

Vineland Environmental Commission
Minutes – Regular Meeting
March 9, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 7:13 p.m by Chairperson Diane Amico. The public notice was read into record. Present were: Diane Amico, Charles Valentine, John Pedersen, David Lowenstern, and guest Nora Zielinski. John Casadia and Brad Giordano entered later.

A motion to approve the **minutes** of the February 10, 2020 meeting, with one correction to the approval of the minutes of the month before to reflect that David abstained, was made by Charles Valentine and seconded by John Pedersen. All were in favor.

The **budget** that is to be approved at the next City Council meeting was passed around. The amounts will be the same as last year. The only expenditure so far for this year is \$300 to Reuben's Hardware, half of which will come from the tree-planting grant. John Pedersen needs more wire for the Maurice River planting area.

John Casadia entered the meeting.

The **2020 Tree Recovery Campaign** seedling giveaway is coming up on Saturday March 28th at the YMCA. Diane will contact everyone in advance to confirm the hours on the sign-up sheet. The seedlings need to be picked up the day before and will also need to be tagged. It is unknown how many or what kind of tags will be provided. We also still need buckets, tables, chairs, tarps, and outreach. A flyer was passed out.

Brad Giordano entered the meeting. He offered to pick up the seedlings and bring them to the YMCA. As soon as the seedlings are picked up, Diane needs the list of what trees we received so she can prepare handouts and the pictures for the binders.

For **Arbor Day**, Sue left information with Diane that 3 schools have responded positively. We put in a requisition to Hopewell Nursery for an initial order of 10 maples at \$35 each. We can later purchase more if needed. The Commission now needs to contact the schools to go to the site to pick the locations. The new requirements for Arbor Day were discussed, as were the requirements of the Board of Ed. John Pedersen would like 3 trees for the Vineland Downtown area.

The **Cumberland County Eco Fair** is May 2, 2020. Diane reviewed the application details. The event runs from 10:00 – 5:00, and setup starts at 8:00. All vehicles must be out of the setup area by 9:45. We must bring our own canopy, and it must be staked. Tables can be rented; chairs are not provided. There is no registration fee for us. A sign-up sheet was passed around. There are usually several thousand attendees to this annual event. We do not have that many handouts, so some pre-printed copies should be purchased. Different handouts used in the past were discussed. The Open Space maps with the City parks is a good handout. Also Native Plants, and something that would be of interest to kids. Different members said their preferences are the boards containing: the Open Space Map, Plant Native, Native Species, What is an Environmental Commission, Volunteer for the EC, Watersheds, and Groundwater. Diane will get prices. After several initiated and modified motions, John Casadia made a motion to spend up to \$375, seconded by Charlie Valentine, all were in favor. There are only 3 spots on our display for educational boards.

For the **Events Calendar**, last month we said to move the S. Vineland Park Cleanup to the 3rd Saturday, but that is the same date as the CCIA Trash Hunt. Diane is still trying to find out whether anyone already registered for South Vineland Park or the MaysLanding Road area. Diane said the application form requires a signature by someone other than her,

such as from the Business Administrator or Legal. John Pederson would still like to participate. Diane will follow up on the registration.

John Pedersen has still been working the volunteer days on weekends. John Lauria sometimes assists.

John Casadia cleaned out the birdhouses at **Willow Oak** and removed swallows. He will get a pole to reinstall the wood-duck box at the pond area. John P. said Willow Oak has been a lot cleaner lately. Brad said that he has noticed that the City's code enforcement has been more active and that the City is currently doing more cleaning up of its own properties recently.

There is something being planned for the **Burnt Mill Pond** area, but no one has contacted the Commission. Diane will see if she can get any information. John P. said we should also find out if the Landis Ave. paving will also include curbs and sidewalks.

The **Site Plan Review** Committee reported on several submissions:

B.D.G.S. submitted another plan that includes cutting down many acres of trees. No replanting is mentioned in the plan and no tree survey was given to us. It was noted that previously the comments regarding trees which we submitted to the Planning Board for both the Rovagnati Meats project and for the Board of Education project were not accepted favorably. Diane will contact the Planning Division to see if a tree survey was submitted.

The Starbucks Coffee site plan includes bio-swales and other in-depth green infrastructure. It is aesthetically well-done, creative, and includes landscaping with a lot of plants. It would be a good thing to submit positive comments.

For the Vasquez & Diaz site on W. Park Ave., John P. has not yet formulated comments yet, but it is not a good plan.

Northeast Precast is not asking for variances and the area was already previously cleared from a previous use of the property.

Verizon is going to put up a 145' tower along Rt. 55. There was discussion of whether they could add accessories that make it look like a tree.

The National Guard submitted an application for their property on S. Delsea Drive. Other submissions had no items of environmental concern. Diane would like to start using cover sheets to keep the comments and site plans organized.

New Business: Diane said the American Littoral Society had asked if we want to host a raingarden workshop. She would like to do educational programs at different times of the year other than spring when we are very busy. Also, ANJEC asked us to host a Stormwater Workshop but we are running into the same scheduling issues for the spring. ANJEC is looking at scheduling this at a brewery, and Diane told them City employees and the Commission cannot host at this type of venue. We can, however, assist with outreach to advertise their event.

A motion to adjourn was made by David Lowenstern and seconded by John Casadia. All were in favor.