

Holland Township Environmental Commission Minutes

January 8, 2020 7 PM Meeting

Acting Chairman Bowers called the meeting to order. I call to order the January 8, 2020 reorganizational Meeting of the Holland Township Environmental Commission. Adequate notice of this meeting was given pursuant to the Open Public Meeting Act Law by the Environmental Commission Secretary by:

1. Posting such notice on the bulletin board at the Municipal Building.
2. Publishing the notice in the December 12, 2019 edition of the Hunterdon County Democrat
3. And faxing to the Express-Times for informational purposes only.

All stood for the pledge of allegiance. All were reminded to turn off their cell phones or put them in silent mode.

Members Present: Jerry Bowers, Henry Gore, David Harrison, Ted Harwick, Ray Note, Dwight Pederson, and Secretary Maria Elena Jennette Kozak.

Absent: Mike Keady, Susan Meacham and Township Committee Liaison: Robert Thurgarland

Let the record show we have a quorum.

Oath of Office:

Ray Note was administered the Oath of Office by Secretary Kozak. He was congratulated on his reappointment. The term expiration is December 31, 2022

Minutes: A motion was made by Dwight Pederson and seconded by David Harrison to approve the minutes of December 4, 2019 as presented. All present were in favor of the motion with exception of Ted Harwick who abstained. Motion carried.

PennEast Pipeline update: Susan Meacham and Mike Keady – Susan Meacham submitted a summary as follows:

PennEast Status Report (Susan Meacham)

PE has asked the FERC for a two-year extension of the conditional certificate that was issued because they are nowhere near getting the hideous thing in the ground. Here's the first paragraph of their request letter: "On January 19, 2018, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) issued its Order Issuing Certificates in Docket No. CP15-558-000 authorizing PennEast Pipeline Company, LLC (PennEast) to construct, own and operate the PennEast Pipeline Project (Project).¹ Ordering Paragraph B(1) of the Certificate Order required PennEast to complete construction of the Project facilities and make them available for service within two (2) years from the date of the Certificate Order, or by January 19, 2020." I've attached the whole letter from PE just so you can see it.

I'm hoping we can get a lot of comments on the FERC docket, saying that they need to deny PennEast's extension request. FERC won't, of course, but if you don't ask, you don't get! One of our pipeline fighters who watches the financial papers saw that each member company of PennEast – EACH company – has already sunk 85 million into this debacle. That ought to piss the shareholders off almightily.

Also, overall, the industry is in a "bust" cycle. "Natural gas is still being produced, and there is now a serious glut, supply outstripping demand to the point that it is causing energy firms to slash costs. Some companies are shuttering drill sites,

filing for bankruptcy protection, laying off employees and curtailing operations. In the past year, the number of drilling rigs operating in the Keystone State has plummeted from 47 to 24.

These moves have become commonplace in recent months, especially in the tri-state region encompassing Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Ohio. Boom has, indeed, gone bust. "Natural gas is in the tank," Patrick Montalban, president of Montalban Oil & Gas Operations, told the *New York Times*. "We're looking at a project right now of over 200 wells in Montana that are for sale, but they are uneconomic. Not only are the wells uneconomic, the gathering of the gas is uneconomic."

This quote was from an article in: https://observer-reporter.com/business/once-a-booming-industry-natural-gas-is-in-midst-of/article_a8b20942-1db4-11ea-8e6e-6363bb7d3371.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=user-share&fbclid=IwAR2AV3NoS391qKonl5hzzihWhH5mGN5yUv3UfQrjTPcPbQjw-maP3Nn11PY

Musconetcong River Management Council – Dwight Pederson – This council is comprised of towns along the Musconetcong River. At this time, Holland Township is a guest and not a member because of the need for the Federal Government to grant its seal of approval. Things could change if the political climate changes. At a recent meeting, Alan Hunt reported that he is in a new position at MWA as the Developmental Officer which means he is focused more on grants. The government has allocated more grants for Wild and Scenic. MWA sends a group to Washington and it is the hope that Holland Township and Pohatcong Township will soon be part of the Wild and scenic which would make them a part of the Musconetcong River Management Council. There was a study done on the Musky regarding bacteria which was done by Rutgers 10 years ago. The grant expands on the Rutgers study which showed bacteria in the river. At the time of the Rutgers study, they could not determine what kind of bacteria and with the new grant they will be able to study the bacterial levels. The theory is that the higher levels of E.coli found in the River indicate human waste as cows and geese show a lower level. Step one occurred last summer and proved that there is something in the River. They sampled when the river was high and then waited for it to recede at which time they noticed the levels to come down. Remember we had a lot of rain in 2019. So the question then comes to mind...What can be done? The belief is that we need to educate homeowners on how to take care of their septic systems (ex...have it pumped every three years). Questions came up about availability of Septic remediation grants and that is something that can be explored. We can also talk with the Highlands Council to see discuss the water project grant availability.

