

November 14, 2019

The November 14, 2019 meeting of the Mansfield Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Paul Tarlowe, held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1976, followed by a Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Present were Paul Tarlowe, Robert Jewell, Marin Martin, Jim McMekin, Dawn Smith and Ruth Pante; Glenn Todd was excused.

### Minutes

Ms. Smith MOVED to accept and approve the minutes of the October 10, 2019 meeting, seconded by Ms. Martin. No discussion. All in favor.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

ANJEC Grant: Ms. Smith reported the grant process is moving along as it should; the Township Clerk and JoAnn Fascenelli have been copied on all paperwork submitted. The final report is due in April.

Mushroom Workshop: A workshop was held October 19 at Cafferata Park, a small but enthusiastic group attended to learn about growing edible mushrooms; it was deemed a huge success. Members present discussed the possibility of a similar event in the spring. Ms. Smith suggested getting RSVP messages so the size of the crowd can be anticipated. This will be discussed again closer to spring.

Environmental Issues: Mr. McMekin reported attending a community garden meeting. A rabid coyote was caught in the township and was subsequently destroyed; others could be present; Cafferata Park was temporarily closed as a precaution. Mr. McMekin has been following the efforts of Greta Thunberg, the 16-year-old Swedish environmental activist on climate change whose campaigning has gained international recognition. She returned to Europe from the U.S. crossing the Atlantic Ocean in a sail boat to promote and illustrate her belief that reducing people's carbon footprint is necessary to save the environment for people.

### OLD BUSINESS

#### ANJEC Open Space Grant: Spring Pollinator Program

Mr. Tarlowe has been in touch with the staff at NJ Audubon's Wattle center, a farmhouse dating back to the 1700s that is a possible site for a spring pollinator program to close out the ANJEC Open Space grant. NJ Audubon and the Environmental Commission are coordinating. Fish and Wildlife biologist Rob Some would give a presentation at the event or find someone if he is not available. The facility is not set up for public programs; RSVPs would be needed to control the number attending. Ms. Smith said 20 people showed up at our program in June and asked if the farmhouse could hold that number. A pollinator mix of wildflower seeds was distributed at that program; Ms. Smith will check on the cost of seed packets and will review the budget which currently has funds set aside for reed replacement. Ms. Martin offered to review the original grant to ensure compliance. Mr.

Tarlowe said that some reeds are occupied at the Pequest Trout Hatchery. Any harvesting this year must be done soon.

Ms. Martin reported Liberty Township has an ANJEC grant for their native gardening, and she suggested collaborating with Liberty. Members present discussed this and agreed compliance under a grant could make it a difficult endeavor.

Bluebird Houses: Ms. Smith has requested certificates of appreciation be awarded to bluebird trail monitors for their work at the December 11 Township Committee meeting; members are urged to attend.

Guard Your Backyard Campaign: Mr. Tarlowe offered to share a model ordinance developed by the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection. Ms. Fascinelli, Green Team coordinator, is drafting a model ordinance specific for Mansfield Township. Mr. Jewell commented that such an ordinance could be expensive for property owners and have unintended consequences.

Land Use Board Report: Mr. Jewell reported a variance is sought for setbacks across from the municipal building. He reported no changes at the Mt. Bethel ski hill.

#### OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Smith reported that a presentation was delivered by Dr. Will Austin, President of Warren County Community College, at the November meeting of the Warren County Economic Development Committee that in part was a review of land use boards and their activities and that this presentation would be shared at an upcoming Freeholder meeting.

It was MOVED by Mr. Tarlowe to cancel the December meeting in anticipation of low attendance, seconded by Ms. Martin; all in favor.

Mr. Jewell MOVED to adjourn at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth A. Panté