

**Towamencin Township
Environmental Advisory Council
Minutes of the August 13, 2024 Meeting**

Attended:

Donna Hegge -Vice Chair *delayed*
Vanessa Gaynor - *Meeting Leader*
Brett MacKay
Joseph Meehan
Kelly Bonsignore
Dr. Richard Costlow

Colleen Ehrle - Towamencin Dir. Admin.
Joyce Snyder – Towamencin BOS Liaison

Excused:

Rory Kelley (Chair)

Dr. David McCreary

The meeting agenda is included as a reference appendix.

Agenda Item 1. Call to Order

The EAC meeting was called to order: 7:06 PM.

Items were added to AOB, agenda item 9.

Agenda Item 2. Opening Comments

There were no opening comments.

Agenda Item 3. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Agenda Item 4. Approval of Minutes

Additions, corrections or deletions were entered on the on-line draft.

A motion to approve minutes as amended: Mr. Meehan;

Motion second: Mr. MacKay.

Passed without objection.

Agenda Item 5. Old Business

a. 2024 Project Updates

i. No Mow

Invasive species & appearance survey updates (species observed)

Kibler Meadow – Bradford pear, multiflora rose, other unspecified herbaceous invasives. This park was identified as needing removal of invasive shrubs and trees. Removal of herbaceous invasives would be extremely labor intensive due to the size of the area.

Fisher’s Park – some unspecified invasives, but in general, acceptable at this time with continued monitoring and regular volunteer events to remove invasives.

Kriebel & Bustard Rds. - some multiflora rose, crown vetch, and other unspecified invasives. Generally, there are abundant herbaceous natives. The EAC recommendation would be removal of invasive shrubs and trees.

Kriebel Rd. Trails – significant bank erosion along Towamencin Creek. Bank stabilization was discussed then tabled to await additional information on possible solutions based on pending inventory.

Township Building (field) – consensus is that it is a good demonstration of concept opportunity. Plans would include an assessment of needs and objectives [a recommendation is needed from EAC for either a forest or a meadow as the preferred outcome; neither activity will adversely impact MS4 program; any program would liaise with Public Works; requisite information from EAC is not anticipated to be available by 24SEP2024 for a 2025 budget proposal; action is to develop a detailed plan for 2026 budget. OPTIONS CONSIDERED: mow X2 per year is a “low-tech, low-cost starter option”; soil removal & replacement would likely be the highest cost and would take the longest ; use of a burn-down broad-spectrum herbicide with or without a soil sterilant prior to re-seeding as appropriate was also considered; Mr. MacKay will research other possible processes for meadow creation at this location and report to EAC.

ii. Finalize Agenda for Public Works Meeting

Reference: PW draft meeting document is on the EAC on-line drive Add a discussion of training opportunities at PW possibly using PWC training. Consider adding PHS “Tree Tenders”. it would be a cost to Towamencin Township, but an on-line course is a possibility at a reduced cost. Encourage PW to investigate the on-line course, and add these two items to the PW meeting agenda. Action: Ms. Gaynor]. Invite Dave Kraynik and Dave Hillmantel [action: Rory Kelley]

Agenda Item 6. New Business

- a. Newsletter; due Friday 23AUG24. A discussion of a draft article prepared by Dr. Costlow for the OSPAC and possible joint submission by OSPAC and EAC. The draft focused on removal of invasive species. EAC supported removal of invasives, but was not in favor of encouraging personal efforts to remove invasives on Towamencin Township properties without instruction/supervision. The article will be submitted by the OSPAC after consultation with Dr. McCreary, and EAC will write a separate submission using suggestions from the EAC meeting [Action: Ms. Hegge].

b. PWC Workshop

Reference:

<https://www.perkiomenwatershed.org/for-municipalities>

Per Jessie Kemper of PWC, they have three options:

- 1) managing stormwater runoff (private property),
- 2) installing a rain garden, and

3) lawn-to-garden conversion.

