

Palmer Township, Northampton County

Environmental Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

February 28th, 2024, 6:30PM, 3 Weller Place, Lower-Level Municipal Meeting Room

1. Roll Call

- a. Present: Karen Adams, Bill Hartin, Tony Rose, Celia Williams, and Colin Burke.
Also present: Paige Strasko, Zach Trexler, John Marks, Tom Dittmar, Ken Starace and Dawn Burke.
- b. Absent: Michael Brett
- c. The meeting was called to order at 6:31PM.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 24th, 2024

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

3. Old Business

a. LCAP: Update and Reminder of Due Dates

- i. Strasko updated the group on the status of the LCAP project, and told the committee that Sean Nichols intends to present for review the draft framework of the Climate Action Plan at the next Committee meeting. Strasko said that once all revisions are made, the Climate Action Plan will be taken to the Board of Supervisors. Adams stated that she wants to make sure the plan includes recommendations for community participation & engagement.
- ii. Marks stated that the Climate Action Plan and discussions have been very informative.
- iii. Hartin asked if there will be an executive summary or analysis of the Climate Action Plan. Strasko said that there will be an overview.
- iv. Hartin said he appreciated all the effort that has been put into this plan, and asked if there was anything that the Committee could do to commend Sean Nichols. Strasko suggested writing a Thank You letter to his professors, and reminded the Committee that we will continue to work with Sean in the future. Hartin said he would be happy to write a letter.

b. Earth Day (Outreach and Program Planning)

- i. Committee Member updates on status of their topic
 - 1. Rose asked if one of the groups participating that is a for-profit organization violated any endorsement policies with the Township. Strasko suggested gathering information from at least 2 other organizations. Marks suggested that Strasko contact the Township Solicitor to inquire about for-profit companies participating in the event.

2. Burke stated that FirstEnergy would love to attend the event. Burke stated that they would use a table to provide information on energy savings to attendees.
3. Adams asked if the Committee would be interested in asking solar companies to attend the event. Rose suggested the Committee ask them to participate. Strasko suggested narrowing the scope of the event rather than expanding it.
4. Starace asked the Committee if there would be any litter cleanup events for the Earth Day event. Adams said the Committee would not be sponsoring and organizing any litter cleanup events that day. Williams said she thought in previous discussion it was decided that the Earth Stewards would be conducting a cleanup at the North End of Fairview Park during the event. Starace said that the Earth Stewards plan on having a contingent of people conducting a litter cleanup at Fairview Park around the same time as the event.

ii. Anticipated need for support/funds

1. Rose said that he began reaching out to local businesses to request permission to table and pass out literature to publicize the event at their locations. Rose stated that each store handled the request to table differently. Rose said that he created small handouts for anyone tabling to hand out to the public. Rose suggested continuing to table and making a final push the last two weeks prior to the event.
2. Williams stated that she had edits that she wanted to make to the handouts and display prior to printing. Williams and Rose agreed to edit the materials after the meeting.
3. Williams asked if the flyer that Rose presented would be the general flyer for the event or if it was a flyer for the groups that were participating in the event. Rose said it is up for discussion, but he believes it can be used for both because it covers everything. Williams said once the edits are made, she can disburse the flyer to all participating groups.
4. Williams and Rose said at this stage, there are about 4-6 confirmed groups that will be attending and participating in the event.
5. Williams asked if there was a place where all the Committee documents could be stored and accessed by all members of the Committee, like a shared drive. Adams suggested using Google Drive. Strasko mentioned that the Township uses Share Point, but she is unsure if there is a cost involved. The Committee agreed to utilize Google Drive, and Williams said that she would set it up and share it with everybody.

