

October 11, 2001

To: River Council Members

This is a reminder that the next meeting of the River Council is scheduled for **October 17th** at the Fox Nature Center in Estell Manor Park from 7PM to 9PM. Please call Mary Vavra or Rick Coe if you are **unable** to attend.

Attached are copies of project proposals received from three municipalities (Weymouth Twp, Somers Point, and Upper Twp.). It seems that several municipalities were unable to prepare proposals by October 8th. If you have decided on a project, please bring the written proposal with you to the October 17th meeting. If it is possible, please bring 15 additional copies of the proposal so that it can be distributed at the meeting to attendees. Remember: the proposal should include a brief description of the project, projected costs and the name of a contact person who will be responsible for completing the project.

For your information, the following is the suggested agenda for the October 17th meeting. If you have any additions or changes to the agenda, please call either Rick Coe at (215) 665-8181 or Mary Vavra at (215) 597-9175.

GREAT EGG HARBOR NS&R RIVER COUNCIL
October 17th
Meeting Agenda

Call To Order

Approval of Minutes from September 19th - ^{1st} Dick, ^{2nd} Bill

Old Business

- River Council Administrator Position followup - see attached
- WMA #15 update - steering meeting in Sept. Action Now Projects - more info from GETWA
- * Update on permit issues - 3
- Update on Hamilton Twp. Meeting re: liveries & access - Sub com. meeting 4 livery people, 2 rec. com, 2 Hemlock residents, 3 members of public. GEWA + Envir. Com. - only to participate. identify new spot for drop off. wants Atl. Co to open site. Pal. Pizz. has to go to zoning for R+SS9 spot. Motion for a letter about endangered species etc... after 11/7 1st Creed 2nd Creed

New Business

- ⊙ - Report on NPS meeting with Pinelands Commission and the need to update the Pinelands CMP to address river-related issues.
- Project Review & Selection \$35,500 for all \$24,000 projects \$6,000 Signs 1st Creed 2nd Joel

Public Portion ^{1st} Julie ^{2nd} Creed

Adjournment (breakout into committees) ^{1st} Creed ^{2nd} Bill

- * 1) Norell new Lawyer - wants dredging - removed gazebo - 280' to 103' dock
 - 2) Denatell - filled wetlands - dredge own waterway to house - Army Corp will review on 10/18
 - 3) Framinge - Filled 2 acres Weymouth Twp., illeg. dock 168', do mitigation on filled land
- Motion to Support NPS on Framinge issue ^{1st} Julie ^{2nd} Rick

meeting 11/13 9:00am Hamilton Twp

**Great Egg Harbor National Scenic and Recreational River Council
Meeting Minutes
October 17, 2001**

Meeting called to order at 7:05 PM by Chairperson, Rick Coe

Roll Call by the Secretary, Belinda Irizarry

Board Members in Attendance: Julie Akers, Bill Christman, Rick Coe, Dick Colby, Gregory Gregory Creed Pogue, Joel Spiegel, Marc Thyrring

Board Members Absent: Robert Alameda, Bill Egan, Eric Fooder, Bill Zapisek

Quorum Present? Yes

Others Present: Belinda Irizarry (Alternate from GEHWA); and Mary Vavra (National Park Service), Fred Akers (GEHWA Trustee) and Greg Nester

Proceedings

Rick Coe stated that the meeting was advertised pursuant to the NJ Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-6. *et seq.* Notices were sent to official publications for the River Council – The Courier Post and The Press of Atlantic City. A copy of the notice was posted on the bulletin board of the Fox Nature Center and the Atlantic County Library in Mays Landing. An Affidavit of publication from the Courier Post was received.

Approval of Minutes for September 19th

Dick Colby made a motion to approve the minutes from September 19th. The motion was seconded by Bill Christman. Motion carried unanimously.

Old Business

River Council Administrator Position. A draft of the announcement advertising the Administrator position was reviewed. Suggestions were made to add computer and GIS knowledge as beneficial skills as well as the fact that physical field work is required. The announcement will be placed in the Courier Post and The Press of Atlantic City. Mary Vavra will make available a full job description based on the decisions made at the September River Council meeting.

Watershed Management Area #15 Update – Julie Akers reported that she attended a steering committee meeting in September where “Action Now” projects were presented on behalf of the River Council. Individual “Action Now” projects were not discussed in depth at the steering committee or focus group meetings. The WMA steering committee is looking for specific details for individual projects which will require additional research and information.

Permit Update –

Mary Vavra updated members on permit issues/violations in the river corridor.

- Discussion took place about illegal dredging that appears to have taken place on a property in Weymouth Township (DiNatale property) and possible scenarios for resolution.

- An update on the resolution of the illegal dock in Hamilton Township (Mark Norell) was provided.

