

## **Palmer Township**

### **Environmental Steering Committee Meeting Minutes**

**July 27, 2022, 6:30PM at Palmer Township Municipal Building**

#### **1. Roll Call**

- a. The meeting was called to order at 6:37PM by Chairman Bill Ruch.
- b. Present: Bill Ruch, Tom Grube, Diane Halasz, Paige Strasko
- c. Absent: Tom Dittmar, Ginny Sciorra, Joseph Armato. No members of the public were present.

#### **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 25, 2022, and June 22, 2022**

- a. Halasz brought up comments on May minutes under 4b ix where committee members discussed Good of the Order and wanted to clarify that the definition, she found stated it allows members to suggest improvement and that the committee should refer to Robert's Rules of Order. Committee members discussed further clarification on Good of the Order for future reference.
- b. Halasz also commented on qualifications discussion from the May minutes and brought up new Zoning ordinances and invasive plants listed in the ordinance. Committee members discussed being more involved with the Board of Supervisors (BoS), helping with the MS4 program and what the committee can do for the township going forward.
- c. Halasz made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from May 25, 2022, and June 22, 2022. She stated even though she was not present they looked thorough. Grube seconded the motion. The motion was passed with a unanimous voice vote.

#### **3. Old Business**

- a. Updated Bylaws
  - i. Committee members discussed going to an upcoming BoS meeting to understand how the meetings operate. Members also discussed using the updated bylaws to confirm the committee's duties with township officials. Halasz thought Joseph Armato should review the bylaws first then send them to Robert Williams for review and approval.
  - ii. Ruch stated the bylaws should be sent out to all committee members once again stating everyone should review and be prepared to discuss and bring questions. Halasz brought up that she will not be present at the next two meetings due to vacations that were rescheduled after the pandemic. In case the committee needed to make changes to the proposed bylaws, she will email word documents of bylaws.
  - iii. Ruch reiterated at the next meeting committee members will review bylaws and make changes as needed, then pass them to Joseph Armato and then the township manager Robert Williams.
- b. **Palmer Community Weekend**
  - i. Ruch stated the committee did not get a tent at Palmer Community Weekend and the committee was planning to raffle off equipment from

Home Depot at the e-cycle event. Grube explained what Jeff Young, and Robert Williams had told him about raffling off tickets for the equipment and Ruch stated the committee cannot make a profit. Grube also stated he has an official letter from the township to obtain the electronic equipment donated from Home Depot. Committee members discussed regulations for selling raffle tickets.

**c. E-cycling event September 17, 2022**

- i. Committee members discussed giving out tickets to residents that come to the e-cycle event where participants could fill out tickets with their name and phone number and tickets would be picked for prizes after the event. Halasz suggested giving tickets at the front of the line and collecting them at the end.
- ii. Halasz also mentioned being prepared for people who are not Palmer residents and having a way for them to exit out of the line. Strasko explained her conversation with Tom Dittmar on how the flow of traffic was set up for past events for efficiency. Strasko described having traffic come in from 25th Street, coming up to the upper parking lots parallel to William Penn Highway and checking IDs where the parking lot splits to go up to the upper levels. Strasko also described that the police and fire departments are planning on having a meeting with township staff and Clean Earth to discuss traffic flow, event set up etc. and that it will require more planning with all parties present.
- iii. Halasz mentioned the Earth Stewards of Palmer were interested in helping volunteer for the e-cycle event.
- iv. Ruch mentioned using google maps or google earth to mark traffic flow in the parking lot and where cones need to go so, they can be handed out to volunteers, as well as marking cone locations so they can easily be reset when moved out of place.

**d. Green Guide Articles**

- i. Halasz brought up the Green Guide articles for Old Business and stated that there is no further work to be done except to make recommendations to the committee and for the committee to vote on them. Halasz stated there were updates she made to the composting article after attending a plant conference.
- ii. Strasko mentioned that they had discussed sending some articles to other township entities for approval since they discuss recycling, open space, and recreation, etc. Halasz agreed and stated those articles should be sent after the committee approves them.
- iii. Committee members discussed meadows, the new zoning plan, open space, and invasive plants, as well as township ordinances for trees, meadows, and open space.

**4. New Business**

**a. Earth Day Plans 2023**

- i. Ruch discussed ideas for a community Earth Day event and specified the committee needs to decide on an area where they want to have it and what type of event they want to have. Grube asked what the date for Earth Day is and Strasko stated it will be April 22nd, 2023, the fourth Saturday in April.
- ii. Halasz suggested doing storm drain labeling. Ruch stated he wanted to start labeling sooner than that and Halasz stated they may not be done with labeling then. Grube stated there will be many labels to do and Halasz mentioned the Earth Stewards of Palmer wanting to help relabel storm drains.
- iii. Halasz also mentioned the benefits of having community volunteers for relabeling so the committee can educate them on how litter affects our waterways and that they missed out on Earth Day this year because no one had anything prepared to educate volunteers.
- iv. Ruch suggested putting together a sub-committee to work on Earth Day plans for 2023 and Halasz stated the important part is getting people to mark their calendars for the event. Some suggestions were putting the date in the newsletter and finding out when the deadline is for the February newsletter, or even doing Earth Day every month.
- v. Ruch described hazardous training he does at his work and the pictograms on different hazardous materials, specifically those that demonstrate a chemical is harmful for aquatic life and the importance of educating residents to look for similar pictograms and teaching them how that affects our waterways.
- vi. Ruch and Grube also discussed new car wash methods that attach to the garden hose at home and foam up to clean your car. They discussed how this product is not biodegradable and the importance of being aware of hazardous products.
- vii. Ruch reiterated the committee should form a sub-committee and brought up there was interest for new members on the committee from Bill Hartin and a neighbor from Ruch's community that was present at the Earth Day event.

