

River Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2022

Meeting Called to Order: at 6:48 PM by Greg Gregory, Chairperson.

Roll Call: by Fred Akers, Administrator.

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Twp.), Kathleen Federico (Corbin City), David Brown (Egg Harbor Twp.), Jim Owen (Estell Manor City), Dick Colby (GEHWA), Bill Christman (Hamilton Twp.), John Keenan (Hammonton), Rick Coe (Monroe Twp.), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City), Bill Handley (Upper Twp.), Susan Stiles (Weymouth), Clark Sprigman (Winslow Twp.)

Board Members Absent: Greg Conway (Folsom Boro)

Quorum Present – Yes

GEHWA Trustees in Attendance: Julie Akers, Dick Colby, Pat Sprigman, Clark Sprigman, Carol Jones, 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 Stuempfig (Alt. Upper Twp.), Pat Sprigman (GEHWA Trustee), Noah Wertzberger (Troop 79), Jason Wertzberger (Troop 79), David Kreutz (Upper Twp.), Ali Stefanik (Corbin City), Daniel Patterson (Corbin City)

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: Julie Akers made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2022, meeting. Dick Colby seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Portion:

Noah Wertzberger – Troup 79 – Eagle Scout Candidate: Noah spoke about his plans to build 2 new osprey platforms to replace 2 platforms in poor condition. The platforms are located on state land.

\$250.00 Check to Troup 79 for Help with Spring Clean-up: Jason Wertzberger, Assistant Troop leader for Troop 79 was presented with a check in the amount of \$250.00 for the troops help during a “Marine Debris” cleanup on May 15th.

Education & Outreach Coordinator Report (Lynn Maun)

Summer Programs – Fox Nature Center, and Outdoor Classroom at Corson’s Inlet

Tomorrow’s World: Students from Tomorrow’s World attended a program at the Fox Nature Center on July 25, 2022.

EHT Talons Enrichment Program: Students from the EHT Talons Enrichment Program will receive both an indoor program at the Nature Center lead by Lynn and an outdoor program in the park lead by Julie on Friday, August 19, 2022.

Ocean City Yacht Club – Minnows Program: On August 3, 2022, students from the Ocean City Yacht Club's Minnows Program participated in a program lead by Fred and Brooke at Corson's Inlet State Park. Recently the Yacht Club had made a \$1,000.00 donation to GEHWA.

Osprey Program Report:

State of NJ 2021 Osprey Project Report: The "2021 New Jersey Osprey Project Report", was sent out to osprey banders prior to the 2022 monitoring season. The report reviewed the 2021 osprey nesting season. A total of 706 occupied nest were reported. This is the largest number recorded in the history of the project. There were 532 known outcome nests (active) that produced 883 young. Nesting productivity was 1.66 chicks per nest. The plan is to do a statewide census of osprey in 2022.

Ben Wurst, who heads the NJ Osprey Project, sent out emails in June stating that he had received reports from the people monitoring the nests in Sea Isle (72% failure rate), Avalon (82% failure rate), the Mullica, Barnegat Bay and Sedge Island (1/2 of nests failed). He attributed this failure rate to the "weeklong nor'easter after Mother's Day". He also thought the adults were having issues finding food and suggested leaving fish in the nests after banding the young.

Annual GEHWA/GEHRC Osprey Colony Monitoring Program: The 2022 assessment of nesting activity for the GEHR osprey colony, west of the parkway bridge, was completed on June 28 & 30, 2022. It was a very successful year for the osprey. Out of a total of 48 nesting sites, 31 were active, producing a total of 68 young. Nesting productivity was 2.19 chicks per nest.

Events, Meetings and Continuing Education:

GEHWA/GEHRC Annual Picnic: The GEHWA/GEHRC's 16th annual picnic was held on Tuesday, July 26, 2022. There were 16 adults and 4 children present. As usual, food was great. Had a small grilling glitch. But had a great time.

GEHWA/GEHRC Annual Canoe/Kayak Event: The GEHWA/GEHRC's annual canoe/kayak event will be held on Saturday, September 24, 2022, at 9:00 AM.

Hammonton's 14th Annual Green Day Event: Hammonton's 14th Annual Green Day Event will be held on Saturday, October 1, 2022, from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM at the Veterans Memorial Park. They will be collecting plastic bags, old blue jeans and gently used plastic toys.

