

Vernon Township Environmental Commission

January 12, 2021

Draft of Minutes

**The meeting was called to order at 7:07 PM by Diane Wexler.**

**Statement of Compliance was read by Diane Wexler.**

**Roll Call:**

Craig Williams  
Bonnie Tadrick  
Catherine Sawoszcyk  
Diane Wexler  
Peg Distasi

**Salute to the Flag**

Mayor Burrell thanked the Commission for their volunteer time and it is an honor to swear in and reappoint Craig Williams, who is the liaison for the Land Use Board to a three- year term.

Mayor Burrell is pleased to swear in Bonnie Tadrick to the Commission for a three-year term. She brings Literature research skills to the Commission and has an open mind and good judgement.

Mayor Burrell thanked Diane Wexler for Chairing the Commission since August 2020. She has had five years previous experience and brings leadership and will live up to his expectations.

The Mayor stated that at the Council's reorganization meeting it was discussed that 2021 will present difficult challenges. As Mayor, he will only be serving one term. He asks that we do our best and do what we need to do. He will be that gentle push from behind to move Vernon forward. He asked the two appointees (Craig Williams and Bonnie Tadrick) to come to his office to sign the oaths of office.

**Craig Williams was sworn in by Mayor Burrell**

**Bonnie Tadrick was sworn in by Mayor Burrell.**

Mayor Burrell congratulates them both. The Mayor leaves at 7:38 PM.

**Nominations for Vice Chair (with roll call vote)**

Diane Wexler made the motion for Craig Williams to be Vice Chair of the Commission, Second by Catherina Sawoszcyk.

Diane Wexler, yes

Craig Williams, yes

Bonnie Tadrick, yes

Catherine Sawoszczyk, yes

Peg Distasi, abstain

Motion approved.

**Meeting Dates to be voted on:**

February 15, 2021	March 15, 2021	April 19, 2021	May 17, 2021
June 21, 2021	July 19, 2021	August 16, 2021	September 16, 2021
October 18, 2021	November 15, 2021	December 20, 2021	January 11, 2022

Diane Wexler asked if the February 15, 2021 date was okay with everyone due to it being Presidents Day. All in favor that it was okay.

**Newspaper: The New Jersey Herald:**

All in favor

**Approval of Recording Secretary: Debbie Coulson Demether:**

Craig Williams made the motion for Debbie Coulson Demether to be the Recording Secretary for the Commission. Peg Distasi seconded the motion. All approved.

**Regular Meeting Agenda:**

**Approval of Minutes of December 21 meeting:**

Diane Wexler said that there were some typos in the names mentioned in the minutes. The Town Attorney's name should be mentioned and to add in the Town engineer. Craig Williams said the minutes were consistent to what transpired at the meeting. Craig Williams made the motion to approve the minutes with corrections mentioned, second by Catherina Sawoszczyk. All in favor. Approved

**Public Participation:**

Peg Distasi made a motion to **open the meeting** to the public, second by Craig Williams,

Jessi Paladini wanted to welcome Bonnie Tadrick to the Commission

Jessi Paladini stated that resolutions should have a number for meetings scheduled and the newspaper and she did not see them such as 21-01, 21-02. Diane Wexler thanked Jessi Paladini and said they would be on next month's resolutions.

**Close the meeting** to the Public. Craig Williams made the motion to close the public portion of the meeting.

### **Land Use Board Liaison Report:**

Craig Williams stated that the first Land Use Meeting was a Reorganization meeting and the application hearing for Rte. 94 LLC was moved to the next meeting in January. Otherwise there is nothing new. Yesterday's Council Meeting approved resolution to Land Use Board of redevelopment of 525 Rte. 515 across from Acme. Diane Wexler said it was not approved. Peg Distasi thought they were approved. Craig Williams copy said "no, Diane Wexler said that Shortway wanted to hear them come back with recommendations. Craig Williams mentioned the resolution for Diamond Comm. And T Mobile which is located at the end of Vander Hoof Court. Also bills were approved.