DEP initiative to help towns pass ordinance on Soil Dumping. Tabled until next month. All encourage to read what was sent to them and available on the DEP website entitled Guard your Backyard. <https://www.nj.gov/dep/guardyourbackyard/>

Phoenix Energy – Western Land Services has been approaching homeowners regarding easement availability to join power lines. This is the same company that PennEast used. People are talking on Facebook about this.

NJ Tree Recovery Campaign May 2020 – Holland Township submitted their application requesting free trees. The event will be distribution on Saturday May 2, 2020 with a pick up date just before at the Warren County Soil Conservation District in Hackettstown. Mr. Harwick and Mr. Pederson have been picking up trees the last few years we were involved with the program. April 24, 2020 is Arbor Day. Secretary Kozak will work with Clerk Miller on the yearly proclamation. Secretary Kozak will work with liaison Thurgarland with the Township Committee supporting our yearly tree planting and plaque dedications. Secretary Kozak will distribute the giveaway flyers once received from the state as they have specific forms to be used. Chairman Keady will do the annual newspaper announcement. We need to work with the local Brownies or Boy Scouts with this event and we will need to establish contact in January.

The 2020 EC schedule is as follows:

Township of Holland
Environmental Commission

2020 Meetings

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Environmental Commission, Township of Holland, County of Hunterdon, New Jersey, will hold their regular meetings on the following dates in 2020 at 7:00 P.M. at the Holland Township Municipal Building, 61 Church Road, Milford, NJ. Meetings are open to the public.

Meeting Dates

January 8, 2020 (Reorganization Meeting)
February 5, 2020
March 4, 2020
April 1, 2020
May 6, 2020
June 2, 2020 *(Tuesday)
July 1, 2020
August 5, 2020
September 2, 2020
October 7, 2020
November 3, 2020 *(Tuesday)
December 2 2020
January 6, 2021 (Reorganization Meeting)

Sub-Committees:

Trails – Ted Harwick, Jerry Bowers and Ray Note. Secretary Kozak reported that DPW Supervisor Colaluce is working on getting cork for the second trail head kiosk. We need to continue spreading the word about the trail.

Community Forestry Plan – Ray Note, David Harrison, Ted Harwick, Henry Gore (emeritus) and Secretary Kozak

Community Forestry Plan Grant - The Holland Township Community Forestry Plan 2020-2024 was submitted and we are awaiting a response from the DEP after December 12, 2019. Please submit your volunteer hour sheets.

Tree Inventory Update – A discussion on moving forward with the Tree Inventory was tabled. Another discussion about Hazardous Tree identification took place with creating a list of potential hazardous trees being something that comes out of the tree inventory. The Subcommittee needs to meet and have a discussion on January 10, 2020 at 1pm. Discussion items to include: Data input into itree, interim report, writing the 2019 annual CFMP due February 15, 2020, 2020 – 2024 amendments, and the inventory.

Interim Report is being worked on and will be submitted to the state.

Girl Scout Silver Award - - Elizabeth Tammaro is no longer a Girl Scout but the family is still interested in participating in events when they can.

Highlands Conformance – Jerry Bowers, Mike Keady and Dwight Pederson.

Highlands Council Environmental and Economic Sustainability Grant Awards Program update:

No news to update other than Secretary Kozak is still working with Maser and the Highlands Council.

The Retention/Detention basin inventory is still an important project but the priority projects are the Wastewater Management Plan, The Water Use and Conservation Plan, The Master Plan Reexamination and the Affordable

Housing/Fair Share Housing Plan. Subcommittees of the Planning Board for the Reexamination Plan and Affordable Housing/Fair Share Housing have been created to work with Planner Green. Plans will be available for review once created. The process for public comment will be through the Planning Board.

Stormwater Education – Mike Keady, Jerry Bowers, Susan Meacham and Maria Elena Jennette Kozak as Secretary – Nothing new to report Secretary Kozak to work on the report. Maser will be asking for it in April or May.

Community Education and Outreach – Jerry Bowers, Dwight Pederson, and Susan Meacham – Nothing new to report. Jerry Bowers will reach out to Bob Thurgarland about seeing if a counter can be added to the website.

The EC webpage is: <http://www.hollandtownshipnj.gov/14-ec/46-environmental-commission.html>. Please send any additions or corrections to Secretary Kozak for posting

Inventory on Fauna and Flora subcommittee - David Harrison, Dwight Pederson, Ray Note and Henry Gore (emeritus) – The trees identified are: Sugar Maple, Hackberry, Red Oak, Norway Maple, White Ash, Hemlock, Red Cedar, Tulip Tree, Black Walnut, and Hemlock. Kentucky coffee tree, American chestnut and Elm were identified on Dennis. David Harrison is still working on the identified trees from the inventory sheets submitted. More information to follow.

Arbor Day subcommittee – Dwight Pederson and Henry Gore – more information to follow

Public Comment: No one is present in the public.

At 8:05 pm Ted Harwick made a motion to adjourn.

Respectfully Submitted

Maria Elena Jennette Kozak

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Environmental Commission Secretary