- Several Council members received a Public Notice regarding a property in Weymouth Township (Fiamingo) requesting an “after-the-fact” permit to legalize the unauthorized placement of fill material on forested wetlands and the legalization of a 168’ dock. Mary Vavra mentioned that the illegal filling of the wetlands area did not appear to have a project purpose and was not water dependent. This activity adversely affected wetlands which were identified during both the study and Comprehensive Management Planning process as priority resources requiring protection. However, the filling occurred in 1989 prior to the designation of the Great Egg Harbor River. Mary stated that the National Park Service deferred resolution of this issue to both the US Army Corps of Engineers and the NJ Department of Environmental Protection since the work occurred prior to 1992. National Park Service is preparing a letter stating its opposition to the filling of wetlands, acknowledging the timing of the fill violation, and recommending that the applicant be required to mitigate the filled wetlands should an “after-the-fact” permit be authorized. NPS will suggest that mitigation can include restoration and the extension of the dock to areas previously mapped as uplands. In addition, a recommendation was also made that the boat lifts planned for the dock be located on the sides of the pier to avoid any further encroachment into the river. A motion was made by Julie Akers to support the NPS position on this particular permit application. Joel Spiegel seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Hamilton Township Issues

- Julie Akers attended the Hamilton Township subcommittee meeting organized to address access and other issues in the non-tidal portion of the river. The subcommittee is made up of: two members from each of the two liveries; two from the Recreation Committee; two residents on Hemlock Lane; and three members at large from the public. GEHWA was invited to participate as well as the Environmental Commission. The subcommittee is charged with addressing issues contained in a National Park Service letter to the Township regarding overuse and the need to develop a plan for the river. The group tried to identify access areas for recreating on the river. Atlantic County does not own property north of Weymouth Furnace except at Penny Pot near Folsom. Hamilton Township wants Atlantic County to open areas for livery use.

- A discussion about the illegal commercial use of a property owned by Mike Cokenakas is located in an area zoned as FA-70 in the Pinelands Preservation Area

which was specifically identified by the NJ Natural Heritage Program as containing threatened and endangered species. Mike Cokenakas was issued a cease and desist order by the Township Zoning Officer and received several extensions so that his business could continue through the summer months. Julie mentioned that a site plan should be required for this property if Mike Cokenakas intends to pursue a zoning variance. It was also recognized that Mike Cokenakas set up an access area in Folsom without permits.

- Julie mentioned that November 13th at 7PM at the Hamilton Township municipal building is the next meeting of the Township subcommittee and it is open to the public. Creed Pogue made a motion to send a letter to Hamilton Township advising them of the environmental sensitivity of the area where Mike Cokenakas is operating illegally and offer River Council resources to address river-related issues. The letter should be sent after Nov. 7th with a copy to Jim Link, Planning Board). Marc Thyrring seconded the motion. Roll Call: Julie Akers –yes; Bill Christman – yes; Rick Coe – yes; Dick Colby – yes; Gregory Gregory –yes; Creed Pogue –yes; Joel Spiegel – yes; Marc Thyrring - yes. Motion carried.

New Business

Updating the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan – Mary Vavra informed members that the Pinelands CMP is in the process of being updated and that now would be a good opportunity to petition the Pinelands Commission to address the issues in the river corridor by amending the CMP to include appropriate information for protection of rivers. Mary mentioned that she met with Chuck Horner of the Pinelands Commission and received information about the approval process regarding zoning variances. Creed Pogue provided additional details regarding the “Certificate of Filing”.

Creed will be attending the Pinelands Municipal Council meeting in Pemberton Township later in October and will take River Council recommendations to the Pinelands Council meeting. A suggestion was made to support the list of recommendations made by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance outlined in the October issue of *RiverCurrents* and authorize Creed to bring these recommendations to the Pinelands Municipal Council meeting. In addition, standards for rivers in the Pinelands need to be included in the Pinelands CMP. Julie Akers made a motion to recommend items 1 thru 10 in *RiverCurrents* with an additional issue to include standards for rivers and the need to address threatened and endangered areas where recreation is occurring and liveries are operating. The motion was seconded by Gregory Gregory. Roll Call Vote: Julie Akers – yes; Bill Christman - yes; Rick Coe –yes; Dick Colby – yes; Creed Pogue – abstained; Joel Spiegel – yes; Marc Thyrring - yes. Motion carried.

A letter will be sent to the Pinelands Commission from the River Council stating support for the above-stated issues..

