

October 10, 2019

The October 10, 2019 meeting of the Mansfield Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chair Paul Tarlowe, followed by a Pledge of Allegiance to the flag, held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act of 1976. Present were Paul Tarlowe, Dawn Smith, Robert Jewell, Marin Martin, Glenn Todd, Jim McMekin and Ruth Panté; also present were Mayor Joseph Watters and Michael Misertino.

Minutes

Ms. Smith said the Bee Huts paragraph should be corrected to show the ANJEC grant report is due in October, not September. She then MOVED to accept and approve the minutes of the August meeting as amended, seconded by Mr. Todd. All in favor.

Mr. Watters noted the September 12, 2019 minutes, in which Mr. Tarlowe reported that the July 17, 2019 minutes of state Fish and Game Council stated that the Council put out notification to Mansfield to discuss a possible land swap for the Rockport farm and got no response. Mr. Watters stated the September minutes were incorrect as Mansfield Township did in fact respond repeatedly. Mr. Tarlowe noted that he was reporting on what was in the Fish and Game Council minutes only, and that the minutes of the Council's September 10, 2019 meeting reflected that they had heard from the township that they were not interested in the land swap. Mr. Jewell MOVED to accept and approve the minutes of the September meeting without changing that section, seconded by Mr. Tarlowe. Discussion: Members present discussed the correctness of the minutes. Mr. Watters maintained that the first sentence should indicate "several times Mansfield ..." responded. Mr. Tarlowe stated the meeting minutes were correct as to reflecting the proceedings of the Commission's September meeting. There was a vote to accept the minutes, all in favor.

During the October meeting the issue continued. Mr. Watters requested a correction to show there were multiple responses from Mansfield Township. Mr. Tarlowe expressed that the minutes in question only indicated that there had been no response to the Council about a land swap as of that July meeting. Today Mr. Tarlowe read an excerpt from the most recent (September 10, 2019) Fish and Game Council minutes where Bureau of Wildlife Management Chief Carole Stanko reported they had heard from the township that they are not interested in a land swap but would possibly be interested in a land management agreement with the township for the barn on Rockport Road that was built in the 1800s. The barn contains incubators which have historic value. Additionally, there had been no interest expressed by anyone which met the requirements set forth by Fish and Wildlife. There has been no action by Fish and Game as to the Game Farm. The state has expressed that buildings that are usable will be upgraded for use and condemned buildings will be demolished; the property will be otherwise be allowed to revert to a natural habitat. Two or three of the buildings have already been demolished. The main house is still occupied, and that is more than 100 years old. Ms. Martin asked if this can be subdivided, and Mr. Watters responded affirmatively but noted the state rarely sells property. If the house were sold, it would go back on the tax rolls.

ANJEC Grant

Ms. Smith offered a draft report which is due October 31 and asked for time spent on the bee project from everyone. Ms. Smith and Ms. Martin will meet October 12 to finalize, then Ms. Smith will revise the report. Ms. Martin suggested hosting a spring event in Mansfield. Ms. Smith explained the grant wants this to be an intercommunity event, perhaps a larger event would happen at the hatchery or other public place. March 2020 was discussed as a possible target date. The grant budget was reviewed; ANJEC will monitor and record the data.

Mushroom Primer

A flyer has been generated and added to the Township Community Watch page. Mr. McMekin will bring logs and mold spore bags; tools for drilling and sealing the holes will be available at the workshop, scheduled for 11:00 a.m. October 19 at Cafferata Park.

Environmental Issues

Mr. Jewell said the Land Use Board is so slow right now that no meeting is scheduled.

Mr. Tarlowe shared a link regarding dumping of “clean dirt”, the operation of solid waste facilities. The state has prepared a model ordinance to regulate dumping in municipalities, and he suggested we review the model ordinance and related state web sites so as to discuss whether to bring to the Township Committee. Mr. Watters commented on the Mt. Bethel Road (former ski hill) property, that the Soils office received a call of complaint; that office declared it is not their responsibility. Mr. Watters reported that he felt it was not illegal. Mr. Jewell said the property is zoned for single family use. Mr. Jewell reported two instances recently where illegal dumping occurred; another site had crushed stone.

The newest road project has begun at Meadows of Mansfield; the road cuts close to Rt. 57.

Ms. Smith said two bluebird boxes were destroyed at the park, one was completely smashed; she will report at the November meeting. Ms. Smith will ask the Township Clerk for participation certificates and suggested the presentation be conducted at the December Township Committee meeting.

Mr. McMekin reported sighting several bald eagles along Jackson Valley Road.

It was MOVED by Mr. McMekin to adjourn at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ruth A. Panté

**Next meeting date:
November 14, 2019**