Cost is \$5 per attendee, or an additional \$25 for the last 2 options if we elect to have attendees receive 3 native plants.

The EAC prefers the lawn to garden option with native plants and proposed subsidizing a maximum of 20 Towamencin residents \$15 of the \$30 registration fee.

EAC will reach out to PWC for dates of the workshop and put it in the Towamencin Township news [Action: Ms. Gaynor, Ms. Hegge].

Agenda Item 7. Township Updates (Informational)

- a. No relevant updates to report from the Township liaison or administration.
- b. EAC flag previously purchased was reported as looking good where it's been flown.

Agenda Item 8. Upcoming Events

- a. We Conserve PA EAC Conference
Scheduled for October 5, 2024, 8am- 5pm at Temple Univ. Ambler Campus. It was noted this is a Jewish calendar holiday (Rosh Hashanah) which may influence overall attendance. EAC does not plan to make a presentation; EAC member attendance will likely be modest. Registration not yet open.

Agenda Item 9. Any other business and closing

- a. Comment on water quality binder. Dr. Costlow indicated a binder on EPA-validated procedures and methods for measurement of water quality was made available to him [official title: Pennsylvania Senior Environmental Core Service, water quality monitoring Field Manual]. EAC decided to ask Towamencin Township if there was any interest. The document will be circulated to PW for comment/disposition [Action: Ms. Ehrle].
- b. Comment on Towamencin population. Dr. Costlow indicated that of Towamencin's population, 35% are over age 50. In contrast, the population of ages 10-19 is 13%. This dynamic is projected to persist and EAC should consider it when planning activities and policies for Towamencin Township.
- c. Bird Town, PA – Ms. Gaynor presented information on a non-profit group called Bird Town Pennsylvania. Reference <https://birdtownpa.org/> . They are dedicated to cooperatively promote community-based conservation actions to create a healthier, more sustainable environment for birds, wildlife, and people. They are aligned with the objectives of the EAC. There is a 4-stage certification plan for townships [Upper Moreland was the first Bird Town] with increasing accomplishments required for each level. EAC will survey for citizen interest [Action: Mr. Meehan to contact Andrew Dolan-who has previously hosted bird walks at Fischer's, Ms. Gaynor to share registration info with EAC, Ms. Snyder to survey Supervisors for interest], and will investigate the certification requirements.
- d. Letter to NPSD (from previous meeting agenda). EAC voted to participate in preparing draft, not to sign the draft letter (vote would occur once draft

is final). There has been no further action on the draft letter that EAC is aware of. A discussion of LEED certification of the high school renovation ensued. No action was taken at the meeting. Action: Mr. Kelley update status of the letter.

- e. Parking on Kriebel Rd across from Fisher's Park was discussed. The space is not approved for parking, but some individuals use it, unauthorized, for park activities. Safety is an issue.

Agenda Item 10. Adjourment

- a. Motion to adjourn – Ms. Bonsignore
Second – Mr. Meehan
Passed without objection.

Action Items noted:

- Research processes to create meadow at Township Building – Brett MacKay
- Add items to the PW meeting agenda -Vanessa Gaynor
- Invite Dave Kraynik and Dave Hillmantel to EAC – - Rory Kelley.
- Write EAC article for Towamencin Newsletter - Donna Hegge
- Contact PWC for dates of the workshop; put them and the \$15 citizen rebate in the Towamencin Township news – Vanessa Gaynor and Donna Hegge.
- Circulate the water quality field manual to Towamencin Township for disposition – Colleen Ehrle
- EAC survey for interest in Bird Town Certification
 - o Contact Andrew Dolan as birder's rep - Joe Meehan
 - o Share Bird Town registration info with EAC – Vanessa Gaynor
 - o Survey Supervisors for their interest - Joyce Snyder
 - o Investigate the Township's certification requirements – Joyce Snyder
- Update EAC on status of the NPSD draft letter - Rory Kelley

Next meeting: September 10, 2024, 7:00 PM