

**Palmer Township – Environmental Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes of May 25, 2016**

Attendees: Ann Marie Panella (BOS Liaison), Cindy Oatis (Recycling Coordinator), Tom Dittmar, Heath Ganssle, Tom Ganssle, John Marks, Diane Halasz, Rob Reese, Deanne Werkheiser, Karen Wollman

Absent: Nancy Nicholas

Guests: Ken Starace

Public Meeting opened at 7:07 PM at Palmer Public Library

Approval of May Agenda

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

Approval of April Minutes

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

Guest Speaker

Ken Starace introduced himself as a resident of Palmer Township since 1976 and is observing the meeting tonight.

Recycling Coordinator's Report

Cindy Oatis reported the following:

1. Township Newsletter. Deadline is next week. Send articles to Cindy.
2. Recycling in Schools. Recycling at Tracy and Palmer Schools is doing well under the current improvements: trash is down and recycling is up. The PTA will be using these two programs as a model for other elementary schools in the district in 2017.
3. Recycling Center Plans. We reviewed the drawings for the new center. There is a \$1.2 million cost, which is higher than expected. A \$250,000 grant is offsetting the costs associated with land improvements (not construction work). The intention is to use future grant money to pay for subsequent phases of construction. Dual stream recycling may be used with the new center. Some comments on the plans: there would be room for a paper shredder (which could generate revenue); it would be safer to have cars drive straight in/out without backing up to unload; the \$100,000 cost for the yard waste collection site is not worth it (it would be better to extend the days and hours at the Berks Street facility instead); it may be necessary to check identification for Palmer residency status. It was recommended that we proceed with promoting the need for the new center. Writing articles explaining the center and dedicating the first 15 minutes of the ESC meeting to the center and inviting the public to attend will help to educate Palmer residents before the plan is opened up for public comment.
4. Palmer Township's Comprehensive Plan. Environmental Planning and Design LLC (EPD) has been hired to shepherd the township through the process of updating the comprehensive plan. The kick-off will be in June. We answered a list of questions to prepare for this. ESC Goals include formalizing the

mission statement and by-laws, potentially becoming an Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC), and developing educational programs. Problems encountered recently have been disposal of electronic waste and yard waste, providing public recycling bins, and dog waste and litter collection on the bike path. More multi-community cooperation to solve common problems, such as waterways and greenways, would be beneficial; the recent 11-community e-waste collection event was very successful. It may be helpful to determine how successful we were in accomplishing the goals of the previous comprehensive plan and, in areas where we have fallen short, to determine why so we can do a better job this time in implementation.

Education Sub-Committee Report

Diane Halasz reported the following:

1. Educational topics we decided to pursue further with cost estimates are: composting, leaf composting alternatives, rain barrels, storm drain stenciling, pocket gardens, and a Palmer Environmental Guide. Sub-committee members have volunteered to work on the estimates, which will be completed for the next sub-committee meeting.
2. Next meeting is on Monday June 27 at 7:00pm at Diane's house.

Old Business

1. Northampton County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection event (Sat 5/21). No request for assistance was received from Northampton County. Tom and Heath Ganssle assisted with the tire collection. A trailer was filled up in two hours. One thousand cars drove through the event. The next HHW collection event is scheduled for October 8.
2. 2017 Budget items. All requests and estimates must be received in time for the July ESC meeting. Send them to John Marks. They must also contain a brief description of how they will be used, why needed, and how they will benefit Palmer Township. The following is what we have to-date. Total for items below would be \$241.26, not including shipping.
 - a. Litter stick pick-up tool (item #158671). Price \$13.40. Purchase 2. Total: \$26.80
 - b. 72" DOT Reachers (item # 158661). Price \$27.80. Purchase 4. Total: \$111.20
 - c. 38" Roadwork Ahead Roll-up Traffic Sign. Price \$54.96. Purchase 1. Total \$54.96
 - d. "T" Stand Traffic Sign. Price \$48.30 Purchase 1. Total \$48.30.

New Business

1. Proposed Mission Statement & By-Laws for ESC will be distributed for discussion during next month's meeting. A sub-committee will meet before then to review and update them.
2. Ken Starace is interested in joining the ESC. John Marks will send a request to the Palmer Board of Supervisors (BoS).

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn: Deanne Werkheiser; second: Tom Dittmar. Approved by unanimous voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.

Next meeting: Wednesday June 22, 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Palmer Public Library

Minutes submitted by: Diane Halasz