

Palmer Township, Northampton County

Environmental Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

November 20th, 2024, 6:30PM, 3 Weller Place, Municipal Training Room, Upper Level

1. Roll Call

- a. Present: Karen Adams, Celia Williams, Colin Burke, Phil Perhamus Monica Cintron and Ashley Cohen.
- b. Also present: Zach Trexler and Paige Strasko
- c. The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM.
- d. Strasko announced that she would be moving on from Palmer Township to a new job for the Northampton County Conservation. Everyone thanked her for her time and efforts.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from October 23rd, 2024

- a. Adams asked if anyone had any corrections or comments on the minutes. Williams made a motion to approve the minutes and Burke seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Old Business

a. LCAP – Sean Nichols

- i. Nichols discussed with the Committee what the plan was for the upcoming Board of Supervisors presentation of the work done this semester. Adams stated that she would like Nichols to be the main presenter, and for the rest of the Committee to be there in case there are any questions. Nichols then shared with them his work so far in the following reports: Analysis of EMS Response Obstacles to Vulnerable Populations Near Flood Zones in Palmer Township, Pennsylvania, Green Infrastructure Strategies for Flood Mitigation in Palmer Township, Pennsylvania, Palmer Township Renewable Energy Source Summary, and Palmer Township Solar Array Viability and Costs for Government Buildings and Parking Structures. After walking the Committee through the highlights, Nichols laid out his plan for the presentation to the Supervisors and the Committee concurred.

b. Earth Day

- i. Plans & Details for next year's Earth Day Event
 1. Some discussion was held about potential vendors, participants and other small details, but Adams suggested having a separate sub committee of the ESC form to plan the event, and then bring it to the Committee for further discussion.
- ii. Special January meeting date and location
 1. Discussion was held regarding holding a special meeting next January, without a quorum, to discuss the Earth Day event and to begin putting plans together to present to the entire Committee later on. Willimas, Cohen, and Cintron volunteered to attend the meeting and begin to put together a plan for Earth Day 2025. They

all agreed to meet in the same room on Monday, January 13th at 7pm.

c. Multi-Municipal EAC collaboration

- i. There was no new information at this time. Adams directed Trexler to remove this item from future Agendas until there is more information to share.

d. Township/ESC Newsletter

- i. Burke stated that he had finished his article for the newsletter, an article discussing deer in the Township, and that it was uploaded to Google Drive for review. Everyone agreed to read over the article and provide feedback prior to submitting it to the Township.

4. New Business

a. Solar Presentation

- i. Perhamus gave a presentation about solar energy which included specifics on site selection, permitting, PPA (Power Purchase Agreement), and interconnection. While reviewing site selection, Perhamus discussed solar farm sizes, obstacles like wetlands and flood plains, site contamination, and what a typical solar farm looks like. While presenting about permitting, Perhamus discussed the planning and development process, different types of permits, obstacles like endangered species, and the differences between public and private land. Perhamus briefly spoke about PPA's and what the requirements and obligations are before discussing Interconnections. He talked about timelines of system studies, different types of power lines, and substations. Perhamus also touched on the physical construction of solar farms and the many steps and hurdles involved.
- ii. After the presentation, the Committee agreed that installing a solar farm is much more involved than they thought it would be, and that they should also be focusing their attention on other types of renewable energy. The Committee thanked Perhamus for his expertise and thoughtfulness.

5. Reports

a. Board of Supervisors

- i. None at this time

b. Environmental branches of Township

- i. John marks and Ken Starace gave updates on the Palmer Proud event and their progress over the last month while also discussing the website that was created for the Earth Stewards and their event.

6. Public Comment

- a. Marks asked the committee what their Mission statement is. Adams said we do not have one. Marks and Starace then explained the importance of having both a mission statement and vision to encapsulate what the ESC is all about. Williams suggested that everyone think about what the mission and vision should be over the holidays, and that when we return in January, we can discuss everyone's

ideas. In the meantime, Williams stated that she would set up a document on Google Drive for everyone to put their thoughts into.

7. For the Good of the Order

- a. Nothing at this time.

8. Next Meeting: January 22nd, 2024

9. Adjournment

- a. Perhamus made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Cohen seconded. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 8:48 PM.