

Watershed Management Area #4
Education/Outreach Committee
Minutes of January 10, 2005

Attendees: Tom Pietrykoski, PVSC, Chair, Elizabeth Bell, NJCWW, Ashley Pengitore, PVSC, Cara Monkowski, Watershed Ambassador, Elyssa Serrilli, IYO/NJYC, Carolyn Waugh, Watershed Ambassador, Barbara O'Brien, Ridgewood LWV, Joe Labriola, Clifton Environmental Comm., Jerry Willis, NPS, Gray Russell, Twsp. Of Montclair, Nancy Zimmerman, Friends of Clark's Pond & Third River.

Meeting called to order and minutes reviewed and approved with a few corrections.

Introduction of new member Ashley Pengitore of PVSC.

Passaic River Relay: Cara & Carolyn handed out the proposal with all of the information included. New date for the relay will be May 14, 2005. Only lightning will cancel the event. It was discussed that the relay would take approx. 4 hrs. Registration will be at Pennington Pk., Paterson at 8:00, then we will bus participants and boats to E. Hanover which will take about 30 minutes. The race will start in East Hanover at 9:00. There will be 3 people to a team or possibly 6 in a canoe. We will probably need 2 buses. Tasks were discussed and those that needed early attention were delegated. Elyssa, with help from Jerry, will contact tree foundations for the trees to be planted in Pennington Park, Tom will look into obtaining canoes and kayaks (hopefully donated) and related accessories, Nancy will contact t-shirt makers for prices (there is possible funding), PVSC will obtain insurance, Michelle (who was not at the meeting) will contact groups and organizations to help us with donations as well as outdoor clubs and boat clubs. Everyone should seek out local organizations that could help with donations. Not all tasks were delegated. We still need to get someone to contact local food establishments for pizza, subs, etc. for the end of the race and bagels before the race. Cara will ask PAC members for volunteers. All news media will be informed of the event. A brochure and flyer will be available by email and then a hard copy. There will be email and mail registration but we're not sure where to have it mailed to. Maybe to Cara. We will also have a link on our website for the race.

Liz will try to organize a cleanup at Pennington Pk. during the race, but it will not be easy because classes end on 5/3/05. Festival at Pennington Pk. should start at 11:00 with tree planting to start earlier. Maybe we should make boats available to those at the park when the racers are finished.

Jerry mentioned that we should rent cell phones for the day and that Nextel is a good choice. It was discussed that the donations we receive will have to go to a 501(C)3 so they can be deposited and the organization can write checks for the disbursement of payments. Barbara will inquire with the Ridgewood LMV to see if it is acceptable because they have never done that before.

WMA4 Website: It will cost \$8.00 per year to have our own URL. Tom will talk to Michelle about the payment. Everyone agrees it is a good idea. This change is OK with Dr. Barrett.

Essex County Roundtable: Tom explained that it will be on Tuesday, Jan 25th and that it will consist of environmental groups in Essex County getting together with the Essex County Environmental Commission to discuss concerns. He will get more info and pass it on to us.

Updates

Township of Montclair: Gray is still concerned about the problems at the Bonsal Preserve. He is seeking input from the Hudson-Essex-Passaic Soil Conservation District. He is afraid Montclair does not have the information needed to deal with the problems. Joe said that the Clifton City Manager and the Clifton Environmental Commission will work with Montclair City Manager and engineer directly because so far there is a lack of communication and projects are still in the planning stages.

NJDEP: Tom spoke on behalf of Michelle regarding environmental endowment grants. Michelle met with Tara (Essex County) about a grant for a bioengineering seminar. February 11th is the deadline for HEP mini grants. Joe said it is easier to get those grants for an event rather than a project. Our event would not qualify. Open Space funds are available through Green Acres – check the website. Natural Resource Conservation Service Funds are available – contact Michelle for information. Rutgers is offering an Environmental Steward Training program. When completed, the student can move into an internship position. Don't forget to send Michelle any info for upcoming events so she can include them on our website.

Friends of Clark's Pond & Third River: Nancy reported that there are no updates. The group is waiting to hear from the Board of Education regarding the soccer field and is planning a membership meeting.

League of Women Voters: Barbara reported that they have not met since our last meeting although people are still doing assessments along the HoHoKus.

PVSC: Ashley reported that she has been working at PVSC and previously worked in the lab. She has replaced Veronica. She will go to PAC and TAC meetings and EOC meetings, if necessary.

NJCWW: Elizabeth reported that this week is Education Week and 141 classes will be scheduled to teach 2500 students around the state in Newark, Camden (Sen. Lautenberg will be there), Ocean County and Mercer County. A press conference will be held at the Mercer County location. The mayors of each city will be on hand at each location.

Watershed Ambassador: Cara (WMA4) reported on the Environmental Education Grant for Urban Watershed Education. It is now in the budget phase. She is also scheduling trainings for water monitoring in the spring. There are 2 types - biological and visual assessments. The data would get submitted to the DEP to be used by them. It is open to anyone and we should give her information on groups who are interested. Carolyn (WMA6) had no update, except the paddle.

NPS: Jerry reported that they are working with NY/NJ Baykeeper on a program for mapping public access points on the lower Passaic River. NY PIRG Community Mapping Program has grant funds to do a public access mapping project of the lower Passaic. He is working with Debbie Mans and folks of Sea Map to develop a web-based site for the public access points. It will be the first in New Jersey.

Cara is also working on this project on the Passaic below the Dundee Dam and Newark Bay by “GPSing” and photographing the points by boat and land. Physical access points and fishing access points will be mapped. Her field portion will be completed in March and April. Plans are for a web-site and a printed version.

Clifton Environmental Commission: Joe reported that the grant money for Dundee Island is in after 4 long years and there is \$600,000 from Green Acres, \$600,000 from Passaic County and \$1.2 million to buy 4.25 acres. Clifton now has 7 acres of the island. They are working with Al Greco for access to the island.

The Friends of Garrett Mountain received a grant for \$1.2 million to fix the boathouse and work on the lake.

The deadline for stormwater management plans is April 1st. Clifton is farming the work out, but Joe feels they should do their own so they have a better appreciation of what needs to be done. The ordinance needs to be in place by October.

Clifton HS is involved in monitoring and has 3 very dedicated faculty members that are involved with conservation and water quality that work with the students. In the fall they were involved in World Monitoring Day.

Each municipality received a video about riparian buffers. It is 20 minutes long and deals with rural areas. There is a need to do one for urban areas.

NJ Youth Corps: Elyssa reported that The Second River Trail in Branch Brook Park was opened. Also, during the Cherry Blossom Festival there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of a portion of the Lenape Trail (approx. 2 ½ miles) through the park. They are working with Essex County for a date. There will be guided walks along the river as well as other activities.

Michelle was not at the meeting because she was planning for a meeting with officials from Passaic County about how to prepare their stormwater management plans tomorrow.

Cara will not be at the meetings once classes start.

Next meeting will be held on February 14th, even though it is Valentine’s Day. Meeting adjourned at 8:25.