

W. SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, September 24 at 7:00 PM  
BNAC – 2001 Union Rd., West Seneca

*Minutes Prepared By Lauren Masset*

**I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:03PM**

**II. ATTENDANCE**

Members: Evelyn Hicks *Chair* (EH), Rick Rutkowski *Vice Chair* (RR) , George Rockey (GR), Steve Kondrak (SK), Karl Spencer (KS), Jack Oshei (JO), Joyce Mallette (JM), Jim Caruso (JC)

Town Liaison: *Town of West Seneca Supervisor* Sheila Meegan (SM)

Associate Members: Lauren Masset (LM), Kyle Hanley (KH)

Absent: Dave Monopolous (DM)

**III. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES**

**1. Meeting Minutes – August 2013**

Motion by JO, Seconded by RR to table minutes.

*Ayes: All*

*Nos: None*

*Motion Carried*

**2. Recording Secretary status:**

SM reported that LM has been appointed to record minutes at the WSEC meetings, and will be able to work on the minutes while working for the town.

EH raised the question/concern: has the town board granted approval for LM to use town time to work on the minutes while in a different department.

SM explained LM is a floater, and is placed to do various clerical duties when/where it is needed in the town. LM does have the approval to do minutes, on town time in the department where she is placed when she can fit it in.

LM thanked SM for the opportunity.

**3. Financial/Treasurer's Report**

JM reported a balance of \$950.00

**4. Correspondence**

JM reported a “Thank-You Letter” from the West Seneca Police Dept (WSPD\ ) regarding night out from “Det. Lt. Richard Cotter”

Letter Received and Filed.

## **5. Office**

JM reported that if the WSEC wanted to order new shirts they would cost:

\$12 for a screen printed design this includes sizes S-XL. A minimum order of 12 shirts is required.

\$18 for an embroidered shirt which includes sizes S-XL. A minimum order of 18 is required.

RR motions, seconded by JC to order screen printed shirts for all members.

*Ayes: All*

*Nos: None*

*Motion Carried*

EH requested that all members send their shirt size to LM for the order.

## **6. 2013 Conference on the Environment – WSEC, Town attendees**

EH reported the conference kicks off on Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> with the keynote event featuring Gord Downie, lead singer of The Tragically Hip. Conference sessions will take place all day on Friday, October 4<sup>th</sup>. They will include but are not limited to “Land Use & Planning”, “Climate Change & Sustainable Communities”, and more. The conference closes on Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup> with two field tours.

THE WSEC will pay the fees for any member who is interested in attending.

KS made a motion, seconded by JM for the WSEC to also fund the tickets for LM & KH if they are able to attend.

*Ayes: All*

*Nos: None*

*Motion Carried*

EH handed out registration forms.

## **IV. WSEC MEMBER PROJECTS - UPDATES/DISCUSSION**

### **1. Oxbow (2805 Clinton St.) parcel:**

RR, DM reviewed aerial photography, performed site visit on 9/18 – discussed type of barrier(s) (bollards, large boulders, jersey barriers), access spacing (30”), identified, marked possible location(s) for barriers, took photograph of location – DM to discuss possible installation with Union Fire Co. Commissioners (need access for emergency rescue equipment) on 10/7, RR to draft letter requesting barriers to Town Board – also, RR/DM observed that road millings had been used to “fill in” depressed areas on top of berm.

SM requests that the WSEC gets prior permission from the town before placing any barriers on the property.

EH mentions that the Buffalo Creek Oxbow Wetland Field Club has encountered individuals on ATVs and asked them to leave.

EH has contacted WSPD Chief of Police Denz about enforcing the issue. Reporting Chief Denz recommends we make a note in the minutes that vandalism has occurred (safety signs which were placed by Erie County Soil and Water were removed). Also noting that we need to post signage which states there are no motorized vehicles allowed in the area due to it being a NYS protected wetland. The signs being removed, and/or motorized vehicles on the property would now be an enforceable act.

EH also mentions the WSEC could contact the WS town attorney and request he draft a law which would protect special environmental areas in the town from such damage. If the law is posted, it is an enforceable act.

EH explains that the Buffalo Creek Oxbow Wetland Field Club has also been discussing this issue among their leadership group. The field club has the idea of making a natural barrier along the berm with bramble bushes. This would make both sides of the berm uninviting, except along the creek near the sill which would need to be left open for rescue purposes. The natural barrier will cover the full line of the Town's property.

EH says the first step is to get the signs posted. EH will speak to Al Kerner to find out what the WSEC has to do in order to have signs posted at both property lines.