NPS Report (Paul Kenney):

- 1. Tommy Byrd Application for Permit to Build Dock:** Paul reported that the NPS received an application for a permit, from Tommy Byrd, to build a new dock on the Wild and Scenic GEHR. Paul had to reject the proposal due to issues with the application. The NJDEP also rejected it.
- 2. Storm Barrier Update:** Paul reported on the "NJ Back Bays Coastal Storm Risk Management Feasibility Study" update. They are now proposing to build 2 storm surge barriers instead of the 1 previously reported.

- 3. NJ PWSRs met with NJ DEP to Discuss Issues:** Paul shared some of the issues that were discussed: the disposal of dredge spoils, and the GEHR WMAs being used by commercial entities. The state is receptive to working with NJ PWSRs.
- 4. Adding NJDEP as a Voting Seat on the River Council:** Paul inquired where or not the GEHRC would consider adding a NJDEP representative on the Council. The representative does not have to have voting privileges. The GEHRC's Bylaws would need to be revised if the NJDEP is given a seat. Paul suggested forming a Bylaw Subcommittee if there is an interest in doing so. He also said that in general the Bylaws are dated and should be revised.

Julie suggested forming a subcommittee to discuss this issue and then inform the RC at the October meeting. Rick Coe suggested forming a subcommittee. Rick will chair the subcommittee and report back in October.

Old Business: None

Other Old Business: None

New Business:

River Councilor Reports for each Municipality

Corbin City: (Kathleen Frederico): Kathleen reminded the RC that Corbin City's 100-year celebration will be held on 9/17/2022. Both the GEHWA and GEHRC bought memorial bricks.

Egg Harbor Twp.: (David Brown): Dave stated that even with gas costing \$6.00 per gallon it has not stopped anyone from using the river. It is very busy.

Egg Harbor Twp.: (Alt. Tom Baum): Tom reported that he continues to see the small dolphin in the river. He also stated that commercial crab pots are absent from the river. He has also witnessed peregrine falcons chasing bird prey.

Estell Manor City: (Jim Owen): Jim reported that the water level in Stephens Lake is down.

GEHWA: (Dick Colby): Dick would like to see an internship with GEHWA in memory of Jamie Cromartie

Hamilton Twp.: (Bill Christman): Bill said that perch have been abundant in the Gravelly Run section of the river, though snapping turtles, which are generally abundant, have been absent

Hammonton: (John Keenan): John shared that the location of the Hammonton Green Day festival has been changed. He does not know the new location.

Upper Twp.: (Bill Handley): Bill stated that the oceans front should also be a concern of the army corp. and not just the back bays.

Upper Twp.: (Alt. Bill Steumpfig): Bill said that sheepshead fish are abundant.

Weymouth Twp.: (Susan Stiles): Sue said the Mays Landing Yacht Club will be hosting their parade of lights on 8/27/2022 with a rain date of 9/10/2022. Monetary prizes will be awarded.

Winslow: (Clark Sprigman): Clark shared that the Winslow Twp. mayor passed away recently. He was supportive of GEHRC/GEHWA.

Other New Business: None

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

1. Ghost Crab Pot Recovery Program Update: A total of 70 crab pots have been removed from the river

2. Beesleys Point Redevelopment: Upper Twp. has requested that GEHWA consult with the Beesleys Point Redevelopment group. Fred and Brooke have done an extensive survey of the property.

3. Cape May County Open Space Plan: Upper Twp. in Cape May County would like to add to their Open Space inventory. The Beesleys Point property might be a source of that open space that Upper Twp. could purchase.

4. Climate Change and Clean Water Act: The state is projecting that precipitation will increase due to climate changes with the 100-year storm. The 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act is this year. Fred shared NJ water quality data with the RC.

5. Orsted Ocean Wind Cable Landing: Orsted plans to run their offshore cables through the W & S boundary in the bay. Fred sent them a letter suggesting that they refrain from infringing on the W & S boundary.

6. Corbin City Beach Sign Update: GEHRC gave Corbin City a grant for a stream bank stabilization project. They also suggested the erection of a sign about "Stream Bank Restoration". Fred and Brooke installed the signs on 8/5/2022. While installing the signs, they were accosted by residents and a day later the signs were ripped out and thrown on the ground.

7. Other Items of Interest: None

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Bill Stuempfig and second by Lynnee LoCicero, the meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.