6. Adams said that the Committee needs to decide when and where the advertising of event information will take place. Starace suggested the Charles Chrin Community Center, Palmer Library, Township Building Lobby, and through the BIP. Rose suggested reaching out to these groups around the next Committee meeting.
7. Adams said she wanted to pick start dates for when the Committee would begin tabling and pushing advertisements. Burke said he could help on the 9th and 10th of March. The Committee agreed to begin tabling on those dates. Rose said he could create a master list of who is tabling where, so no one overlaps.
8. Strasko asked if everyone was okay with the flyer being finalized. The Committee agreed the flyer was good to go.
9. Strasko informed the Committee of a Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Conservancy Grant for events that take place on or near the trails. She said the funding can provide up to \$2,000. Strasko said the application is filled out, but she is missing a budget of what is being spent for the Earth Day event. Strasko said she was planning on buying coffee and donuts for the morning.

iii. Communication with attendees

1. Keeping participants up to date
 - a. Adams asked if there was a list of participants. Adams suggested that the Committee send updates to all groups participating that the event is continuing to move forward. Williams said she would consolidate the list and send it to all Committee members, and that she can reach out to all participants.
2. Logistics/supplies
 - a. Dawn Burke said that Jersey Mikes would be willing to give out free food for the event. Adams said she is against providing any food to attendees because handling food brings a new level of planning and oversight to the event. Adams said that she would rather give out gift cards for free food.
 - b. Rose suggested that the Committee plan a site visit to Fairview Park to get a better understanding of what the event will actually look like. The Committee all agreed to participate in a site visit if they were available.
 - c. Adams asked if the participating groups should be instructed to bring their own tables and tents. Rose suggested that there are plenty of tables already at the park.
 - d. Adams suggested purchasing reusable water bottles with Township/Committee logos on them. Rose said if bottles are purchased, they need to be double walled, steel bottles.

Adams said that she would rather purchase as many bottles as we can regardless of the insulation type. Rose suggested using 4Imprint to purchase the bottles. Strasko said she would make the purchase.

3. Review participant list

- a.** Adams said this item was already discussed previously.

c. Storm Drain Labeling

- i.** No updates at this time. Strasko said after the Earth Day event she can begin planning and that she will need the Committees help in gathering volunteers. Strasko said she will bring the storm drain display to the Earth Day event.

d. ESC Education/Information/Newsletter Topics

i. Survey

- 1.** No update at this time.

ii. Trash/Recycling/Waste and Food Waste

- 1.** Trexler provided the Committee with a copy of the 2023 Recycling Program update that was provided to the Board of Supervisors. Adams said that the Committee will review the reports and provide any questions or comments at the next meeting.

4. New Business

a. Single Use Plastics Reduction Study

i. Supervisor follow up

- 1.** There was no update at this time.

b. Committee Membership

- i.** Adams announced that there are 2 vacancies on the committee.

5. Reports

a. Board of Supervisors

- i.** There were no updates at this time.

b. MS4

- i.** Strasko said stormwater education is continuing to be pushed out to the public. Strasko reiterated that the storm drain labeling project is coming up and will need the Committees help gathering volunteers.

c. Environmental Branches of Township

- i.** Adams suggested more collaboration between the environmental branches of the Township such as the Shade Tree Commission and the Stormwater Authority. Strasko suggested that Committee members attend various public meetings across the different groups of the Township.

d. Update on the Nurture Nature Project

- i.** Paige said the only update is that the organization wants the template from the Municipalities assessing the different risk factors of multiple variables like flooding and climate change. Strasko said the next public outreach event is in June once the map is finished. Strasko proceeded to give a brief overview of what this project encompasses.

6. Public Comment

- a. Starace asked the Committee if there is another e-cycle event scheduled for this year. Strasko said the vendor from last year asked if we wanted to hold the event in September again. Adams said yes, the Committee will hold another e-cycle event this year. Adams said this will be a major agenda item for the next meeting. Burke asked if the event could be held at the Chrin Center, but Strasko said that it is not big enough.

7. For the Good of the Order

- a. There was nothing at this time.

8. Next Meeting: March 27th, 2024

9. Adjournment

- a. Hartin made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Rose seconded. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 8:22PM.