

PALMER TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

July 25, 2018, 6:30 PM

Minutes

1. **ROLL CALL AND INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS** - The meeting was called to order at 6:30pm. In attendance were Tom Dittmar, Nancy Nicholas, Ann-Marie Panella, Madison Smith, Ken Starace, and guest, Bridget Salantri.
2. **MEETING MINUTES** – A motion to approve the meeting minutes from June 27, 2018, was made by Starace, seconded by Nicholas, and approved by all.
3. **OLD BUSINESS**
 - A. Pesticide Contamination in Water
 - i. Bridget Salantri updated the committee indicating PSU promotes atrazine with no-till farming before planting, then after growth they spray with Round-up. Corn and soybeans don't die because they are GMOs. Atrazine can cause birth defects at small rates now, but as years pass rates will go up. Currently, there are no regulations on pesticides and herbicides. Easton Suburban Water does not test for them in surface water or underground water. It would be necessary to locate a suitable testing center. Bridget suggested the committee go to Minnesota's website where they have information well laid out, including their policy on ground and surface water testing for pesticides and herbicides.
 - ii. Panella suggested the issue be brought to Chris Christman's attention by Cindy Oatis with a request to be placed on an upcoming Board of Supervisors' meeting agenda. She recommended they come prepared to speak about the issue; bring appropriate scientific research, and a prepared motion. Panella indicated this would be a good opportunity for Palmer to be the first to move toward restrictions on pesticides and herbicides. If the supervisors were to agree to it, they would likely request that Chuck Bruno or Chris Christman write a letter to Easton Suburban Water about why they are not testing or if they will start testing for atrazine and/or Round-up. Bridget indicated she would be willing to present to the Board with a couple of weeks' notice to prepare. Panella felt that with the upcoming budget preparation and Community Days, we should move the atrazine presentation to late September and perhaps have Bridget present a dry run at the August ESC meeting.
 - iii. Starace contacted Green 18, in Harrisburg that deals with environmental issues and stated the possibility of getting it on their agenda.
 - iv. Starace suggested that Cindy Oatis approach other townships, municipalities, and the county to raise Atrazine awareness locally and to push for testing.
 - B. Library Children Environmental Education Program – Starace reported that Mia, Nicholas and Oatis prepared and presented 2 separate programs on recycling and bees. Both were well received by the children that attended and the library staff. Nicholas added that 4 of the 15 that signed up, actually showed up for the first class, and only 4 of the 8 kids signed up for the second class showed up. Many were young children and well below the specified age. Concern was expressed that preparing suitable educational materials is difficult with such drastic age differences. Nicholas feels this is not something we should put our time into as it isn't age appropriate education.

- C. EASD Recycling – Nicholas reported that she and Oatis are continuing to work with the school district. She feels that this effort is worthwhile and believes the focus on recycling education in the schools is a better educational choice.
- D. 2019 Projects and Goals (Budget)
 - i. Starace indicated he met with Dan McKinney who stated he would be interested in having an educational program during the 2019 Palmer summer camp program. Starace was in favor of this program and recommended considering designing and implementing a program tying in different themes.
 - ii. Starace suggested attendance at Palmer AA meetings in hopes of creating a more team approach.
 - iii. Starace suggested reaching out to the Kiwanis Club. Panella indicated that Palmer Township Kiwanis is always looking for speakers and meets 7:30am every Wednesday @ Williams Diner.
 - iv. Starace suggested applying for the Tree Vitalization grant.
 - v. Palmer Township E-Cycling Event, Fall 2019 @ EAHS – Dittmar indicated difficulty reaching the county environmental coordinator. We would want to obtain a DEP county/municipal grant and involving Easton Public Works to help share the costs.
 - vi. Dittmar and Starace discussed the possibility of installing flashing yield signs with lights at appropriate locations such as crosswalks along the bike path to improve safety.
 - vii. Budget Requests
 - 1. Earth Day project (\$300)
 - 2. Mobile paper shredder (?)
 - 3. Stuff a Truck Event (free)
 - 4. Environmental Education (\$400-500)
 - 5. Tire collection (\$400)
 - 6. Tatamy E-cycling (free in 2018)
 - 7. Palmer E-cycling event (\$4000)
 - 8. Grants for Community Beautification (money needed for 50/50 match on grants)

c. UPDATES/REPORTS

- A. Supervisor Report – None at this time
- B. MS4 Education – None at this time

d. NEXT MEETING: August 22, 2018

e. ADJOURNMENT

- A. Nicholas made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Starace and approved by all.

Submitted by M. Smith/C. Oatis