

**FRANKLIN LAKES ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
MINUTES – MARCH 23, 2015**

In Attendance: Commissioners Carole Holden, Sue Barbuto, Michael Colombo, Don Scine, Skip Williamson, Larissa Symbouras, Moira Murphy, and Omar ElRafei. Green Team member/recycling coordinator Liz Morris. Council liaison Ann Swist.

Absent: Gary Sheppard

The March meeting of the Franklin Lakes Environmental Commission was called to order at 7 p.m. and held in the municipal building on Monday, March 23, 2015. The minutes of the previous meeting were not read.

Chair's Report: Green Fair.

The chair asked for feedback on the first annual FLOW Green Fair, which was held on March 7, 2015.

Discussion was held regarding different aspects of the fair, including:

1. The success of the fair in having a good variety of information and exhibitors/participants and good attendance.
2. The lack of success in getting the three towns to work together, as Franklin Lakes (especially Liz Morris and Carole Holden) did the vast majority of the work. Carole took responsibility for pushing to have the fair this year rather than next year, which caused the other towns, especially Oakland, to shy away from helping. If this event is to take place again next year, all three towns must divide the work more equally. In one of the meetings, jobs should be designated and expectations outlined.
3. In addition, Franklin Lakes should receive more of the attention and credit.
4. The exhibitor planning to educate regarding rain barrels and rain gardens was a no-show.
5. The lack of timely setup in the cafeteria by Ramapo High School custodial services was explained by Carole Holden in that a representative of FoodTown was mistaken for a representative of the Green Fair when she stated that she would not be setting up until the next morning.
6. Next year, the films and presenters will be in a separate room from the booths and exhibits. Michael suggested having the exhibitors and participants in the school hallways leading to the speaker/entertainment/movie room(s).
7. Michael suggested punch cards to be given to attendees, who would be entered into a raffle to receive a gift/prize (like a recycling bin or other item) if they could show that they visited all of the exhibitors.
8. More of the FLEC needs to participate to allow for better representation at our booth.

New initiatives stemming from Green Fair:

1. Apiary Project: Larissa spoke to some of what is needed to care for bees, and will present the details of costs and requirements at the April meeting. A suggestion was made to enlist the assistance of high school students as assistant beekeepers for the project.
2. Solar Information (with BD): Carole explained that a criticism was heard from the other FLOW towns regarding the lack of solar representation at the Green Fair. BD is looking into converting to or supplementing with solar energy, so Carole will be looking into working with them about their findings and perhaps coming to speak regarding use of solar energy in Franklin Lakes.
3. Water Pledge and Green Business Recognition Program: put off to a future meeting in favor of moving on to other issues.

A suggestion was made to enlist high school students to assist in the future with endeavors like the Green Fair, Film Festival, and Spring Cleanup, giving us additional hands to take on some of the work. Possibly give them FLEC t-shirts for helping.

Member Reports:

Pilgrim Pipeline – Michael – Our proposal is more specific than other towns', which is good. There is only one water source for this entire area, including New York City, Franklin Lakes, and the surrounding towns. Our position is that if this is going to be done, it needs to be done correctly the first time, to standards far above the minimums. The problem is that the federal government will likely require only the minimum standards, and the Pilgrim Pipeline will do only what is required. Upon the suggestion of Don Scine, the language that the pipeline won't "directly and specifically" benefit Franklin Lakes will be added before the proposal is put into final form by Michael and submitted to the mayor and council for discussion at a work session.

Motion made for Michael to formally draft the proposal of the Environmental Commission for submission to the mayor and council. Passed by unanimous vote.

Water - Michael – The public should be educated regarding use of water and watering of lawns especially.

Public Education and Outreach – Sue – The film festival is well into planning, to be held during each of the four Thursdays in May. Three films have been chosen, more are being narrowed down to be the fourth. Liz has created a great spreadsheet to calculate the ratings of the films. The committee is working on obtaining speakers for each film; one is the director of The Resilient Ones, coming from Vermont to speak. The committee also plans to speak to a group of Teaneck tweens who have instituted a "no plastic bag" initiative in their town as potential speakers. The big promotional push will be in April, at which time, everyone will need to help spread the word to increase attendance.

Energy – new commissioner – Omar and Skip will share this specialty.

Recycling – Liz – Liz just completed the economic section of Rutgers recycling course. Our recycling rate is 21%, while the state's goal was reduced from 60 to 50%. Franklin Lakes' percentage has been going up, so we need to keep making the effort. Carole & Liz are trying to find a way to measure where we are with our residents at this point; how well we've done. The tonnage grant report has been the focus for this month. Liz has sent out 300 letters & has gotten 100 back, so she needs to chase businesses down to get the information as close to accurate as she can.

Planning Board – Gary – N/A

Environmental Contaminants/Bees – Larisa – Larissa will now take on this specialty and will put together details regarding costs and requirements for the town to have beehives for the April meeting. In addition, she will research and begin an initiative to educate the public regarding the dangers of using pesticides/herbicides/fungicides and fertilizers, and to encourage residents to find alternate routes to maintaining properties.

Old Business

The spring cleanup day, which is required for the town to continue to be eligible for the Clean Communities Grant, will be held in May, possibly May 9. Ann Swist will email the DPW and discuss with them at their April 1 meeting the areas of town that would be best for the cleanup day, and the best approaches for doing so.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Larissa Symbouras