**b. ESC Canvas Bags**

- i. Ruch stated he wanted to be proactive since New Jersey banned plastic bags, in case Pennsylvania soon decides to ban plastic bags Ruch thought it would be a good idea to have canvas reusable bags with the ESC logo to hand out to Palmer residents. Ruch stated he had proposals ready to share with Armato to purchase canvas bags but the pricing he saw was rather expensive.
- ii. Halasz asked how expensive reusable bags are at grocery stores now and Grube stated his recent experience with having to buy reusable bags in New Jersey. Committee members discussed the integrity of some reusable bags and how it would be a good idea or gesture to the community to get

people to think more environmentally friendly. Halasz also brought up using recycled materials for the bags, but Ruch stated that option was more expensive than canvas.

**c. Zoning Ordinances**

- i. Ruch asked if there was any new business and Halasz brought up that she thought the committee should send comments on the new zoning ordinance that was released. Grube mentioned he had not finished going through the ordinance yet and Halasz stated she would share her comments that were already typed up. Halasz mentioned she had already sent her comments as a resident but also thought the committee should comment. Ruch and Grube stated it would be a good idea to be involved with the zoning ordinances.

**5. Reports**

**a. Board of Supervisors**

- i. Joseph Armato was not present to report on the BoS.

**b. MS4**

- i. **Storm Drain Labeling- need volunteers**
- ii. Strasko reported on storm drain inlets that need to have new emblems attached for areas of the township she had already surveyed. She provided committee members with a list broken down by development and street name. Grube commented that the list only covered North of the township. Strasko explained she is still surveying the township to find more inlets that need to be relabeled on the South end of the township. Ruch asked about metal fish plates and Strasko stated the metal fish plates are sufficient and do not need an emblem on them.
- iii. Grube asked about logistics of attaching the emblems and materials that would be needed to complete these emblem attachments. Committee members also discussed how to reach out to residents to find volunteers, Halasz suggested putting a post on Facebook and Ruch mentioned his wife runs the Village of Mill Race Facebook page and she can share it there as well.
- iv. Ruch also mentioned t-shirts for volunteers. Committee members discussed logistics such as developments to start in, having a set date for volunteers to come out, notifying residents of volunteers attaching emblems and safety equipment for volunteers.
- v. Ruch mentioned the committee should start finding volunteers before the weather gets cooler. Halasz mentioned working with Strasko on a Facebook post to find volunteers.
- vi. Strasko also mentioned attaching emblems in stages and to keep in mind the supply of emblems the township had at that time. Strasko also brought up an idea to “adopt a storm drain” since most storm drains are in front of a residence. Committee members also discussed educating the residents not to rake leaves or grass into the storm drain.

- vii. Halasz asked if the committee should try to start with the first Saturday of every month to get volunteers out for attaching emblems. Grube agreed. Strasko stated she will email Halasz about a Facebook post to get volunteers interested and see how many people respond. Strasko asked if the committee wanted to start in Mill Race since Ruch lives in that community and can get a high number of volunteers. Halasz also mentioned instructions for attaching emblems and Strasko stated she would make sure there were enough copies to hand out.
- viii. Strasko also mentioned gathering educational material to give to volunteers such as a pamphlet about stormwater. Ruch also wanted to ask Armato what else the committee can do to help the MS4 program. Strasko stated she would talk with Tom Adams to figure out how the committee can help as well. Ruch mentioned putting signs near outfalls to tell residents not to dump anything near the outfall.

#### **6. For the Good of the Order**

- a. Halasz asked Strasko to add page numbers to the minutes. Halasz also stated the contact list on the Palmer website should be updated because members who are not on the committee are still listed on the contact sheet. Ruch also mentioned putting the new logo on the Palmer website as well. Halasz said someone should send Brenda DeGerolamo the logo in the correct size for the website.
- b. Ruch asked if there was anything else to add and Halasz asked if he could send out a call for agenda items before the agenda was finalized. Ruch and Strasko discussed a schedule for agenda items and Halasz mentioned that on BoS agendas there is a statement that agenda items could change up to the day of the meeting and why the ESC cannot do the same. Ruch agreed that things change with agenda items.
- c. Ruch stated it was important for committee members to attend despite the summertime and scheduled vacations. Grube stated he would not be able to attend the next meeting and Halasz will not be able to attend the next two meetings due to vacations.
- d. Halasz also stated the committee should purchase three Robert's Rules of Order for the chairman, vice chairman, and secretary. Grube asked Strasko to inquire with Robert Williams if the township has any copies of Robert's Rules that the committee could use.

#### **7. Next Meeting: August 24, 2022**

#### **8. Adjournment**

- a. Grube made a motion to adjourn, Halasz seconded. The motion was unanimously approved by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04PM.