

**River Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River**  
***Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes***  
***February 15, 2023***

**Meeting Called to Order:** at 6:38 PM by Greg Gregory, Chairperson.

**Roll Call:** by Fred Akers, Administrator.

**Board Members in Attendance:** Julie Akers (Buena Vista Twp.), Alison Stefanik (Corbin City), David Brown (Egg Harbor Twp.), Jim Owen (Estell Manor City), Greg Conway (Folsom Boro), Dick Colby (GEHWA), John Keenan (Hammonton), Rick Coe (Monroe Twp.), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City), Bill Stuempfig (Upper Twp.)

**Board Members Absent:** Bill Christman (Hamilton Twp.), Bill Handley (Upper Twp.), Ralph Bernard (Weymouth), Clark Sprigman (Winslow Twp.)

**Quorum Present** – Yes

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

**Others Present:** Fred Akers (Operations Manager), Brooke Handley (River Administrator), Paul Kenney (NPS), Lynn Maun (Coordinator), Clay Emerson (Atl. GEHWA), Paul Ludgate (Atl. GEHWA), Daniel Patterson (Alt. Corbin City), Lynnee LoCicero (Alt. Hammonton), Ralph Cooper (Upper Twp. Green Team), Carol Jones

**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.

**Nomination and Election of Officers of the River Council:** Fred Akers introduced the existing slate of officers as the nominees for 2023 and inquired if there were any other nominations to be made. None were made and the following motions were made to accept the slate of officers listed below:

**Chair** - Greg Gregory  
**Vice Chair** - Rick Coe  
**Treasurer** - Dick Colby  
**Secretary** - Fred Akers

Fred Akers made the motion to accept the nomination of **Greg Gregory** as Chair, **Rick Coe** as Vice Chair, **Dick Colby** as Treasurer, and **Fred Akers** as Secretary. Hearing no objections, the nominations are approved by unanimous consent.

**Resolutions:** Fred Akers brought the following resolutions before the council for vote:

Resolution 1-2023: Designating Depository of Funds and Fiscal Agent.  
Resolution 2-2023: Designating Official Publications.

## Resolution 3-2023: Notice of Meetings of the River Council

A motion was made by Rick Coe and seconded by Gregory Gregory, to approve Resolution 1-2023. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Rick Coe and seconded by Greg Conway, to approve Resolution 2-2023. All in favor. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Rick Coe and seconded by Julie Akers, to approve Resolution 3-2023. All in favor. Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes:** Rick Coe made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 19, 2022, meeting. Julie Akers seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Rick Coe made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 21, 2022, meeting. Julie Akers seconded the motion. Motion carried.

**Public Portion:** None

### **Education & Outreach Coordinator Report (Lynn Maun)**

**In Schools, Nature Center, and Outdoor Classroom:** Lynn is reaching out to teachers regarding programs for Spring 2023.

**St. Vincent De Paul School:** Julie and Lynn are teaming up to provide elective programs in February and March for groups of 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders.

**Marsh Elementary School:** Julie and Lynn will provide indoor and outdoor programs for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students from Marsh Elementary School at the Fox Nature Center in March.

**Stockton University:** Fred, Brooke and Lynn will lead 2 Environmental Principals lab classes during an outdoor streamside event in April.

### **Events, Meetings and Continuing Education:**

**GEHWA Member Meeting:** The last GEHWA Member Meeting was held on Tuesday, January 24, 2023 at 6:30 pm at the Nature Center and via Zoom. Brooke Handley presented “Lenni-Lenape History and Culture in Beesley’s Point NJ”. The program was recorded and can be viewed at the Great Egg Harbor Watershed Association YouTube site.

### **Upcoming Events and Meetings:**

**Pinelands Short Course:** Fred, Brooke and Lynn will attend the Pinelands Short Course on Saturday, March 11, 2023, at Stockton University.

**GEHWA:** The Annual GEHWA Member Meeting and program will be held on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, at 6:30. The election of GEHWA Trustees will take place at the meeting. The meeting will be hybrid (in person and via Zoom).

**ACUA Earth Day Celebration:** The 2023 ACUA Earth Day celebration will be held on Sunday, April 23, 2023. We will table and present a program at this event.