Egg Harbor Township – The possibility of Egg Harbor Township acquiring a 500-acre property located near Miry Run, a tributary of the Great Egg Harbor River for off-road vehicle use was raised for discussion. It was suggested that the River Council write a

letter to Vince Palistina in Egg Harbor Township regarding this issue reminding them that this property is in the river corridor and a need to identify whether there are any threatened and endangered species present and address the environmental sensitivity of the area. The letter should be addressed to the Mayor with copies to the Environmental Commission, and the Municipal Clerk with a request that copies be distributed to the Planning Board, Township Committee, Vince Palistina and any other appropriate Township official. Marc Thyrring made a motion to send a letter and Creed Pogue seconded the motion. Motion carried.

New business:

Six municipalities and GEHWA submitted project proposals for funding consideration by the River Council. Details regarding each proposal are attached. Decisions made are as follows:

- Monroe Township - Footbridge in the area of the Blue Hole to provide access from the Winslow Township side to Monroe Township. Estimated cost: **\$3,000**. Motion to fund made by Gregory Gregory and seconded by Creed Pogue. Motion carried.
- Somers Point - Slope stabilization at Kennedy Park at the juncture of the Great Egg Harbor Bay and the mouth of the Great Egg Harbor River. Estimated cost - **\$3,000**. Motion made by Creed Pogue and seconded by Gregory Gregory. Motion carried.
- Somers Point - Exhibit and educational signage delineating the Great Egg Harbor NS&RR, as well as its history. Estimate for 6 signs at 3 sites - **\$3,000**. Motion to approve made by Creed Pogue and seconded by Gregory Gregory. Motion carried.
- Weymouth Township – Strategic plantings project to benefit native animal and insect species along the RR tracks and Route 557. Estimated cost **\$500** which includes \$200 for strategic plantings in Estell Manor. Motion to approve made by Creed Pogue for plantings in both Weymouth Township and Estell Manor. Motion seconded by Julie Akers. Motion carried.
- Weymouth Township - Referendum Promotion: Questions were raised about referendum promotion as potentially not being appropriate for River Council support. Rick Coe made a motion to disapprove this project. Motion was seconded by Creed Pogue. Motion carried.
- Weymouth Township - Website Development by the Environmental Commission - Estimated cost **\$500**: Questions were raised as to whether the Township was taking advantage of Atlantic County's assistance program for websites. Creed Pogue made a motion that that this project be conditionally approved pending information received from the Township as to why or how the County's Program may be of assistance. Motion was seconded by Gregory Gregory.

- Buena Vista Township- Study of Deep Run to identify causes of algal growth in the Pancoast Mill Pond - Estimated Cost **\$3,000**. Creed Pogue made a motion to approve which was seconded by Bill Christman. Motion carried.
- Egg Harbor Township - Continuation of the Adopt-A-Stream project within the Township - Estimated cost **\$1,000**. This is an expansion of the GEHWA Adopt-A-Stream Program. Creed Pogue made a motion to approve this project. Motion was seconded by Julie Akers. An amendment to the motion was made indicating that this project money will be spent for transportation and education purposes.
- Egg Harbor Township – Streambank stabilization of an area on the Dead Horse Run Creek - Estimated project \$10,000. Motion to approve **\$5,000** for this project was made by Creed Pogue and seconded by Bill Christman. Mary Vavra will enter this project into the Wild and Scenic River project competition if one if held this year.
- GEHWA - \$7,000 for gauging station to measure water levels near Weymouth Furnace area. Motion to approve **\$5,000** made by Creed Pogue with GEHWA making up the difference in funds. Motion was seconded by Julie Akers. Julie amended this approval conditional upon receiving information about future costs associated with this station. Roll Call Vote: Julie Akers - yes; Bill Christman - yes; Rick Coe - yes; Dick Colby - yes; Gregory Gregory - no; Creed Pogue - yes; Joel Spiegel - yes; Marc Thyrring - no. Motion carried.
- All proposals regarding signage will be combined for efficiency. Project proposals for signage were received from Monroe, Upper and Buena Vista Townships. Estimated cost **\$6,000**. Motion made by Gregory Gregory to fund this project. Motion seconded by Creed Pogue. Motion carried.

Total amount appropriated for the above projects is \$30,000. Mary Vavra reminded those in attendance that all projects will require a primary contact responsible for making sure that each project is completed according to agreed upon conditions and that funds are properly spent. In addition, a project write-up will also be required demonstrating the benefits of the funding received. This information can be used to showcase what is being accomplished.

Public Comment

A motion was made by Creed Pogue to open the meeting to the public at 9:10PM and seconded by Julie Akers. Fred Akers (GEHWA Trustee) updated members on NJDEP efforts to provide gauging stations to determine water levels and water quality. Fred also shared information about the extensive research he has been doing to help Hamilton Township address issues on the non-tidal section of the river. Fred will keep River Council members informed of his research efforts.

Motion made by Creed Pogue to close the public portion. Motion was seconded by Julie Akers. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:20PM by Rick Coe.