

Ms. Skalski called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**ROLL CALL:**

Members Present - Robert Amadon  
Danielle Bagley  
Jacqueline Balikowski  
Ryan Harrington  
Tracy Skalski

Absent - Cynnie Gaasch, Chairperson  
Michael Beltz  
Evelyn Hicks

Associate members present: Brittany Hernon and Alex Goodwin

---

**MINUTES TO BE APPROVED**

Motion by Ms. Balikowski, seconded by Mr. Amadon, to approve the Meeting Minutes of March 6, 2023, and April 3, 2023.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

**ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC**

No comments were received.

**COMMISSION PROJECTS**

Bike friendliness in West Seneca, Center Road approach

Ms. Skalski stated the Environmental Commission voted to endorse and forward the letter from Chris Holmes of West Seneca Bikes to the Town Board. Ms. Bagley will follow up with Mr. Holmes on the next steps.

Tree Inventory Grant

Mr. Amadon stated the Town Board approved the submission of the grant to NYS for \$75,000 and anticipates the grants to be awarded this fall.

Motion by Mr. Amadon, seconded by Ms. Balikowski, to authorize the Chair of the Environmental Commission to sign the letter to the Town Board for the grant funding.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

Deer Management Plan

Scout Project - Ms. Hernon stated on June 4, 2023, an Eagle Scout installed an enclosure, monitoring plots, and tagged seedlings throughout the Burchfield Nature and Art Center Park for the purpose of monitoring the deer feeding pressure. This study can be added to the Deer Management Plan.

Town awareness regarding fawns

Mr. Beltz is absent so the item will be tabled until the next meeting.

Strategic Planning

Ms. Skalski stated this will be tabled until the next meeting.

Summer

National Night Out – Tuesday, August 1, 2023, 5 – 9 P.M. at Erie 1 BOCES on Harlem Road. Mr. Harrington stated he and Ms. Hicks will be in attendance to represent the Environmental Commission.

Trees planted by Young Development – Ms. Balikowski stated she viewed the trees last fall and utilized a map a former commission member provided and noted a more accurate map is needed. Ms. Skalski stated it would be best to view and document the trees' status, noting a list of the trees that need to be replaced must be given to Young Development by September. Ms. Bagley will contact Highway Superintendent Adams for assistance. Ms. Skalski stated the commission will plant the replacement trees at the right time of year to ensure they survive.

**GOVERNANCE**

Ms. Balikowski stated the proposed By-laws allow for Co-Vice Chairs and suggested voting on the Bylaws prior to the Co-Vice Chairs and proposed a few minor changes including:

- ✓ The name of the commission is listed in it's entirety and then referred to with an abbreviation and suggested adding the abbreviation in parentheses at the beginning of the document – (WSEC)
- ✓ On page 2, change the Vice Chair "or" Co-Vice Chairs to "and or"
- ✓ Nominations of elected officers to be done at the "first" meeting and elections at the "second" meeting
- ✓ On page 3, Change Town "Council" to Town "Board," and always use the title "Recording Secretary" instead of pronouns
- ✓ On page 4, add clarification for "written verification for voting in abstentia" and remove the word "general" from the bullet point as all meetings are open to the public

Mr. Amadon stated the word "more" should be capitalized under the first bullet point on page 4.

Ms. Skalski requested Ms. Balikowski provide more detail about the written verification for voting in abstentia. Ms. Balikowski stated she is unsure how this process would work as a quorum must be met for a meeting and requested the author provide clarification. Ms. Skalski questioned whether the statement should be removed altogether. Ms. Balikowski discovered that this was in the previous by-laws and is unsure who previously included this statement and questioned if the commission agrees that a member can vote while not present at the meeting. Mr. Harrington stated an email could be utilized. Ms. Balikowski suggested using electronic communication, copying all members, and reading the vote aloud. Secretary Martin stated this practice may violate the Open Meetings Law and encouraged the commission members to seek legal advice from the Town Attorney. Mr. Harrington questioned if a member could forward their vote via email prior to a meeting and could the vote be counted. Ms. Balikowski suggested the email be forwarded to the Chair. Ms. Skalski suggested adding this and consulting with the Town Attorney.

Motion by Ms. Balikowski, seconded by Mr. Harrington, to approve the changes to the By-laws of the West Seneca Environmental Commission as listed.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

Motion by Ms. Balikowski, seconded by Mr. Amadon, to elect Evelyn Hicks and Tracy Skalski as Co-Vice Chairs of the West Seneca Environmental Commission.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

Motion by Ms. Skalski, seconded by Ms. Bagley, to elect Jacqueline Balikowski as Treasurer of the West Seneca Environmental Commission.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

Motion by Ms. Bagley, seconded by Ms. Balikowski, to appoint Alex Goodwin and Brittany HERNON as non-voting Associate Members of the West Seneca Environmental Commission.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried

Ms. Skalski stated the commission needs a member to monitor the Environmental Commission's email. Mr. Harrington stated he will contact Chairperson Gaasch to discuss. Ms. Balikowski suggested the same person also be the Recording Secretary; this person would track commission activities. Mr. Harrington will discuss the role with Chairperson Gaasch.

Ms. Skalski stated there is a suggestion to shift meetings to Burchfield Nature and Art Center and set a regular meeting time. Ms. Bagley questioned where the meetings are posted for the public's knowledge. Secretary Martin stated they are on the town's website. Ms. Balikowski stated the change is due to difficulty securing the meeting room at the Community Center and stated Wednesdays are not good for her. Ms. Skalski stated the current time and day is good for her schedule.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Town Composting Program – Ms. Skalski stated she learned of the program through a Facebook post and was surprised the Environmental Commission was not included as the Environmental Commission should be involved and promoting the program and is confused and concerned as to why the program was not brought to their attention. Ms. Bagley agreed that not enough residents are aware of this program and how it works. Ms. Skalski stated the program is run by Farmer Pirate and on their website, there is a link for the West Seneca pilot project. Ms. Bagley suggested a QR code be added to the collection bin.

Ms. Balikowski stated she received a request from Chairperson Gaasch to prepare a report on the commission's finances and contacted Director of Finance Straus and learned there is \$1,000 in the commission's line. Ms. Balikowski noted Ms. Straus was not familiar with the Town Environmental Funds listed in the previous minutes and stated she would like to know where the money is being held.

Ms. Skalski stated Councilmember Piekarec has requested the annual report.

Ms. Skalski requested updates on the Erie County Environment Management Council. Associate Member Leane Schultz noted the meetings are still virtual and the members will be touring the recycling center.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Ms. Amadon, seconded by Ms. Bagley, to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 P.M.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Motion Carried



Margaret A. Martin

Deputy Town Clerk/Secretary to the Environmental Commission