

Palmer Township, Northampton County

Environmental Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

April 24th, 2024, 6:30PM, 3 Weller Place, Lower-Level Municipal Meeting Room

1. Roll Call

- a. Present: Karen Adams, Bill Hartin, Tony Rose, and Celia Williams. Also present: Paige Strasko, Zach Trexler, Supervisor Charles Bellis, John Marks, and Phil Perhamus
- b. Absent: Colin Burke and Michael Brett
- c. The meeting was called to order at 6:29PM.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from March 27th, 2024

- a. Adams asked if anyone had any corrections or comments on the minutes. Hearing none, Williams made a motion to approve the minutes and Rose seconded. The motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

3. Old Business

a. LCAP: Presentation Review and Discussion

i. Status of project/plan

- 1. Rose stated that the LCAP looks excellent and the whole project was well done.
- 2. Adams asked what comes next for the LCAP project, and Nichols stated that the Committee could choose which goals and activities to approach first and then dig into those goals further, providing a deeper analysis. Adams suggested that the plan for the next steps should be included in the LCAP PowerPoint. Nichols stated he would add the next steps to the LCAP and the presentation.
- 3. Strasko asked if there were any comments on the flyers that Nichols put together for use on the Committee social media. Rose said that less busy is better, and that the second edition of the flyers looks the best.
- 4. Nichols asked if there was a plastics project going on within the Township. When Adams confirmed and provided details, Nichols stated that the project is an item that would be a great addition to the LCAP.
- 5. Nichols reminded the Committee that if any other changes or suggestions are found to keep letting him know so he can continue to make edits prior to the Board of Supervisors presentation. Strasko said that Thursday, May 2nd is the deadline for any edits to the LCAP.

ii. Board of Supervisors presentation details and date

- 1. Adams asked if the LCAP presentation will be on the next Agenda for the Board of Supervisors meeting, and Strasko confirmed that it

will be an Agenda item for the May 6th Board of Supervisors meeting.

2. Adams asked if Hartin would be willing to speak to the Board of Supervisors prior to the presentation by Sean Nichols to explain what is being presented. Hartin stated that he is willing to present to the Board of Supervisors along with Nichols.

b. Earth Day

i. Debrief

1. Adams gave a large thank you to all the members of the Committee for hosting an awesome event and for everyone going above and beyond for the Earth Day celebration.
2. Hartin said that the speaker portion of the event fell apart due to their being too much noise at any given time. Hartin suggested that the Committee should decide if that type of program should continue to be a part of Earth Day events going forward.
3. Hartin stated that advertising and promotion for future events needs to begin a lot earlier than it did for this year's event. He also stated that Rose's idea of tickets for attendees was a fantastic addition to the event. Adams agreed that it was very successful.
4. Williams stated that the Committee should reevaluate the timing of the event for next year. She said that a 3-hour event would be better. She also said that a better PA system would help to draw attendees to a specific place at any given time, like for a presentation. Williams also stated that each member of the Committee could have done a better job of advertising, like taking and utilizing yard signs and flyers.
5. Rose stated that the raffles went very well, and that the kids loved it. He mentioned that attendees hung around the event for items to be handed out and to see who won the raffle.

ii. Plans for next year's Earth Day Event

1. Adams suggested that the Committee create a template, similar to the e-cycle event template, to aid them in planning for future Earth Day events.
2. Rose stated that a photo competition could go over very well.
3. Rose mentioned that parking was not an issue, but if there is a larger crowd the Committee may need to reevaluate the location of the event.
4. Hartin suggested that discussion should be had about having a main event for Earth Day that would serve as a draw for many members of the community to attend the event.
5. Rose brought up the possibility of holding the Earth Day event earlier in the month to avoid all of the competition on the weekend

of Earth Day itself. Adams said this should be an Agenda item for the next meeting.

6. John Marks suggested that each newsletter edition in between now and the next event should announce the date of the Earth Day event and begin to promote the event. He mentioned also that including information with the quarterly utility bills could be very helpful.

iii. Subcommittee to manage next year's Event

1. Adams asked for opinions on appointing 2 members of the committee to be in charge of planning events in the future. Williams said that with only 5 people on the Committee, a subcommittee would not serve the correct purpose. She stated that a subcommittee would be better in a committee with more members. Rose said that just because there is a subcommittee does not mean that other members do not participate in the planning of the event. Adams said that she is just hoping for planning and discussion to be had outside of the monthly Committee meetings.

c. E-cycle event

i. Discussion

1. Adams asked if the High School will be used again, and John Marks suggested that traffic can become a large issue if a large portion of the County attends the event rather than just Palmer residents. Marks suggested that if the event is open to the entire County, it should be held at Northampton Community College.
2. Adams asked if a date needs to be agreed upon, and Strasko said yes. Adams said we will stay with a Saturday in September. The Committee agreed that the e-cycle event will be held on Saturday, September 14th.
3. Adams asked who needs to be contacted at the Community College and Marks suggested starting at the President's Office.

