

**Minutes of the Parks & Environment Advisory Board**  
**Meeting June 2nd, 2021 online via Webex**

In attendance:

**Officers Present** - Mike Hogan – Vice Chairman,

**Members Present** - Ken Sooy, Stephen Fielder, Dick Colby, Lisa March,

**Members Absent** - Bill Reinert – Chairman, Heather Warburton

**Commissioner Representative** – James Bertino - absent

**County Staff** - Greg Brookins, D.H.P.W. - present

**Secretary** - Eric Husta – D.D.P.R. – present

**Old Business:**

None

**Roundtable Discussion topics:**

The meeting was called to order at 7:02PM and the minutes from our May meeting were approved unanimously.

Eric Husta updated the group on the current projects underway in parks including the expansion of the Veterans Cemetery, the addition of a new restroom at picnic area 2, the opening of camping season at Lake Lenape West, and planting bed maintenance taking place at various other county locations.

Dick Colby inquired about the Open Space Plan tax and the status of the 2021 budget approvals. He also asked if the County was targeting any new acquisitions. Greg Brookins noted this was a question for Planning and he would reach out to Ranae Fehr for a status update. Eric Husta mentioned Ranae's office was still working on wrapping up acquisitions related to the exit 44 Garden State Parkway interchange as well. Dick also mentioned being asked by Sustainable Egg Harbor City to provide a list of favorite street trees and proceeded to poll the group for suggestions.

Steve Fiedler discussed his recent attendance at a seminar at the Forsythe Wildlife Refuge focusing on inclusion and underserved communities. He also provided an update on the status of Hay Road and the grading and brush cutting work the county and Egg Harbor City completed. Steve then suggested possible topics for future guest speakers including forest stewardship legislation and inclusion. Mention was made of Galloway's Salem oak seedling finding a permanent home at Absegami High School.

Steve also updated the group on Doug Tallamy's new book entitled, "The Nature of Oaks" and the recent work of his brother, Martin. Discussion was also had on the proposed development around the intersection of Pomona Road and the White Horse Pike.

Mike Hogan talked about the recent emergency closures of some of the local Wildlife Management Areas including Winslow and Menantico. He also mentioned monthly walks along the Delaware River and his upcoming presentation on the invasive Callery Pears.

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The night's topics concluded with Lisa March facilitating discussion on cicadas and Greg Brookins mentioning the remaining vacancy on the commission. He noted the county had reached out to the first candidate with no response being received and the intention to move to the next candidate before we resume meeting in September.

The meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

**Our next meeting is currently scheduled for Wednesday, September 1<sup>st</sup> , 2021 at 7 PM .**

cc: Dennis Levinson, County Executive  
Jerry DelRosso, County Administrator  
Diana Rutala, Deputy County Administrator  
Maureen Kern, Chairperson - Board of County Commissioners  
James Bertino, Board of County Commissioners – PEAB Representative  
Greg Brookins, Department Head Public Works  
All Advisory Board Members