JC says that the letter RR drafted needs to be sent so the issue is on record. EH will redraft the letter.

LM reported that the field club has been mapping planted vegetation via GPS, removing invasive species (knotweed), and the club house is currently under construction. The group is currently working on work plans for West Seneca West Senior High School Key Club who will be coming out on Saturday September 29<sup>th</sup>.

EH says that the field club will be holding a meeting at the BNAC on 9/26/2013 - all are welcome to attend.

EH says that River Academy will be also holding two events on October 5 & 12 for mapping and planting.

## **2. WSEC library display:**

JM attempts to contact the librarian have been unsuccessful - she will attempt re-contact by next meeting.

## **3. Creek Awareness presentation/Giant HogWeed in West Seneca Presentation:**

RR sent "final" presentation (9/6) to WSEC members, KS for incorporation into Creek

Awareness presentation -

KS reports he will incorporate this PowerPoint into the stormwater PowerPoint for future presentations.

KS contacted West Middle School, and was advised by Principal that April 2014 will be a better month for presentations. Schedule to be reviewed by KS, EH, and Principal. Final dates will be determined/provided to group.

KS suggests that they incorporate 1-2 slides on ATV damage on vegetation, to provide a brief education and awareness on the issue.

EH questions if it can be done in March prior to spring break. KS answers with that is not an available time due to State testing.

EH reports LM will share the presentation with school groups who are visiting the oxbow, as an educational component.

JM says she will request the library display case for a similar month to go hand in hand with the presentation in the schools.

#### **4. Stormwater/Illicit Discharges/Cazenovia Creek:**

RR reviewed Water Quality Improvement Projects grant application, spoke w/ Ron Entringer (NYSDEC) re: eligibility of proposed project (separation of combined sewers on Mill Rd., High View Terr.) – sent summary information re: waste water discharges to Entringer (9/16), awaiting response.

EH questions SM if the town is aware of this grant. SM assures the WSEC that the town is aware and is working diligently on the issues. However, the neighbors of the group must vote in order to rectify the issues; the vote must have 100% approval by those who reside in the area.

JC suggests that signs be put up, to raise awareness of the illicit discharge issue. EH responds with she believes that signs are already posted, however she will reach out to Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper for different signage ideas that may be in use elsewhere in the region.

#### **5. BNAC Rain Barrels:**

No Action

#### **6. Boat/canoe/kayak launch site (502 Mineral Springs Rd):**

SM reports she visited the site today with other officials from the area. The group visited the identified canoe launch location. Al Kerner had said a fence will need to be put up to keep the public out of the transfer station. Matt English suggests we move to Leydecker road. SM justified all of her explanations with photographs taken on site during their visit.

After discussion, the members felt that the Leydecker Rd site is not feasible (shallow waters, ice dams downstream in vicinity of Mill Rd. Park) for a canoe/kayak launch site..

SM explains that the group she was with went through a various different aspects, ideas, and locations: taking careful consideration of all variables.

RR suggests we enhance the location next to Tops Plaza (880 Harlem Road).

GR asks if the town has looked into the Greenway project. SM answers that Brian Higgins is in control of that.

EH says there is a demand for a boat launch in the Buffalo Creek, due there being so many in/out places in the river. The problem is that area is too small. If we can be patient and continue to work on the topic (perhaps resolve the Oakgrove Issue) then it may work out.

SM received correspondence from Chuck Godfrey at Erie County Federation of Sportsmen's Club Inc. on the issue. The letter was received and filed.

SM/GR will continue to work on this task, and report back to the WSEC

## **7. Emerald Ash borer issue**

No Action.

SK does mention there will be a fall fest as Reinstein Woods (Cheektowaga) this weekend (9/28 - 9/29), where you can learn the skills needed to inject the trees. He will be attending.

## **V. TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS – ISSUES/STATUS**

### **1. 1200 East & West Rd. (NY State Developmental Center)**

RR spoke with Kevin Hintz (NYSDEC) re: remediation of solid waste at the site – he does not know current status of cleanup, will schedule inspection

GR reported that the property transfer is in limbo, reason unknown. EH will follow up.

## **VI. ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC**

NONE

## **VII. Other:**

1. EH reported National Grid will rebuild stations which each close to the town property. Ron Lelonek from National Grid will meet with the WSEC at an upcoming meeting (date unknown) to discuss the project, gain insight/ideas from the WSEC, as well have the WSEC help with public outreach.

**JC motions, RR seconds to adjourn the meeting at 8:23pm**

