

WEST SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION (WSEC) MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 27, 2015 at 7:00 PM  
BNAC – 2001 Union Rd., West Seneca

**I. CALL TO ORDER @ 7:03pm**

**II. ATTENDANCE**

Present: Evelyn Hicks (EH), Chair, Rick Rutkowski (RR), Vice-Chair, Joyce Mallette (JM), Karl Spencer (KS), Dave Monopolopolus (DM), Jim Caruso (JC), Steve Kondrak (SK), Lauren Masset (LM)

Associate Members: George Rockey

Excused: Jack O'Shei (JO), Michael Wass (MW)

Town Board Member: Councilman William Hanley (WH)

**III. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES**

**1. Meeting Minutes – Dec. 2014**

RR motion to table December 2014 meeting minutes, seconded by DM

AYES: ALL

QUESTION: NONE

NOES: NONE

*Motion Carried*

**2. Financial/Treasurer's Report, 2015 Budget/December 2014 Purchases**

EH reports purchases have not yet been completed, she has received the forms to encumber the items using the 2014 budget. The 2015 budget is \$1500.00

**3. 2014 Annual Report**

RR has initiated, will circulate to members for input.

**4. Member Appointments/Status:**

On January 5, the Annual Reorganization Meeting was held at the Town Hall and the following Environmental Commission appointments were made:

2 year term effective 1/1/15 - 12/31/16

Evelyn Hicks (Chair), Lauren Masset, Joyce Mallette, James Caruso and David Monopolopolus.

1 year term effective 1/1/15 - 12/31/15

Richard Rutkowski, Steve Kondrak and Karl Spencer

1 year term (Youth) effective 1/1/15 - 12/31/15

Jack O'Shei

#### Associate Members

George L. Rockey, Paula Olma and Michael Wass

The Reorganization Meeting was open to the public and the minutes are available on the Town website.

Discussion ensued about the lack of personal communication regarding the appointments. There was concern that members were not individually contacted regarding their appointments and JC feels that a letter of notification/appreciation should have been sent by the Town Board to George Rockey thanking him for his service. Further discussion ensued about appointments; no further action was taken.

#### **6. Correspondence**

*National Grid Discussed Below*

#### **7. Office**

RR had previously asked for a key to the Environmental Commission office which has been relocated within the Burchfield Center. The office is not generally accessible due to the office being within the Town's Accounting/Finance Offices. If a WSEC member would like to work in the office, arrangements can be made with EH to access the office at a mutually convenient time.

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

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

EH reports the NFWF grant has been completed, and there is a small amount of money that will remain. The money will be used for tree planting and other items on the current site. There will be work days in both March and April 2015.

RR requests EH send the final grant report to all members of the WSEC.

#### **2. 2735 Clinton St. - Proposed Oxbow Nature Park**

RR reports that a photo of the conceptual site plan can be viewed by the public at Town Hall

EH reports Connie Miner sent a grant application to the Niagara Greenway Commission for this project.

As requested by the Town Board, EH sent a letter (from the WSEC) on January 20, 2015. to the Niagara Greenway Commission supporting the grant application..

JC makes a motion to accept the letter as written, seconded by KS:

AYES: ALL

QUESTION: NONE

NOES: NONE

*Motion Carried*

EH to send letter to all WSEC members.

*Letter is attached to meeting minutes (see below).*

**3. W. Seneca Developmental Center – Status Quo**

**4. National Grid – Gardenville Station Upgrade Project:**

EH received a letter from Andy Smith (Stantec) who wrote a letter to Chuck Rosenberg (DEC) and Joe Rowley (DEC) in request of a meeting for an action for moving along with the wetland permit

**5. Subcommittee reports:**

• **Tree Issues Subcommittee**

Initial revision of ordinance sent to members (Dec 2014 ) - members met on January 27, 2014 at 6:00pm at BNAC – KS gives oral report to WSEC members – Town Attorney to review ordinance, provide comments to subcommittee.

• **Creek Awareness Subcommittee**

KS reports next presentation to sixth grade students is scheduled for 3/13/15 at West Seneca West Middle School. No time has been set yet.

• **Water Quality Issues Subcommittee:**

◦ **Rain Barrels :**

DM has 13 more barrels to distribute to residents who requested a rain barrel and suggests that they can be given away (i.e. raffle) at National Night Out and during May at the WSEC display at the West Seneca Library. EH asked RR to obtain educational information relevant to stormwater for distribution to the public.

◦ **Illicit Discharges (Cazenovia Creek) – Status Quo**

◦ **Boat/canoe/kayak launch site- Status Quo**

**V. NEW TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS - None**

**VI ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC**

EH mentions we will participate in Earth Day and National Night out. She will obtain the dates and forward it to all members. JM mentions the WSEC will be able to have the library display in May 2015.

EH states Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NFRC) is abandoning part of their rail track in the town. WH mentions this may be used as a “Rails to Trails” in the future. This is just a concept idea. EH questions if there is any way to have NFRC provide funds to turn that into a

proper trail. EH asks the group if anyone would like the correspondence from NFRC emailed to them, no member states that they do.

RR requests that the members think about/develop projects for 2015.

Meeting adjourned (motion by RR , second by KS) at 8:10 P.M.

AYES: ALL

QUESTION: NONE

NOES: NONE

*Motion Carried*

The next WSEC meeting will be held February 24, 2015 at 7:00pm.



# WEST SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Town of West Seneca • 1250 Union Road • West Seneca, NY 14224

January 20, 2015

Mr. Gregory D. Stevens, Chairman  
Niagara River Greenway Commission  
2136 West Oakfield Road  
Grand Island, NY 14072

Re: Proposed Oxbow Nature Park

Dear Mr. Stevens,

It is my pleasure to write this letter in support of the proposed Oxbow Nature Park which is being submitted to the Niagara River Greenway Commission by the Town of West Seneca.

Over the past ten years, the Town of West Seneca Environmental Commission has worked to develop and implement the *Oxbow Habitat Restoration Plan*, focused on managing invasive species and on reintroducing native species that exist elsewhere in the stream corridor or were historically present on the site. In 2009 the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation added the Oxbow to its protected wetlands list, and a private owner donated a major part of the wetland to the Town with a conservation easement "to be protected in perpetuity as a nature preserve." The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the US Fish & Wildlife Service have provided grant funding to support this initiative. It is our eventual goal to provide connectivity along the Buffalo River/Buffalo Creek stream corridor. We hope to be able to open this area to the public for passive recreation purposes such as birding, walking/hiking, cross country skiing, etc. and we feel that Niagara River Greenway funding would allow us to achieve this objective.

In conclusion, we fully support the efforts of the Town as they seek external funding to support the creation of a complete passive recreation nature park at the Oxbow wetland site. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Evelyn A. Hicks, Chair