ii. Contacting other Municipalities

1. Adams stated that when she contacted other municipalities last year, they were all delighted and delightful. She said that they would love to be involved.
2. Adams said that until we get clarification on funding from the County, we should hold off on contacting other municipalities.
3. Hartin asked to what extent other municipalities will be required to contribute both financially and physically with volunteers. Marks said that in the past they have contributed with advertising and staffing to aid in traffic control. Strasko said that the maximum reimbursable amount from the County is \$3,000, and that the setup fee from the contractor begins at \$4,500. She stated we also usually pay for the use of a forklift. Adams asked if the Township usually covers the difference in price and Strasko said that last

year we did. Rose stated that the Committee inform other municipalities of a suggested donation to help offset the cost.

4. Marks suggested charging municipalities on a sliding scale, so that smaller municipalities pay less than those that are larger. Adams said she likes the idea. Marks said that the cost to participate can be based on the population of each municipality.

iii. Correspondence with Northampton County

1. Strasko said that research needs to be done to find out if other municipalities can participate in the event.

iv. Subcommittee to manage the event

4. New Business

a. **Single Use Plastics Reduction Study**

- i. Supervisor follow up/update
 1. No update at this time.

ii. Presentation

1. Adams stated that Benda DeGerolamo told her the study would be placed on an upcoming Board of Supervisors meeting agenda for presentation and discussion. Adams said there is no official date yet, but it is upcoming.
2. Adams said that in the meantime more research needs to be conducted to find out how other states and municipalities have handled the situation.

b. **Committee Membership**

- i. Adams stated that there is currently 1 vacancy on the committee.
- ii. Strasko said that Phil Perhamus is being appointed to the Committee at the Board of Supervisors meeting on May 6th. Supervisor Charles Bellis stated that he is extremely qualified for the position.

c. **Palmer Newsletter**

i. Content due dates

1. Strasko stated that the newsletters go out in February, May, August, and November. The deadlines to submit info to be included in the newsletters are about a month and a half prior to release.

ii. Advertising e-waste

1. Trexler stated that the due date for the August newsletter is about mid-June, and that this is the newsletter that info for the e-cycle event would be in. Adams said that it is very important to get all the info nailed down so that all the important information can be included in the August newsletter.

iii. Other topics to include throughout the year

1. Adams asked how much room is in the newsletter for additional info. Strasko said that MS4 gets a page, trash and recycling gets a page, and the ESC gets space as well. Strasko mentioned that

partnering with a Township staff member to write an article together is a possibility too.

2. Hartin suggested that a calendar of events for the Township be produced and added to the newsletter. He stated that it would be helpful to be able to put all Committee events like Earth Day and the e-cycle event on a single calendar. Adams agreed with the statement.
3. Hartin also suggested that it would be nice to include photos in the newsletter, and that once established, community members could submit their own photos to appear in the newsletter. Williams stated that it would be fun to do a "Guess the picture" article in the newsletter.

5. Reports

a. Board of Supervisors

- i. No reports at this time.

b. Environmental branches of Township

- i. Adams announced that the Palmer Township Shade Tree Commission will be holding their annual Arbor Day Event at the Palmer Library this Friday that will begin at 10:30am. They will be planting some trees.
- ii. Strasko said that the Township recently won a Watershed Restoration and Protection program grant for \$50,000. Strasko said that she will be reaching out to this committee and others for help with planting and other restoration projects applicable to the grant.

6. Public Comment

- a. Supervisor Charles Bellis thanked the Committee for having him at the meeting tonight. Bellis suggested utilizing QR codes around the Township for community members to access the various picture ideas that were discussed earlier in the meeting. Bellis then stated that the Earth Day event was great and that he was happy he was able to attend. He then discussed an idea for next year's event that could be centered around the Youth Center near Palmer Elementary School. Bellis suggested having each classroom inside the school create a display for Earth Day that could be on display during the event. He suggested that the committee make it a competition to see which class can make the best display. Bellis suggested this would be a great way to get more children and parents to come out and show support for future Earth Day events. Williams said that she loves the idea and that she thinks bringing science into Earth Day is a great idea.

7. For the Good of the Order

- a. Williams said it was interesting to be at Earth Day as a member of both the Committee and tabling for my Walker's Unlimited group. She stated that Township Manager Robert Williams was very excited about the Walking group and wanted it to be involved with the Active Transportation Plan. Williams said she appreciates everyone's support.

8. Next Meeting: May 22nd, 2024

9. Adjournment

- a. Williams made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Hartin seconded. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 8:27PM.