

WEST SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 22, 2020 at 7:00 PM

West Seneca Community Center – 1300 Union Rd., West Seneca

CALL TO ORDER – 7:03 p.m.

I. ATTENDANCE

Evelyn Hicks (EH) Chair, Rick Rutkowski (RR) Vice-Chair, Mike Wass (MW), Lauren Masset (LM), Tracy Skalski (TS) Emily Baker (EB), Cynn timer Gaasch (CG)  
Excused/Absent: Camie Jarrell (CJ), Andrew Beehler (AB)  
Town Council: Bill Hanley (BH)

II. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. Meeting Minutes – November 2019 – tabled - Feb 2020, July 2020 approved
2. Financial Report – MW verifies that budget amounts are as follows:
  - 2020 WSEC Working Budget – \$971.95
  - Town Environmental funds:
    - National Fish and Wildlife Federation (NFWF) - \$2,710.76
    - US Fish & Wildlife Service - \$29,000.00
    - National Grid Mitigation Fund - \$61,000.00
3. Correspondence – none
4. 2015, 2018, 2019 Annual Reports – status quo
5. Membership – Cynn timer Gaasch appointed by Town Board to fill the remainder of Karl Spencer's term

III. WSEC PROJECTS - UPDATES/DISCUSSION

1. Oxbow (2805 Clinton St.) – discussion ensued re: proposal for Creation of W. Seneca Nature Sanctuary – members agree that we should support this proposal, and BH says that he believes the Town Board would as well - -EH will “finalize” the draft letter to the Town Board, RR will look for existing Ordinance/Code within government that could be used/possibly adopted by the Town.
2. Standing Subcommittee reports:
  - Tree Issues Subcommittee – status quo
  - Creek Awareness Subcommittee – EH would like to modify the approach that the Subcommittee takes to educate people of dangers associated with recreation near/in creeks
  - Education Subcommittee:
    - Environmental Corner in Local Media – TS will ID existing measures which have already been published for residents to take to minimize damage from deer that may eat flowers/vegetables on their property – CG will try to identify grant opportunities for educational programs, will join TS on the subcommittee
  - Water Quality Issues Subcommittee:
    - Buffalo Creek Canoe/Kayak Launch – 880 Harlem Rd. – 9/14 - M. Todd's (NYSDEC) e-mail to RR advised that installment of additional steps probably would not occur this year, but would remain in the Work Plan for 2021
    - Residential Rain Barrels –1 provided to resident @ 22 Wichita Rd Municipal Rain Barrels – no activity
    - Storm Drain Marking – 8/25 – 68 medallions placed on 19 Town Streets by TS, LM, EB, RR, assisted by 2 volunteers – (also, 9/4, 9/10, 9/20 - RR - 23 Streets., 104 medallions)

3. Biking in W. Seneca –TS reported that the bike group suggested projects at the 9/14/20 Town board meeting using Town recreation funds. Also, a request for creation of a formal bicycle committee. It is the hope of the committee to use the maps they have created with the GBNRTC regional plan to create a West Seneca Bike Master Plan. “Rails to trails” should also be considered.

#### IV. TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

1. 945 Center Rd – (proposed construction of 32 residential units by Young Development) – “settlement” agreement reached between Town and developer - RR suggests that one WSEC member should volunteer to “lead” the Tree Issues Subcommittee in order to facilitate meetings (as necessary) with the neighbors of the property, Young Development, and the Subcommittee to ascertain where tree plantings will occur on the property. That person can provide updates to the WSEC as needed. EH agrees that the Subcommittee should reconvene to address the issues affiliated with 945 Center Rd. - MW agrees to chair the Subcommittee, reconvene members, and address the issues – BH feels that the \$250 penalty in the Town Tree Ordinance is too small to be a deterrent, and that the Ordinance should be amended to increase the cost of the penalty – discussion ensues, and WSEC members agree with BH
2. 799 Indian Church Rd (Levy Grid Co.) – proposal for battery storage business was received by the Town

#### V. ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC - None

Adjourned – 8:29 p.m.