

Palmer Township, Northampton County

Environmental Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

January 22nd, 2025, 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, Ashley Cohen, and Township Supervisor Charles Bellis III.
- b. Also present: Zach Trexler
- c. The meeting was called to order at 6:33PM.

2. Reorganization

- a. Trexler asked for nominations for Chairman of the Committee. Adams nominated Celia Williams. Burke seconded the nomination and Trexler closed the nominations. Celia Williams was elected as Chairman of the Committee by unanimous voice vote.
- b. Williams asked for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Committee. Adams nominated Colin Burke. Cintron seconded the nomination and Williams closed the nominations. Colin Burke was elected as Vice Chairman of the Committee by unanimous voice vote.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes from November 20th, 2024

- a. Williams asked if anyone had any corrections or comments on the minutes. Perhamus noted one correction that needed to be made. Adams made a motion to approve the minutes as amended and Perhamus seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

4. Old Business

a. LCAP

- i.** Williams stated that Sean Nichols gave a good presentation to the Board of Supervisors in December. She said at this point, we need to decide what we want to do with the plan moving forward. Adams suggested coming up with recommendations to provide the Board with some actionable items, such as an Energy Audit of Township buildings as well as energy efficiency of new buildings. She suggested picking items to focus on that are reasonable and not too large of a scale. Perhamus offered his knowledge and assistance with energy/solar topics.
- ii.** Adams asked if the new Recycling Center is completed yet, and Trexler said more paving needs to be done when the weather allows. Adams also asked what the status of the new Police Department is, and Bellis said they are waiting for the Weller's to respond to their correspondence from the Township Solicitor. He said that it is at a perfect time for the Committee to jump in to review plans and ideas to ensure the building is energy efficient. Perhamus stated that there is also nothing wrong with retrofitting a building after it is either fully designed or built. Adams and Perhamus agreed to work on this moving forward. Bellis reminded the Committee to

always be looking for grants to fund any work, stating that there is always something available.

- iii. Burke asked why developers do not go through a review with the Committee when submitting plans for development of any kind. Bellis said that the Rec Board reviews all plans, as well as the Shade Tree Commission. Trexler explained the Shade Tree Commission review process. Adams suggested that this Committee may not have the expertise to review any plans. Bellis agreed but also suggested that there are some items that this committee could very easily review and make sure that developers are considering when submitting anything to the Township. Perhamus stated that he has presented plans to various municipalities, and he has never had to present the environmental committee of any of them directly. Adams said that this Committee could come up with a checklist to review plans with in the future. She said that she and Perhamus will review the LCAP to come up with recommendations on what to pursue.

b. Earth Day

- i. Cintron said that so far, we have a great list of participants, with a few remaining that we have to nail down. The flyer is very close to being finalized, and the social media page for the event is up and running. She said we are still looking for food trucks, so if you have any recommendations let us know. Adams asked if you are looking for the vendor to be free, and Cintron said that attendees should be expected to pay for whatever they order from the food trucks. Bellis asked if Earth Day has a budget, and Trexler said yes. Bellis said let's make sure we send it all, and Burke agreed that we need something to bring the people out. Williams asked what the amount is that the Committee can spend on Earth Day. Cohen said they are also continuing to try and organize a pickleball event, and Bellis told her to reach out to Dan McKinney at the Chrin Center. Cohen said with Earth Day starting at 10am, we could start the tournament at 8am. Bellis suggested utilizing the electric sign that the Township owns to advertise the event, and Cintron stated she has already established contact with the Township to work on this. Williams said that so far, some of the vendors attending will be the Game Commission, the Audubon Society, the Master Gardener's, the Bushkill Stream Conservancy, the Earth Stewards, the Shade Tree Commission, the Township Planning Department, the Walkers Unlimited, and many more. To date, we have secured 17 groups to participate in the event, and we are still working on getting around 10 more. Williams stated that she spoke with an animal shelter about holding an adoption event during Earth Day. Adams suggested using caution with animal shelter because some of the animals in the past have been difficult to control. Williams also said she reached out to the Elementary School to potentially hold an ad competition. Adams suggested asking JP Mascaro to attend the Event, and

