

fRiver Council of the Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River
Regular Bi-Monthly Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2023

Meeting Called to Order: at 6:36 PM by Rick Coe, Vice Chairperson.

Roll Call: by Fred Akers, Secretary.

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers (Buena Vista Twp.), Alison Stefanik (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.), Bill Handley (Upper Twp.), Bill Egan (Weymouth)

Board Members Absent: Greg Conway (Folsom Boro), Greg Gregory (Somers Point City), Clark Sprigman (Winslow Twp.)

Quorum Present – Yes

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

Others Present: Fred Akers (Operations Manager), Brooke Handley (River Administrator), Paul Kenney (NPS), Lynn Maun (Coordinator), Kathleen Federico (Alt. Corbin City), Daniel Patterson (Alt. Corbin City), Bill Stuempfig (Alt. Upper Twp.), Denise, Appleget (Alt. Hamilton Twp.)

Open Meetings Act: Rick Coe 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 April 19, 2023, meeting. Dick Colby seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Portion: None

Education & Outreach Coordinator Report (Lynn Maun)

In Schools, Nature Center, and Outdoor Classroom:

Spring 2022 indoor and outdoor educational programs for: Williamstown MS – Monroe Twp., South Main Street – Pleasantville, Fernwood MS – EHT, Northfield School - Northfield, Richmond Ave. School – AC, SVDP – Mays Landing, Middle Twp. MS – Middle Twp., Jordan Road School – Somers Point.

GEHWA Annual Picnic and Campfire: GEHWA's 17th Annual Picnic and Campfire will be held on Tuesday, July 25, 2023 at Lake Lenape Park.

NPS Report (Paul Kenney): Paul stated that a contract for a hydrologist, to assess the impacts to flow in the GEHR by the construction of flood gates across the inlet, was approved by the NPS and that it will go to bid in late July. He hopes to have someone working on the issue by Sept/Oct. Paul wants the hydrologist to focus on 5 tributaries: Tuckahoe River, Cedar Swamp Creek, Patcong Creek, Lakes Creek and English Creek.

Old Business:

1. Update on Marshallville Bridge: A public hearing is not necessary to move forward with the reconstruction of the Marshallville Bridge. The State of NJ sent a letter to Upper Twp. that reconstruction of the bridge has been approved.

2. Update on Somers Point Grant Projects: The RC approved \$7,000.00 at the last meeting for both the Dobbs Avenue Natural Area and interpretive sign at Broadway Avenue. The SP Garden Club has started planting native plants at Dobbs Avenue and the sign has been ordered and plans are in the works for its installation.

Other Old Business: None

New Business:

River Councilor Reports for each Municipality

Buena Vista Twp.: (Julie Akers): Folsom and Buena Vista Twp. have jointly been working on a beaver issue. They will be installing informational signs.

Corbin City: (Alison Stefanik): Alison reports that she has also seen a lot of terrapins. She reported that the informational sign was missing at the beach. There is a continuing problem with jet skis damaging the vegetation growing on the shoreline.

Egg Harbor Twp.: (David Brown): Dave reported seeing a lot of terrapin turtles.

Estell Manor City: (Jim Owen): Jim said the Stevens Lake bridges are still intact.

GEHWA: (Dick Colby): Dick reported that GEHWA had its annual audit and all reports have been filed. He also said that GEHWA Trustee Ed Curry has passed.

Hamilton Twp.: (Bill Christman): Bill reported that Hamilton's Hometown Celebration will be held on June 24th. He said the river has been quiet, and there is not much boat traffic. He also reported that he has been catching a lot of American Eels.

Hamilton Twp.: (Denise Applegat): Denise said she sees a lot of boat traffic near the Sugar Hill Inn. The "National Night Out" is August 1 at Gaskill Park. She also stated that Hamilton Twp. has introduced an ordinance banning balloon releases.

Hammonton: (John Keenan): John is interested in hearing what Julie has learned about the beavers.

Upper Twp.: (Bill Handley): Bill thanked the RC and NPS for their efforts to get the Mill Creek Bridge reconstructed. He also reported that in late May and early June there was an oily sheen on the Tuckahoe River. Bill is also concerned about the trains carrying hazardous materials that are traveling

over the river.

Upper Twp.: (Alt. Bill Steumpfig): Bill appreciates all the outreach GEHWA is doing.

Weymouth Twp.: (Ralph Bernard): Ralph has seen a lot of horseshoe crabs at the English Creek Marina.

Other New Business: None

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

- 1. Paddle for the Edge:** The "Paddle for the Edge" program will collect data on the shoreline in the Great Egg Estuary. The program will track if the marsh is receding.
- 2. NPS Comptroller Meeting:** Fred, Brooke and Alan Hunt met with the NPS Comptroller, Jessica Bowron. Jessica manages the NPS budget. At the meeting they gained a better understanding of how money is allocated to PWSR.
- 3. BL England Implosion:** On 4/11/2023 the boilers at the former BL England came down. A date has not been set for when the stack will come down.
- 4. Dredged Materials in Beesley's Point:** Sixty cubic yards of dredged materials can be used as fill at Beesley's Point. Dredging from Patcong Creek channel is within the W & S designation. Those materials could be used at Beesley's Point. Princeton Hydro is working with the development group to calculate how much dredge material is needed to create a maritime forest.
- 5. Beesley's Point Phragmites Management:** GEHWA recommended that the Beesley's Point Development Group do a controlled burn of the phragmites and then have Princeton Hydro apply an herbicide.
- 6. PPA Climate Science Forum:** Brooke attended a climate change forum on 5/19/2023 at the Pineland Preservation Alliance facility. The consensus of the presenters is that it is going to get warmer, wetter, and windier.
- 7. Hamilton Preserve Guardrail Update:** A survey is needed before Atlantic Electric approves the installation of a guardrail at the Hamilton Preserve.
- 8. State Attorney General on ATVs:** The State Attorney General issued comments on the ATV issue in NJ.
- 9. State Grant for Green Infrastructure:** The Murphy administration awarded \$7,000,000 in stormwater assistance grants. EHT is taking advantage of getting part of this grant money to replace a parking lot with pervious paving.
- 10. NOAA River Herring HCP:** The GEHR has good habitat for river herring but is still seeing a decrease in numbers which is likely related to bycatch.
- 11. Other Items of Interest:** None

Adjournment:

Upon motion by Bill Christman and second by Dick Colby, the meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.