

MINUTES
East Amwell Township Environmental Commission
Business Meeting
April 23, 2012
7:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: The April 23, 2012 Business Meeting of the East Amwell Township Environmental Commission was called to order by Chairperson, M. Petrus at 7:38 PM.

In compliance with the Open Public Meeting Act, M. Petrus announced that this is the Regular Business Meeting of the Environmental Commission, as published in the Hunterdon County Democrat on January 26, 2012. A copy of tonight's agenda was filed with the Township Clerk and the Township Committee, forwarded to the Hunterdon County Democrat, and the Trenton Times Newspaper, distributed to the various East Amwell Township Committees and Boards, and was posted on the Township Bulletin Board.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: M. Petrus, T. Robbi, J. Bradstreet, S. Grace, J. Corboy (Secretary)

ABSENT: D. Sageser, D. Kellogg, J. Angelone, F. Clair, E. Feinberg, B. Hummel

ANNOUNCEMENTS: No announcements were made.

PRESENTATION OF MINUTES: March 26, 2012 – Business Meeting

The minutes of the March 26, 2012 Business Meeting were motioned for approval by T. Robbi, and with a second from J. Bradstreet, were approved with no corrections/additions/deletions. There was one abstention.

LAST MINUTE ADDITIONS TO TONIGHT'S AGENDA:

- a. Letter from c. Ehrenclou/RHA, 3/13/12, re: membership contribution...
- b. Note from M. Andrews, 4/20/12, re: 2012 Budget
- c. E-mail message from B. Hummel, 4/18/12, re: Plant Exchange Day
- d. E-mail message from E. Feinberg, 3/21/12, re: March 2012 EC Mtg.

PRESENTATION OF BILLS: None presented.

REPORTS:

- a. Planning Board – D. Sageser was absent this evening. Thus, no report was received.
- b. Township Committee – D. Sageser was absent this evening. Thus, no report was received.

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c. **Recycling Committee** – M. Petrus reminded members that **Roadside Clean-Up Day** was held last week and that **Clean-Up Day** will be held this coming Saturday, **April 28**, at the **Municipal Building Parking Lot**. Secretary informed members that the **2011 Tonnage Report** will be filed with the State this coming week via a certified recycling coordinator.

d. **Farmland/Open Space Preservation** – T. Robbi informed members that the **Lang property**, consisting of **22 acres** and located on **Rocktown Road** and just north of **Omick property**, will close in **May**. This is a **D&R Greenway** project, together with **Greenacres & the Township Open Space Fund**. The **Drift property**, consisting of **58 acres**, across from the school and south of the stables will also close in **May**. **Barbara Haug's 24 acre farm**, adjacent to a previously preserved **58 acres site**, will also close in **May**. The **County Freeholders** have tentatively decided to reduce the **Open Space Tax rate** from **3 cents** to **2 cents per \$100 assessment** in an effort to keep the overall **County taxes flat**. Because of the **real estate bubble burst**, evaluations in the **County** will trend downward. The **County tax rate** adjusts for changes in evaluations. Thus, the **Open Space Fund** will collect less money. The **Freeholders** hope to pay down previous debts before the open space tax was instituted. T. Robbi mentioned several areas where these funds could have been utilized and now will not. T. Robbi stated that he was able to sign up several volunteers (to work on the rehabilitation of several trails) at S. Grace's presentation on migratory birds this past week. He informed members of several projects that these volunteers will be able to work on.

e. **Site Review Committee** – T. Robbi stated that there has been no activity to report for this sub-committee.

f. **Public Outreach** – No report received. However, M. Petrus did mention that fact that secretary reminded him that a purchase request will have to be made ahead of time for the **4-H Fair prizes**. Members discussed types of prizes, such as seeds for **sugar snap peas, beans, etc**. T. Robbi suggested approaching local business to seek out donations. Secretary suggested that the two local nurseries might be approached to donate excess plants/seeds that have not sold by late **August**.

g. **Conservation Easements** – J. Bradstreet reported that the letter to conservation easement property owners has been refined and that three letters have recently been sent out. He hopes to have three more letters available shortly. Two contacts (phone and e-mail addresses both) have been listed on the letter to make it easier for the owners to respond. If they do not respond within ten days, J. Bradstreet plans on calling them personally. There are approximately **200 sites** that need to have a site visit.

h. **Stream Quality Assessment** – D. Kellogg was absent this evening. Thus, no report was received.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None presented.

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NEW BUSINESS:

a. Letter from Raritan Headwaters Association – seeking membership renewal. Members discussed briefly, reviewed the 2012 budgets and decided on a \$100 membership renewal amount. Secretary will prepare voucher for the next meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE: All correspondence was listed on the 4/23/12 agenda. (Last minute additions were listed previously in these minutes.

OPEN TO COMMISSION MEMBERS: T. Robbi informed members that he was unable to find anyone willing to take charge of the Plant Exchange Day this year. M. Petrus stated that he will be attending the Clawson Park Meeting on April 26. Some topics to be discussed are as follows: drainage, vandalism, plantings, etc. T. Robbi suggested that M. Petrus consider writing a couple of articles for the VIP.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC: None present.

ADJOURN: 8:15 PM Motion for adjournment was received from J. Bradstreet and T. Robbi seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Joyce S. Corboy, Secretary

**cc: Env. Com. Members Board of Adjustment Board of Health
Twp. Com. & Clerk Democrat Newspaper Recreation Com.
Twp. Bulletin Brd. Trenton Times Recycling Com.
Planning Board Associate Members Agric. Adv. Com.
Farmland & Open Space Preservation**