

**BOROUGH OF SOMERVILLE  
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES – MARCH 8, 2022**

**PRESENT:** Jeffrey Lamborn (Chair), Helene Venizelos (Vice Chair), Sandra Bencoter (Secretary), Glen Denys, Rebecca Reitman Garofalo, Larry Cleveland (Planning Board Liaison), Gina Stravic (Borough Council Liaison) and Thompson Mitchell (Outgoing Borough Council Liaison).

**ABSENT:** Geoff Keiser and Janet Perantoni.

Green Team: Caitlin Martin and Geri DeSapio.

**VISITOR:** Patty Hunt (Communications Director for Somerville, NJ)

Meeting was called to order at 8:10 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:** February 2022 minutes. The minutes were approved on the motion made by Glen, seconded by Helene, and carried unanimously.

**II. COMMUNICATIONS**

- A. Sande reported no outstanding mail this month.
- B. Larry read a letter from a resident interested in planting a tree on their property.
- C. Check the ANJEC website for webinar dates for Environmental Commissioner programs.
- D. Helene posted plastic bag law on social media sites. Rebecca volunteered to help with social media postings.
- E. ANJEC offering \$1,500 grant. See email for suggestions. Due date: 5/2/22

**III. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. Geoff continues to work on EC webpage on Somerville's website.
- B. Sande will contact Paul (Wallace House) with an April 1 deadline regarding the planting of the Salem Oak seedling.
- C. Shade tree ordinance – Jeff will continue to research other town ordinances.
- D. Sande submitted order for Salem Oak seedling.
- E. Jeff reviewed with members the Chart of Work for 2022.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Sande made the motion to nominated Jeff for EC Chairperson and Helene for Vice Chairperson. Glen seconded motion and motion carried unanimously.
- B. Colleen submitted a grant application to Somerset Garden Club for fruit trees and berry bushes. Notification is late April or early May.
- C. Larry reported the EV charging station ordinance #2661-22-0118 was passed by Borough Council. It has specific state requirements. It must be posted – then it

will be finalized.

- D. Helene discussed priority actions for Sustainable New Jersey. Although not due until 2023, it is imperative EC start working on them now. Actions will be divided between members.
- E. Geri will contact Vanderveer school to see if they have an interest in participating in the program giving all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students tree seedling to plant for Earth Day.
- F. Flood zone ordinances. Larry, Glen and Geoff gathering info for next meeting on 3/28/22 at 6:00 p.m.
- G. Patty Hunt asked for volunteers to do a 60 second video on the bag ban. Helene and Jeff volunteered. It will take place on May 4<sup>th</sup>.

## V. REPORTS

- A. Rebecca – Green Team (Liaison)
  - 1. Email by 3/15/22 with list of items needed for Community Garden.
  - 2. \$9,738.21 total for garden (includes \$1,500 for temporary fence).
- B. Planning Board – Larry Cleveland (Liaison)
  - 1. Applicant for “Oak” project (2 story bld. 2 restaurants) did not do proper noticing.
- C. Borough Council – Gina Stravic (Liaison)
  - 1. EV charging station approved.
  - 2. A Girl Scout is working on her Gold Award.
    - a. Repurposing clothing and items. Items to be put on curb 4/23/22.
    - b. Gina will forward proposal.

Motion to adjourn meeting made by Helene.

Seconded by Rebecca.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.