

WEST SENECA ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 7:00 PM
West Seneca Community Center – 1300 Union Rd., West Seneca

CALL TO ORDER – 7:04 p.m.

I. ATTENDANCE

Evelyn Hicks (EH) Chair, Rick Rutkowski (RR) Vice-Chair, Cynn timer Gaasch (CG), Tracy Skalski (TS), Jacqueline Balikowski (JB), Mike Wass (MW), Patrick Healy (PH)
Town Council: Jeff Piekarec (JP)
Absent: Andrew Beehler

II. ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

1. Meeting Minutes — September 2021, November 2021 - approved by members
2. Financial Report – as per MW (all funds verified via W.S. Finance Dept.):
 - 2022 WSEC Working Budget – \$1000.00
 - Town Environmental funds:
 - National Fish and Wildlife Federation (NFWF) – \$2,710.76
 - US Fish & Wildlife Service - \$29,000.00
 - National Grid Mitigation Fund - \$61,000.00
3. Correspondence – resignation letter sent by (WSEC member) Emily Baker to Town Board
4. 2015, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 Annual Reports – status quo - (need completion, submittal to Town)
5. Membership – 2 vacancies exist on WSEC – residents interested in possible appointment to Commission should provide letters of interest and/or resumes to WSEC and to Town Board - Town Board has appointed Jeff Piekarec as liason to WSEC
6. Planning for 2022 – project planning, work activities:
 - Deed Restrictions for Town’s Undeveloped Properties – TS has provided Erie Co. reference info to EH for this project
 - TS would like W. Seneca to participate in Erie County’s Community Climate Action Planning (CCAP) program, and will contact Town Board re this initiative.
 - TS would like W. Seneca to participate in the Climate Smart Communities program, which would necessitate the hiring of a coordinator to facilitate the program – (money for salary is available via grant funding) – she will contact Town Board re: this initiative
 - RR will provide replacement (as necessary) of storm drain medallions along Town streets, intends to request assistance to ID locations of missing medallions from B. Adams (Town Highway Supervisor) this Spring.

III. WSEC PROJECTS - UPDATES/DISCUSSION

1. Oxbow (2805 Clinton St.) – on 2/21, RR observed damage to 3 trees at site
2. Standing Subcommittee reports:
 - Tree Issues Subcommittee – as per MW, Young Development intends to plant the agreed upon trees this spring contrary to our advice. The proposed tree planting layout per site, completed this fall has been eliminated but all information concerning the tree type and layout has been forwarded to Town Code Enforcement officer.
 - Education Subcommittee:

- Environmental Corner – TS has posted information re: W. Sen. Deer Task Force, and also the link to the Town’s survey - Also, posted: Minimize Deer Foraging
 - Creek Awareness and Safety - EH would like expand the relevant information into other environmental activities (i.e. Earth day/creek cleanups, National Night Out)
 - TS will post information, photos re: the Meyer Rd. wetlands viewing platform on Facebook, will solicit interested parties to participate in WSEC activities.
 - Town Recycling Program – discussion re: sharing information about recycling best practices – (TS and CG will collaborate)
 - Other – RR completed Deer Foraging topic (see above), is working on downspout disconnect topic
 - Water Quality Issues Subcommittee:
 - Buffalo Creek Canoe/Kayak Launch – 880 Harlem Rd. – RR will contact NYSDEC re: possible site improvement
 - Residential Rain Barrels – RR will initiate in Spring 2022
 - Municipal Rain Barrels – RR will initiate in Spring 2022
 - Storm Drain Marking – (see above).
3. New WSEC Grant opportunities – CG provided a handout describing programs: available:
- Recreational Trails Program
 - Environmental Protection Fund Grants Program for Parks, Preservation, and Heritage Parks Program
 - Local Waterfront Revitalization Program
 - Climate Smart Communities Grant Program
 - Water Quality Improvement Project Program
 - Non-Agricultural Nonpoint Source Planning and Municipal separate Storm Sewer System Mapping Grant
 - Green Innovation Grant Program
 - NYSEFC Wastewater Infrastructure Engineering Planning Grant Program

Relevant program opportunities were discussed – EH will be the point person with Town re: grant opportunities, and will schedule a meeting with the company (Rotella Grant Management) currently contracted with the Town to provide grant writing services.

IV. TOWN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

1. 2885 Clinton St – (proposed ballfields (Canisius High School) – project is progressing – no additional interaction with the WSEC is expected

V. ISSUES OF THE PUBLIC:

1. Town Deer Task Force – meetings ongoing – CG reports that a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) sheet is to be developed by the Task Force
2. Biking in W. Seneca – no new information

Adjourned – 8:28 p.m.