Trexler suggested reaching out to Waste Management very early in the planning process since they usually get booked up quickly. Williams said that so far, we have 2 presentations planned. Perhamus will be giving a presentation on native plants, and Nurture Nature will give a talk about energy. She said we are looking to add 1 additional presentation. Bellis said that the Committee could reach out to John Marks and Chrin Hauling if they want to get someone to come and discuss recycling. Williams said we are expecting to have a complete list of attendees at the next meeting. Burke said he is continuing to pursue the geologist from Harrisburg, and then asked about having a farmers market attend the event to bring more people. Burke also asked if we would be making water bottles again or if we would be getting new shirts to wear. Williams said we might do bottles and shirts again. Adams asked how many water bottles we have left from last year, and Trexler said about half. She said then we only have to order half as many. Williams said we will think of something to do with the bottles. Cohen said she emailed the Easton Marching band to ask if they would come to the event with a pep band, and she is waiting for a response. Trexler suggested keeping parking in mind while continuing to plan the event, especially because the park will remain open to the public while the event is ongoing. Burke suggested doing monthly video clips about the environment that are taped and added to social media. He said he could do the taping and the editing on his own. Williams said it is a good idea to consider, and stated we can add this to the agenda for the next meeting. Cohen said we could post a video recapping Earth Day to use for future promotions.

c. Township Newsletter

- i.** Williams thanked Burke for his article in the current edition. Williams said that May is the next edition, and the following will be in August, with the deadline for submission being about 6 weeks prior to release. She said Perhamus is writing the article in May, Cohen in August, and myself in November.
- ii.** Williams said in the past, we have discussed having a separate ESC newsletter and asked if that is something we want to pursue. Burke suggested pausing this for now and picking it up somewhere down the road, maybe after Earth Day.

5. New Business

a. ESC Mission Statement and Vision Discussion

- i.** Williams said we began this discussion last year. She then put on the screen 3 different versions of the new mission statement for the Committee to review and decided which one to move forward with. Adams said they are all very similar, and both her and Perhamus both agreed the third option is the best. Adams said it is not a bad idea to have a mission statement, vision, and a scope of work moving forward, but we

have to make sure we stay local. Perhamus suggested using the scope to remind us how we accomplish what we accomplish. Williams said it will also remind us of when something is outside of our scope of work. Cintron suggested making the mission statement something shorter and has more of a punch because if it's too long people will not remember it. Williams said this will be updated on all of our platforms when finalized.

b. Logo Discussion

- i.** Williams said that Cintron spent some time recently working on a redesigned logo for the Committee, and Trexler put them up on the screen to view. Adams said in some of these we are minimizing the Township too much. She said she is okay with making the ESC larger, but the Township should not be that small. Cintron said we can definitely make the Township parts larger. Cintron said she will make the adjustments. Adams asked if this needs to be brought before the Supervisors. Trexler suggested presenting the new logo, mission, vision, and scope all together at one of the upcoming Board meetings.

6. Reports

a. Board of Supervisors

- i.** Bellis stated that the Board of Supervisors recently interviewed a resident for the open seat on the Committee, and that it went well. He said she should be in attendance at the next meeting in February.
- ii.** Bellis announced that he is now the official liaison between this Committee and the Board of Supervisors. Adams welcomed him to the Committee. Bellis said he is looking forward to making this Committee the best of the Township.
- iii.** Bellis said, to make your Earth Day event more interactive, you could ask residents that purchase a plant at the plant sale to come back to the committee with updates on what they did with the plant and how it is doing. Perhamus said that part of his presentation will be displaying native plants and that he plans to raffle them off to event attendees.
- iv.** Bellis said that the Stormwater Authority will be hosting a presentation on sinkholes on March 25th at 7pm downstairs, and he invited everyone to come. Bellis said he has seen this presentation before, and it is amazing.

b. Environmental branches of Township

- i.** Nothing at this time.

7. Public Comment

- a.** None at this time.

8. For the Good of the Order

- a.** Adams said that the Wood Avenue warehouse being developed is continuing. She discussed the upcoming Easton Planning Commission's meeting that the public is invited to attend. Bellis said the Board of Supervisors voted the other night to not get involved. Adams said she spoke with Chairman Mike Brett, who told her she

could reinstate the warehouse discussion at the Commission meeting, but only from her own perspective and not of the Township's.

9. Next Meeting: February 26th, 2025

10. Adjournment

- a. Adams made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Cohen seconded. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 8:05 PM.