical Society is hosting the 1st Annual Captain May Day at the Memorial Park in Mays Landing on Saturday, May 7, 2022. We will table at this event.

GEHWA: The annual GEHWA “Hike for Frogs” will be held on Tuesday, May 24, 2022. Details regarding location and time will be sent closer to the event.

NPS Report (Paul Kenney):

- 1. NPS Funding Increase for FY 2023:** Paul reported that the FY2022 funding for Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers was \$165,000.00 per river. FY2023 funding has been increased by \$45,000.00 to \$210,000.00 per river.
- 2. Dredge Spoils Dumping:** Paul reported that the dumping of dredge spoils in Estell Manor has not been approved by the NPS. A total of 145,498 cubic yards of dredge spoils (7274 truckloads) from 4 project areas will be dumped. Fred sent 4 letters to the Army Corp of Engineers, 1 for each of the 4 projects. The Pinelands Commission has also sent 4 letters. The NPS only has jurisdiction over the 4820 cu. yds. of dredge spoils being removed from Somers Point, and not the other 3 locations, but because the spoils are being dumped in Estell Manor it now gives the NPS jurisdiction over the whole project. To date, Paul has not received any correspondence regarding this project.

Old Business: None

Other Old Business: Fred reported that the Captain Dave of the Duke of Fluke, cancelled the 10 River Eco Cruise programs scheduled for this spring. Captain Dave had agreed to the dates and supporting this valuable program for Jim Thoms’ and other teachers’ 7th grade students from Fernwood Middle School. Fred and the

staff will work with teachers to try to find an alternative vessel or program that will meet the needs of the Fernwood program.

New Business:

1. Resolution 6-2022, \$3,370.00 Grant to Corbin City: A motion was made by Bill Christman and seconded by Jim Owen, to approve Resolution 6-2022, to add coir logs to slow the long-term erosion at the Main Street Park. Roll call; all in favor. Motion carried.

Discussion followed concerning river bank erosion issues in many areas of the river due to increased, out-of-control jet ski use. More enforcement is needed from Marine Police (Tom Baum will reach out to contacts he has in NJ State Police, Marine Division as a start.) Considering a River Patrol program and reporting registration numbers on jet skis were also suggested. A subcommittee should be formed to work on this issue.

River Councilor Reports for each Municipality

Buena Vista Twp.: (Julie Akers): Julie reported on different species of frogs and toads calling.

Corbin City: (Carol Foster): Carol thanked the River Council for the grant for \$3,370.00 which is to help stop erosion at the Main Street Park. She also reported an eagle's nest at Head of River. She also talked about the celebration for the 100th anniversary of Corbin City.

Egg Harbor Twp.: (David Brown): Dave reported seeing osprey in the new nest on Wharf Road.

Folsom: (Greg Conway): Greg gave an update on dams at Penny Pot and on Hospitality Branch and conversations with DEP about decommissioning.

GEHWA: (Dick Colby): Dick reported seeing a new dock near Mays Landing.

Hamilton Twp.: (Bill Christman): Bill talked about Hamilton Township's 1st annual Captain May Day. He said the township has received a grant for 2/3 of the cost to replace the dam in Mays Landing, but there is a deadline, and the contractor must be awarded the contract or Hamilton Twp. will lose the grant. Bill also informed the RC of the need to address the issues of having Cannabis operations in a municipality. He has not seen any stripers, however there has been heavy herring activity. Bill also reported that there is an issue with jet skis on Gravelly Run.

Hammonton: (John Keenan): John commented that first hummingbirds have appeared in his area.

Somers Point: (Greg Gregory): Greg reported on crappies, striped bass and perch in river.

Somers Point: (Alt. Bill Reinert): Bill reported seeing 2 dolphins.

Upper Twp.: (Bill Handley): Bill wants to organize a cleanup on May 15 and use the "Marine Debris" mailing list to target the property owners on the Tuckahoe.

Upper Twp.: (Alt. Bill Stuempfig): Bill reported on perch fishing at Head of River.

Weymouth Twp.: (Bill Egan): Bill reported seeing the State of NJ Marine Fisheries sampling fish on the river. Tom Baum added that they have been out sampling herring since early March. Fred added that Eric Husta reported seeing herring in the fish ladder and 1000 in Lake Lenape.

Other New Business: None

Administrator's (Fred Akers) & Assistant River Administrator's (Brooke Handley) Report:

- 1. Hill Week:** Fred and Brooke attended Hill Week and asked for robust funding.
- 2. NPS Funding Increase for FY 2023, continued Congressional Support:** Each partnership river will receive \$210,000 for FY 2023. The current ask letter for 2024 is circulating through congress and is doing well.
- 3. Musconetcong River 30th Anniversary:** Fred and Brooke attended the Musconetcong's 30th Anniversary celebration of their Wild and Scenic designation.
- 4. Ghost Crab Pot Recovery Program Update:** Sixty-six of the 81 ghost crab pots located by the Stockton survey were recovered at a cost of \$7,300.00.
- 5. Marine Debris Program Update:** Fred and Brooke have taken several trips on the river searching for marine debris. They salvaged a usable tandem kayak in addition to other debris. They also took a photo/journalist out on the river to see the derelict boats.
- 6. Bluebird Program Update:** Fred monitors the Bluebird trail at Michael Debbi Park in Buena Vista Twp. There are 20 boxes that he installed with his son 24 years ago as part of his sons Eagle Scout project.
- 7. Joel Spiegel Memorial Bench Update:** Fred assembled the bench and delivered it to the Public Works Department in Folsom. The Public Works Department has installed it in Penney Pot Park where a dedication ceremony will take place on June 4th.
- 8. Pinelands Short Course:** Fred, Brooke and Lynn attended the Annual Pinelands Short Course.
- 9. Continued Staff Training and Awards:** Fred and Lynn have received recognition for their participation with the international CoCoRaHS program from the headquarters in Colorado and by the State of NJ.
- 10. Adams Branch Update:** Fred, Brooke, and Paul Ludgate revisited Adams Branch. The GEHWA/GEHRC first looked at the issues impacting Adams Branch in 2006. They conducted water quality tests and examined the current conditions of the stream.
- 11. Atlantic County Bikeway West:** Fred attended a meeting for the "Atlantic County Bikeway West". He stated that there are many different parts that would have to come together before this project can be realized.
- 12. River Council Osprey Program Update:** The damaged osprey platform on Wharf Road was replaced and moved to a better location that was near enough to the old site so the returning birds would find it. Fred and Brooke also repaired one at Jeffers Landing.
- 13. Somers Point Osprey Viewing Station:** Bill Reinert suggested that an osprey interpretive sign be placed overlooking the Broadway osprey nest near Kennedy Park. The platform nest is monitored by Bill Stuempfig. Reinert is working with the municipal engineer and County to site the sign. Approximate sign cost is \$2,000.
- 14. Other Items of Interest:** Fred reported that Cobin City will be selling 4" x 8" bricks for \$40.00 for its 100th Anniversary to take place 9/17/22 from 11-3 at Head of River..

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Bill Christman and second by Bill Handley, the meeting adjourned at 8:28 PM.