## **NPS Report (Paul Kenney):**

- 1. Status of NJ Back Bay Study:** Paul reported that there was no new news regarding the “NJ Back Bay” study. He said that the EIS should be prepared by fall. Several River Councilors had questions and comments for Paul.
- 2. Tommy Byrd Dock:** Paul reported that after restoring extensive violations to the wetlands and sounding property and vast review, the Tommy Byrd property has been approved for a dock.
- 3. Inflation Reduction Act \$500k to Great Egg:** Through the “Inflation Reduction Act the NPS has received funding to hire NPS staff, of which the GEHR has been allocated \$500,000 to hire a NPS staff person for up to 5 years.
- 4. Stranding of Whales:** In response to a question by Dick Colby, Paul offered his opinion that recent increases in whale strandings are a world-wide phenomenon, likely brought on by global warming, which has changed ocean temperatures such as to bring more whales to the North Atlantic, and brought their feeding zones closer to shore, and reduced their health. Necropsies reveal that many or most are killed by collisions with ships. There is no evidence that their strandings are related to offshore wind power development."

**Old Business:** None

**Other Old Business:** None

## **New Business:**

- 1. Resolution 4-2023 River Council Endorsement of \$210k Budget Summary for FY24:** A motion was made by Jim Owen and seconded by Greg Conway, to approve Resolution 4-2023, Roll call; all in favor, non opposed Motion carried.
- 2. Resolution 5-2023 River Council Recognizes Carol Foster for Years of Service on the Great Egg Harbor River Council:** A motion was made by Julie Akers and seconded by Dick Colby, to approve Resolution 5-2023, all in favor. Motion carried.

## **River Councilor Reports for each Municipality**

**Buena Vista Twp.: (Julie Akers):** Julie is working with Greg Conway on beaver issues.

**Corbin City: (Alison Stefanik):** Ali is glad to be appointed to the RC.

**Egg Harbor Twp.: (David Brown):** Dave reported all is quiet on the river.

**Estell Manor City: (Jim Owen):** Jim reported that work is currently being done to stabilize the dams at Stephens Lake.

**Monroe Twp.: (Rick Coe):** Rick reported that he is now a solicitor with Monroe Twp Schools.

**Somers Point: (Greg Gregory):** Greg is working to turn a township lot into a natural area supporting flora and fauna.

**Other New Business:** None

**Administrator's Report (Brooke Handley) & Operation's Manager's (Fred Akers) Report:**

- 1. Annual Staff Activity Reports:** Due to increased capacity GEHWA staff provided outreach to 17,000 people in FY2022.
- 2. Meetings with Congress:** On 2-8-2023, Fred went to DC to meet with members of the Senate and House.
- 3. Cape Atlantic Soil Conservation Outreach Meeting:** Fred and Brooke went to a local working group at the Cape Atlantic Soil Conservation office along with many other groups. They talked about streambank erosion and other environmental issues.
- 4. Egg Harbor Township Mayor and Committee Meeting:** Fred and Brooke attended an EHT meeting regarding Patcong Farms. They also promoted some of the work that GEHWA does.
- 5. Township of Hamilton Mayor and Committee Meeting:** Brooke and Fred have been spending a significant amount of time addressing the issues at Gravelly Run and the proposed Trophy Park.
- 6. B.L. England Plant Restoration Update:** Fred and Brooke continue to work with the redevelopment of the B.L. England site and are proposing the planting of a maritime forest.
- 7. GEHR Outstanding Cultural Resources Values Update:** The GEHWA program on the Lenni Lenape has generated a great deal of interest. Brooke would like to continue to gather any information related to the Lenni Lenape in the area.
- 8. River Council Recycling Grant Awards for 2023:** A total of \$284,976.00 was awarded to GEHR municipalities in 2020 recycling performance.
- 9. Somers Point Natural Areas Project:** A lot located at 1001 Dobbs Ave. in Somers Point is being proposed for a "Natural Area Project. It is close to the Jordan Road School and could be a great outdoor classroom.
- 10. Other Items of Interest:** None

**Adjournment:**

Upon motion by Gregory Gregory and second by Dick Colby, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.