

**BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES – JULY 11, 2023**

PRESENT: Jeffrey Lamborn (Chair), Helene Venizelos (Vice Chair), Sandra Benscoter (Secretary), Geoff Keiser, Roberta Harmon, Glen Denys, Geri DeSapio, Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo, Gina Stravic (Borough Council Liaison) and Larry Cleveland (Planning Board Liaison).
Green Team: Paige Greenfield, Jefry Tineo and Timarie Diehl.

VISITORS: James Meister, SHS student offering volunteer work during the summer, Ava Coppola, new social media representative (will work with Helene and Timarie), Mrs. Coppola and John Guarino, Somerville resident starting a non-profit to bring outdoor classrooms to areas in N.J.

Meeting is called to order at 7:41 p.m. by Jeff. This meeting is called to order in accordance with the open public meeting law. Notice of this meeting is posted on the Somerville website. A copy of this statement will be included in the minutes.

I. MINUTES: June 2023 minutes. Minutes were approved on a motion made by Geri, seconded by Geoff, and carried unanimously.

II. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. No new mail.
- B. Kevin will need additional information from Rebecca to close the grant program.
- C. Kevin notified EC a resident was using an off-road vehicle on borough property adjacent to Spring Street.
- D. Jeff will respond to a letter concerning memorial plantings on borough property.

III. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Roberta reported the EC kiosk for the 3rd quarter is updated.
- B. Timarie, Ava and Helene will collaborate on educational programs for EC.
- C. Sande reports the NJT beautification project slowly continues.
- D. Timarie presented an updated design for the EC logo.
- E. Children from 3 CCD church groups participated in weeding and planting flowers in garden beds behind Van Derveer Elementary School.
- F. July 27 is the final deadline for completion of points and priorities for SNJ Silver Status.
- G. SNJ and PSE&G developing a plan to bring awareness to residents of free home energy audits. Marketing tool kits needed.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Recreation department invited EC to participate in National Night Out on Tuesday, August 1, 2023, from 6-8 p.m. Roberta will oversee organizing the event.

- B. "No Mow May" Ordinance was discussed. EC members felt it needed restrictions.
- C. Gina completed the application for NJ Tree Foundation.
 - 1. Volunteers from Met Life will plant the trees at Walnut Street Park.

V. REPORTS

- A. Green Team – Rebecca Reitman-Garofalo – Liaison
 - 1. Les Floyd, a local artist, will be commissioned to do a painting in the garden.
 - a. The painting will consist of 4 plywood panels and hang on the rear fencing.
 - b. Supplies would be approximately \$350. Cusick's Funeral Home will assist with the financing.
 - c. Green Team's next meeting is in August. Date to be determined.
- B. Planning Board – Larry Cleveland – Liaison
 - 1. Bridgewater approved a large warehouse on Rt. 206/206 Southbound, before Rt. 287 access.
 - 2. Dunken Donuts application for a new building on Rt. 206 Northbound, by Orlando Drive was cancelled until the next meeting.
 - 3. A potential courtesy review of Van Deveer School may not be necessary since the planned work is inside.
- C. Borough Council – Gina Stravic – Liaison
 - 1. Cliff Street Garden Apartments – no guidelines for renovations – check current ordinances for construction sites.
 - 2. Currently OEM project is 3 X the original budget.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Glen.

Seconded by Roberta.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.