
West Reading Environmental Advisory Council

500 Chestnut Street
West Reading, PA 19611
610-374-8273

E-mail: eac@westreadingborough.org



MEETING MINUTES

August 24, 2020

Members Present

Chairperson Jenna Hiester; Council Members Patrick Kaag, Samantha Kaag and Ryan Lineaweaver; Residents Jim Keller and Brian Adams; Mayor Andrew Kearney; Borough Manager Nicholas Imbesi and Borough Secretary Cynthia Madeira.

Call to Order

Chairperson Jenna Hiester called the Zoom meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Ms. Hiester congratulated and welcomed the newest member, Brian Adams to the Environmental Advisory Council. Mr. Adams shared his enthusiasm about the Community Garden and West Reading in general, and his plans to improve the area along Second Avenue.

Approval of Minutes

Moved by Mr. Lineaweaver and seconded by Mr. Adams to approve the minutes of July 27, 2020. Motion carried.

Community Garden

- Due to the weather forecast yesterday, the garden cleanup event was postponed to Sunday, August 30th at noon. Information has been posted on social media, and Mr. Adams indicated that there are thirteen interested volunteers, including the Wyomissing and West Reading area Boy Scout Troop that would like to earn merit badges. Ms. Hiester recommended sharing the updated information on the EAC Facebook page and with Borough staff to update information on the Borough website.
- Mr. Adams stated that a friend who is a master gardener is interested in sharing tips on how to prepare the garden for the upcoming winter months.
- Mural discussions for the wall adjacent to the garden are ongoing.

Pick Up PA 2020 – The West Reading area fall International Coastal Cleanup is scheduled for Sunday, October 4, 2020 from 10am to 2pm with the Community Garden as the designated meeting place. The Recreation Department will be supporting this event with children's activities such as a take home craft project and possibly a scavenger hunt. A canopy type tent will be setup in case of rain. Mr. Kaag will ensure that PennDOT is requested to mow the cloverleaf area, request the Public Works Department to provide a truck for this event and request Mr. Moletress to transport electronic devices to the recycling center. Ms. Hiester will coordinate efforts with Penn Avenue business owners for raffle prizes and a meeting place along Penn Avenue. Gloves, bags and safety vests will be provided to the volunteers along with a number of pickers and buckets. A laminated map will be at the registration table to designate work areas throughout the Borough.

Environmental Advisory Council Enabling Ordinance – Amendments to the existing Environmental Advisory Council enabling ordinance were discussed. Mr. Imbesi reported that Act 148 of the state enabling statutes limits the number of members to seven and noted that with Mr. Lineaweaver's recent appointment to Borough Council, the number of Borough Council members on the EAC is currently three. Ms. Kaag suggested retaining an EAC vacancy on the Borough website and should someone be

interested in joining the EAC she would step down from the committee. Also, the option to allow non-voting associate members to the board was proposed. Mr. Adams welcomed the associate member idea to potentially establish block captains for cleanup initiatives. Ms. Kaag shared information gathered from Wyomissing Borough where block captains have been chosen, however there are pros and cons to this designation. Mr. Adams' group walks collecting trash is setting a good example for the community. Also, the necessity of designating a Vice Chairperson was discussed at length and it was decided to allow Mr. Imbesi to draft redline recommendations for further discussion during next month's meeting.

New Projects or Initiatives – Ms. Hiester noted her desire to step down as Chairperson by the end of the year to allow someone who has more time and/or skills to dedicate to advancing the environmental needs of the community. However, she still desires to be involved in the community and the EAC to help especially with the litter pickup events. Ms. Hiester stated that she plans to challenge herself this month to finding an attainable grant opportunity and welcomed member participation. Mr. Adams suggested placement of trash/recycle bins within residential areas of the Borough that may aid in limiting the amount of debris. Mr. Imbesi shared some of the challenges associated in finding ideal locations within residential areas to place containers and the need for the Public Works Department to empty these bins, the Public Works Director will be asked to provide recommendations. Mr. Adams asked if EAC members would be amendable to landscaping activity at the front of the Community Garden and the donation of a replacement 2' x 2' sign to bring attention to the garden. Members agreed to the improvements and recommended before and after pictures. Also, Mr. Adams plans to create a stepping stone type memorial to honor the late Mr. Rohrbach. It was recommended that any major changes to the garden be brought to the EAC for comment.

Update from Council – There were no notable updates from Borough Council.

Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 7:02 p.m.

Next Meeting: Monday, September 28, 2020 at 6:00PM