

**Palmer Township – Environmental Steering Committee  
Meeting Minutes of January 25, 2017**

**Attendees:** Ann Marie Panella (BOS Liaison), Cindy Oatis (Recycling Coordinator), Tom Dittmar, Heath Ganssle, Tom Ganssle, Diane Halasz, John Marks, Ken Starace

**Absent:** Nancy Nicholas (Assoc. Mbr.), Rob Reese, Deanne Werkheiser, Karen Wollman (Assoc. Mbr.)

**Guests:** David Baxter, to observe what the committee does

**Public Meeting** opened at 7:02 PM at Palmer Public Library

**Election of New Officers**

Ann-Marie Panella opened the nominations for chairperson. Tom Dittmar moved that John Marks be nominated; Tom Ganssle seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. John Marks was approved as chairperson by unanimous voice vote.

John Marks opened the nominations for vice chairperson. Tom Dittmar moved that Tom Ganssle be nominated; Diane Halasz seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. Tom Ganssle was approved as vice chairperson by unanimous voice vote.

John Marks opened the nominations for secretary. Tom Ganssle moved that Diane Halasz be nominated; Tom Dittmar seconded the motion. No other nominations were made. Diane Halasz was approved as secretary by unanimous voice vote.

Tom Ganssle moved that elections be closed; Tom Dittmar seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Approval of October 2016 Minutes.**

Motion to approve: Tom Ganssle. Second: Tom Dittmar. Approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Recycling Coordinator's Report**

Cindy Oatis reported the following:

1. Value of recyclables have started to edge up, as reported by Ken Zinnis.
2. Recycling of cartons (eg, milk and juice cartons) has increased in the US. In 2009 18% of US households recycled these items while now 60% of households recycle these.
3. Recycling Center. The township had anticipated using 2016 DEP 903 grants to fund tier 2 of construction. But because even year 903 grants are being skipped and Palmer Township was on the even year schedule, this money will not be available to fund tier 2 of construction of the new recycling center. Options are being examined. The unsafe conditions of the current recycling center have been lessened somewhat by the Public Works Department moving out of the building. It was noted that 903 grants cannot be used to renovate the existing building.

4. DEP 904 grants are still intact but will not be as much as in previous years. They have been reduced by 15% across the board for all municipalities due to inaccurate contamination statistics by some Materials Recovery Facilities.
5. Recycling ordinance revisions are being worked on and will be brought to the PESC for review prior to review with the township manager, Chris Christman. This may be in the April-June time frame.
6. PESC Directions 2017. Chris Christman has seen the draft copy of this and is OK with it, noting that interactions with the BIP must go through Dave Colver.
7. Northampton County Earth & Health Day will take place on Thursday 4/20 at the government complex at 7th and Washington Streets, near the fountains, from 11:30am to 1:30 pm.
8. e-Cycling event is scheduled for Saturday 5/6 at Nazareth Intermediate School. Tom Dittmar will help Deanne Werkheiser with grants and traffic management plans. Police may help also. An estimated 800 - 1000 cars are anticipated. Question arose as to whether event could span 5 hours instead of 3.
9. Palmer Recycles cards were mailed. Aluminum foil and pie plates are no longer on the list because of problems with contamination by food. Caps may now be left on beverage bottles for recycling.

### **Old Business**

1. Formal vote on 2017 meeting schedule. Tom Ganssle made a motion to approve the 2017 meeting schedule. Diane Halasz seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.
2. Individual Litter Clean-ups. Send information on individual litter clean-up efforts to Tom Ganssle, who is keeping track of these.
3. PESC Structure Status. Chris Christman was pleased with the document. Tom Ganssle made a motion that it be submitted Chris Christman for official acceptance as the PESC Bylaws. Tom Dittmar seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.
4. Green Guide. Articles are needed from Tom Dittmar, Rob Reese, and Cindy Oatis.

### **New Business**

1. ESC Direction for 2017. John Marks read the items in the list. In anti-litter campaigns, ad hoc collections were added. The retention of Open Spaces was moved to the comprehensive plan section. Research better ways to enhance Palmer's recycling participation was further defined as education and efforts to reduce contamination and separate trash from recyclables. Absorbing the functions of the Shaded Tree Commission into the ESC as added as the Shade Tree Commission has not met for years. It was also noted that the budget was approved for the Community Education Event.

Tom Ganssle made a motion to limit the priorities to the top 5 for the year in the Year of Planned Action. Tom Dittmar seconded the motion. Members should send their preferred priorities by 4pm this Friday to Diane Halasz, who will tally the votes and report the results. Ken Starace noted that all items should be included in the vote because as items are completed the next priority on the list will roll into place.

2. Validate info in the 2017 Member Directory. Updates were provided. Diane Halasz will send an updated list after the meeting.
3. Earth Day Celebration. Ken Starace reviewed the planning document. The following were noted: removed advertising in Easton Express Times and Morning Call as they are expensive. Add township website and 25th Street electronic sign to Advertising section. For Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, the Minsi Trail troops should be contacted. Taking before and after photographs would be good. The

Comprehensive Plan is being presented to members of the BIP in March and this event could be piggy-backed onto that for donations. It was suggested that Home Depot be contacted for support and that perhaps businesses could clean up their own properties. Members should review the planning document and send comments and suggestions to Ken by Friday, Monday at the latest.

4. 2017 EAC Network Meeting. This will take place on Saturday May 6. Cindy Oatis and John Marks may attend.
5. Tents, Tables, and Other PESC Equipment. Tom Ganssle reports that these articles are now being stored in his basement and asked if they should be stored with other township property somewhere. It was noted that it would likely disappear if so stored. These articles will most likely be needed for the Earth Day and Community Education events and should continue to be stored with Tom if he has the room.
6. Education Sub-committee will be setting up meetings in 2017.

**Adjournment:** Motion to adjourn: Diane Halasz; second: Tom Ganssle. Approved by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:33 pm.

**Next meeting:** Wednesday February 22, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Palmer Public Library

**Minutes submitted by:** Diane Halasz