

DRAFT

ROLL CALL:

Members Present - Robert Amadon, Chairperson
Evelyn Hicks
Barbara Lipiew
Ryan Taylor
Ben Szablewski
Councilmember Scott Robertson

Absent - Danielle Bagley
Thomas Mudd, Jr.
Adam Reger

Associate Members present: Brittany Hernon

WELCOME

Chairperson Amadon opened the meeting and noted that he is starting the meeting while waiting for at least one more member to meet a quorum.

MINUTES APPROVAL

Mr. Szablewski requested one correction to the June 10, 2024, meeting minutes on page 2: change Google "drive account" to Google "folder." Secretary Martin noted the correction.

Motion by Ms. Hicks, seconded by Mr. Szablewski, to approve the Meeting Minutes of June 10, 2024, with the correction as stated.

Ayes: All Noes: None Abstain: None Motion Carried

ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC

Carol Yetter of the Burchfield Nature and Arts Center reminded the Environmental Commission there is a room for their use at the BNAC and would provide a good opportunity to reach many people.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence received by the commission.

ONGOING COMMISSION PROJECTS

Bikes

Chairperson Amadon stated Councilmember Robertson will provide an update on the letter from West Seneca Bikes that was forwarded to the Town Board in March 2023 if he is able to attend the meeting.

Trees

Tree Inventory Grant: Chairperson Amadon stated the town's grant writer Rotella Management has indicated the Tree Inventory can proceed but noted there are ongoing problems with the NYS software that are expected to be resolved soon. The following are the next steps for the grant project:

- Determine the Environmental Commission members that will participate – Ms. Lipiew stated she will participate and questioned how the timeline is affected by the delays. Ms. Herson stated it is possible for the town to request a no-cost extension to complete the project.
- Attendance at project team meetings
- Create a press release
- Assist with RFP process to select a certified arborist
- Scheduling and participating in project meetings starting with the project kick-off
- Taking photos of the town's trees to collect a diverse sampling
- Prepare an Outreach Strategy
- Additional tasks that arise

Ms. Hicks shared a comment from Mr. Mudd where he would like 70% native, non-cultivar species trees be planted. Further Ms. Hicks reminisced about a past tree planting day. Ms. Lipiew stated follow-up to ensure the health of the young trees should be a part of the project. Ms. Hicks stated in her opinion, the town does not have the resources to do this.

Councilmember Robertson arrived and Ms. Hicks questioned if there was an update to the revised tree list and requested the commission be included in the replacement process. Councilmember Robertson stated he will follow up on this.

Education

National Night Out: Ms. Hicks stated the event was well attended despite the weather that evening.

Other opportunities: Ms. Lipiew stated she is investigating additional information on composting through University Express, an Erie County program targeted to Senior Citizens. Ms. Hicks questioned if she did anything at Burchfest event. Ms. Lipiew stated she participated in other activities at the event. Ms. Hicks suggested the Environmental Commission have a table next year. Ms. Yetter and Ms. Lipiew stated there is a room available for the commission at the BNAC. Ms. Hicks stated she would move Environmental Commission items that have been in storage elsewhere, to the room at BNAC, and will contact the Town employees who helped move these items in the past to assist with this.

Waterways

Storm drain medallions: Chairperson Amadon summarized the purpose of the storm drain medallions, the cost per medallion, and the recommended installation procedure. The commission should decide if they will continue to utilize the medallions to mark the storm drains. Councilmember Robertson advised the commission to be mindful of the costs involved, use what is on hand, and order responsibly. The medallions are installed in new developments and during reconstruction projects. Mr. Amadon asked Councilmember Robertson if the Town Highway Department has been installing these medallions. Councilmember Robertson indicated that they have been.

Past grants for waterways: Buffalo Creek - Ms. Hicks stated the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is obtaining permission from property owners to complete a survey but have encountered issues that will delay the surveys until spring.

Letter of support from the Environmental Commission and Town Board to the Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper for the Buffalo Creek Floodplain Reconnection Project.

Chairperson Amadon referred to the recent edition of the town’s newsletter and highlighted the Engineering Department’s article about storm drains. Ms. Lipiew referred to the line painting on Union Road and stated she observed workers blowing excessive paint into the storm drains and is not certain what the paint is composed of. Ms. Hicks stated the town is required to complete reporting and public outreach.

Chairperson Amadon referred to the discussion about community gardens and stated he invited Scarlett Hanley to the meeting. Ms. Hicks stated she observes community gardens in the City of Buffalo and cautioned that they quickly deteriorate from neglect. Chairperson Amadon stated community gardens can be successful.

GOVERNANCE

Chairperson Amadon noted the following:

- ✓ Four members’ terms will expire at the end of the year- Himself, Ms. Bagley, Ms. Lipiew, and Mr. Taylor
- ✓ There is a vacancy for a youth member
- ✓ Determine the 2025 meeting schedule at the next meeting
- ✓ The 2023 Annual Report will be filed at the September 23, 2024, Town Board meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Tree City USA – Chairperson Amadon stated Ms. Bagley is not in attendance to provide an update.

NYSDEC Smoke Creek Habitat Opportunity Assessment Report – Ms. Hicks stated she does not have an update at this time.

Liaison to the ECEMC, Erie County Environmental Management Council – Chairperson Amadon stated Associate Member Ms. Schultz is stepping down from this position and a replacement is needed. The meetings are online. Ms. Hicks stated the meetings provide an opportunity for Erie County Department of Environment and Planning and towns to communicate.

Ms. Hicks questioned Mr. Taylor about a banner for the commission to use at future events. Mr. Taylor will investigate sturdier materials.

Ms. Hicks questioned Mr. Szablewski about the status of the commission’s social media pages. Mr. Szablewski stated he is not familiar with the data tools and Mr. Reger might be a better person to provide this information.

Chairperson Amadon stated a resident in attendance is interested in the commission and invited Kathleen to ask the commission any questions she may have. Kathleen made some comments that were not picked up by the recorders.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ms. Hicks, seconded by Ms. Lipiew, to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 P.M.

Ayes: All

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Motion Carried

Margaret A. Martin
Deputy Town Clerk/Secretary to the Environmental Commission