



SOUTH ORANGE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION Minutes

Thursday, May 25th, 2023 – 7:30 PM (Virtual WebEx Meeting)

Adequate notice given to the public.

Attendees:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| ☒ Linda Beck | ☐ David Kraiker | ☒ Olivia Lewis-Chang,
Trustee |
| ☒ Walter Clarke | ☒ Robert Orgera | ☐ Joe Foligno, DPW |
| ☒ Lorraine Graves | ☒ Beau Schwegman | |
| ☒ Larry Hirsh | ☒ Katie Skibinski | |

Public: Kathleen Grant

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Call meeting to Order 7:40 pm

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

April 2023 - Approved unanimously.

3. POLICY UPDATES (read “Administrative” again this month)

- o Olivia Lewis-Chang - new Trustee Liaison - Walter clarified that in being elected (congratulations, Olivia!), Olivia has lost her right to EC suffrage.

- #### **4. BOT/PUBLIC WORKS UPDATE** - Mike from DPW gives a positive report on the electric leaf blowers and says that he'd be happy to replace other DPW equipment with electric versions. He also reports that the electric batteries last more than one hour, which is what has been reported to various people from landscapers in grievances. Kathleen suggested that DPW might be willing to give us a testimonial about the “upgrade” of the equipment that could be some nice messaging for the public. Lorraine would love to meet with someone at DPW about solid waste.

5. UPDATES ON NEW and CURRENT PROJECTS, ISSUES, etc.

- o NJAW Grant Proposal-Did not get it. We'll try again.
- o Energy Study for SOPAC- R. Orgera. Rob reports that we need to talk to the Director of Operations at SOPAC rather than facility managers for the theatres. Walter spoke with Doug Newman, the Head of the Board, and former Trustee Steve Schnall. Both are interested in saving money. They think it would be useful to make an introduction to Mike Boudain (spelling), the new Director. John Nettleton estimates that it'd be a Level \$3,000 - \$4,500. Rob and Linda remind everyone that the original plan was to make a “low-hanging fruit” list would be helpful: AC and windows open, shutting the blinds in the loft when there's no event, film on the south facing windows, remove the no beer bottles/all beer has to be in plastic cups “policy” at events.
- o **Sub Group/Green Team Reports**
 - o **Shade Tree** - Shade Tree Ordinance is in progress! Linda, Walter, and David have been meeting with Topology and the Village Engineer to get this into shape for review. Jackson Township is one of the models for the new ordinance. Also using reference documents from ANJEC and from NJ State. Brian Conway from Casey and Keller also offered some insight for the Tree Ordinance which is helpful.
 - o **River Greenway**

- o **Walk/Bike** - Very successful. Possibly twice as many this year in Meadowland Park than we had last year in New Waterlands. Meadowbrook Lane was closed to cars and offered a great opportunity for recreation.
- o **No Mow May?** - Linda will head up this effort. No Mow May ordinance needs to happen - who would like to revive the committee? Who can look into the science and the appropriate timing?
- o **Sus Jersey Schools** - Lorraine will connect with Jennie and Georgia about contacting Trenton about initiatives.
- o **Adopt a Drain** - no movement.
- o **New Business:**
 - o SOEC Meetings will be the 3rd Thursday of the month from now on to accommodate Trustee Lewis-Chang's meeting schedule.
 - o Katie would like to announce that electric school buses are already happening in SOMA!
 - o **Food Waste** - Lorraine would like to invigorate her efforts to educate about food waste and mentions resources like Food Too Good To Waste, etc. She looks for partners in this effort.
 - o Fossil Fuels and Utility Plants - Rob let us know about some activism opportunities. He'll share with the group. The Newark event is June 5th from 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm. Food and Water Watch has more info.

6. COMMUNICATIONS -

- o FB: XXX followers (up from 932, reach up 91% past 28 days) IG: XXX (up from 441, Reach up 64% last 28 days).
- o IRA/Coms sub committee report
Katie gave an update:
 - o Social Media education campaign is so far a 7 week curriculum, each week by theme, explaining each and listing benefits. Blog posts will correspond with more details.
 - o Also to include other outside rebates and resources
 - o Partnerships to be made with other town establishments and groups to help get our content out further.
 - o A public event to give people the information including pitfalls seems necessary and beneficial.

7. WORK DAYS/VOLUNTEERING:

- o Work Crew: Dates upcoming: June 11th- 3rd St trees

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Rob Orgera commends Katie and Kathleen for the excellent work on the IRA front. Rob states that the upgrades to people's homes are probably the number one thing that an individual can do to make a positive impact on the environment.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE – TBD June

10. ADJOURNMENT: 8:52 pm