

Vineland Environmental Commission
Minutes – Regular Meeting
June 10, 2019

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairperson Diane Amico. The public notice was read into record. Present were: Diane Amico, Lisa Fleming, John Pedersen, David Lowenstern, Charles Valentine, and Anthony Coffee. John Casadia entered later.

A motion to approve the **minutes** of the May 13, 2019 meeting was made by David Lowenstern and seconded by Charles Valentine. All were in favor.

Diane passed around the current **budget report** with balances for the regular budget, the No Net Loss Budget, and the Developers Fund for Reforestation. There is \$488.98 left in the regular budget for the year. The other accounts can be used for all tree-related purchases.

Diane reported that the **City Hall Annex Raingarden** is almost complete and we are just waiting for Public Works to redirect the building drains into the garden after it can be confirmed that the garden is draining correctly. The area will be checked again after a large rain. There was discussion on the lack of weeding and overuse of weedwackers by Public Works, and Diane was asked to send Raingarden maintenance instructions to them.

The second **raingarden** to be constructed at the **Vineland Public Library** by a partnership of Rutgers, ANJEC, and Public Works is being planned possibly for next week. We are waiting for Public Works to schedule the digging. Diane needs the exact dates confirmed before advertising for volunteers to do the planting portion. The plans were drawn by an Engineer at Rutgers and were reviewed by City Engineering.

The **Stormwater Education** session is this Thursday, June 13 at 6:30 p.m. Diane asked members to spread the word and to register for the session if they have not already done so. It has been published on the City's Facebook page and sent out in an email broadcast. The League of Conservation Voters is taking care of other outreach.

Volunteer Work Days have continued with John Pedersen, who said there has been a good turnout the last few Saturdays. He has had help from the Fenili's, the LDS church, and VHS students. They have been working on the tree pits along Landis Ave. Diane requested to be able to purchase additional "**volunteer**" **t-shirts**, as the smaller sizes are gone. A motion to order 3 dozen shirts, not to exceed \$338, was made by Charles Valentine and seconded by John Pedersen All were in favor. Diane will compare prices before ordering.

John Casadia entered the meeting.

The **Space Shuttle Pine** does not have signage. Diane passed around news articles from other towns who have done promotional outreach for their trees, and said the tree might be better protected from being cut down by other City departments if it had signage. The Electric Utility has already placed

electric wires above the tree. Initially, the NJ Div. of Forestry had advised us not to announce the location for the first 5 years. It has been longer than that. David will look in his files to see if he has the original certificate for the tree. Diane will work on possible text for the sign. Different types of signs were discussed.

Willow Oak grass is high. John Casadia left a message for Public Works to see if they can cut the main trail, the perimeter of the field, and maybe into the two side trails if possible. The stone delivery can be made to the parking lot. and John P. will try to incorporate that work into the volunteer work days.

Lisa purchased and planted additional plants in the **Giampietro Park Raingarden**. She has a receipt for reimbursement. A motion to reimburse \$285 to Lisa was made by Charles Valentine and seconded by John Casadia. Diane will use the No Net Loss money for this. All were in favor. It was noted that Public Works weedwacked plants that were near the sign but outside of the log perimeter. Diane said the bricks that were moved to Giampietro from the City Hall Annex either need to be used soon or we will need to give them to Public Works, as they cannot stay there in piles/pallets. Various uses for the bricks were discussed.

David obtained a quote for signage for the **Wildflower areas**. The graphic of the sign was passed around. A motion to order 12 signs with metal poles was made by David Lowenstern. Charles Valentine amended the motion for 18 signs. The amended motion was seconded by John Casadia. All were in favor. David will find out if there is a lower price for 18, as the quote was based on a lesser quantity.

There were two minor **zoning board applications** reviewed with no environmental concerns noted. Diane asked members who have site plans from previous reviews to please return the plans for the EC files.

The Commission received a thank you card from a school thanking us for their **Arbor Day tree**. The card was passed around.

Diane reported that the **Roots for Rivers planting at Giampietro Park** is ongoing, with the American Littoral Society returning to the site with interns to straighten the tree stakes and weedwack. The Recreation Department has expressed to Diane that they are not happy with how it looks. Diane reached out to Dale about what is the preferred method of delineating the planting area from the grass to prevent mowers from entering that area, but does not have an answer yet.

Diane reported that the **Roots for Rivers Maurice River** planting is complete, including the mycorrhizae on the roots and white-cedar area with fencing. The area will need to be checked periodically to monitor the tubes and survivability of the trees. It was a lot of work and there were many volunteers. Diane will do a final report.

In response to questions on how grant budgets work, Diane explained the procedures. For this project, there was an overage of about \$500 that was taken out of No Net Loss, due to the difference in the total for the project when the number of tubes was replaced by deer fencing. The balance of No Net Loss needs to be used. John Pedersen discussed maintenance of street trees.

Martin Geisser has asked the Commission for assistance with funding the planting of some trees, screening, and shrubs in the areas at the **Vineland Public Library** where new construction has taken place. This would be around the new parking area and one small median in the front. Martin can get a quote and can oversee the work. Several members said they want only native plants purchased. John Pedersen said he prefers the money be spent elsewhere, such as maintenance on the Cool Cities trees. It would be helpful to see a diagram or a plan. John Pedersen said we should hire a landscape architect. A motion to explore the possibility of letting Engineering plant trees at the Library was made by John Casadia and seconded by Charles Valentine. All were in favor except for John Pedersen who voted "no". Diane will forward to Martin the Commission's requirement that the plants be only native to NJ, so Martin can get a quote for discussion at the next meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made by John Casadia and seconded by Charles Valentine. All were in favor.