### **Old Business:**

Composting: Mike Cheski was absent from the meeting. Discussion concerning the Pollinators Garden being put adjacent to the Town trail tying together with Composting. Peg Distasi said not to place the Pollinators garden too close to the walking trail. Diane Wexler said that we should look at grants in March. Craig Williams said there was plenty of room to possibly have more than one pollinator garden.

Craig Williams brought up NRI. And talked to the Administrator to follow up. He said he was trying to get a hold of Cory Stoner. Craig Williams stated that Corey Stoner has nothing to do with it and we need to get something going. Diane Wexler said it is part of the Master Plan. Craig Williams said we should go to the next Council meeting and ask the Council, like a nudge.

Diane Wexler wants to put Peg Distasi in charge of communicating at the Town Council meetings. Peg Distasi made a motion for Craig Williams to go to the Council with the NRI and the importance to Vernon. Catherina Sawoszyk seconded the motion. All in favor.

### **TGP**

Craig Williams read the draft letter:

Vernon Township Environmental Commission

January 12, 2021 21

Church Street,

Vernon, NJ 07462

Keith D'Angiolillo

Senior Project Manager

Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc

412 Mt. Kemble Avenue – Suite 100

Morristown, NJ 07960

Regarding: Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, LLC

Systemwide Maintenance Project

Mr. D'Angiolillo,

The Vernon Township Environmental Commission is in receipt of a copy of the Freshwater Wetlands General Permit 1, wherein, in part, the maintenance program is described. As this project involves a section of the pipeline that traverses Vernon Township, we have questions;

1. Within the Vernon section of the project, how many test stations exist currently and under what circumstances would additional stations be required?
2. How many ground beds, of either the Galvanic or Impressed Current exist within the Vernon section of the project? In your experience, how common is it to disturb existing ground beds? Are additional ground beds anticipated? If so, why?
3. How many stream or waterway crossings exist in Vernon's section of the project area? If it is deemed that corrective work in any such area and designated buffer are necessary, we request to be informed of the particulars before the corrective work is undertaken. Please specifically affirm our request.
4. The "intelligent tool", hereinafter known as a "pig" is launched and received in pipe segments that require excavation/pipeline exposure to these points. How many such excavations are anticipated within our section of the project?
5. With regard to casing crossings of either a highway or railway, a metallic sleeve isolates the coated pipe from the impacts of the crossing. Are ordinary roadways treated the same way as "highways"? In your experience, how common is the instance of a "shorted casing" requiring remediation? We request that we be informed of any such instance prior to corrective work being undertaken. Please specifically affirm this request.
6. In the instance of "Exposed Pipe" and the potential for stream contour adjustments, we specifically request that we be informed of any such instance within the project area within Vernon, before any adjustments are made. Please specifically affirm that request.
7. In the instance of "Hydraulic Testing", are any new pipes anticipated within Vernon's portion of the project area? If so, why?
8. Of particular concern to this committee is the topic of "Class Changes". We request "class" information of the existing pipe network within our project area. We request information on a relevant range of "class" criteria applicable to this project area. We further request information as to what "class" changes are anticipated within our section of the project and why? If a "class change" is deemed necessary, we ask that we be advised about just how much of our project area may be impacted by such a determination prior to any physical changes. Please specifically affirm this request.

9. It is anticipated that any vegetation areas disturbed by the maintenance activities be remediated to a level at least equal to what currently exists. Please affirm this request by evidence to our committee of the existing conditions prior to any specific disturbance and the remediation plan involved.

We trust that we can anticipate your cooperation in this regard.

The Vernon Township Environmental Commission

As discussed and moved in open session 1/12/2021

Craig Williams explained number 8: class changes, a new pumping station in West Milford and Wantage gets an improved station. If pushing more product increases pressure what if it exceeds the pressures allowed by the existing pipe. That would mean excavation to install a higher pressure pipe.

Number 9: In vegetated areas the land should be put back as before. Peg Distasi asked about tree removal and storm water requirements. Craig Williams stated that vegetation is vegetation. Diane Wexler said we should give them a time limit to answer our questions. Craig Williams said it was a request for information and should be answered on a timely basis. If they don't answer then we have to call them on it. All agreed to send letter out.

Diane Wexler discussed compressor station meetings with power points. Their first meeting is a ZOOM on February 4, 2021 at 7:00 PM from West Milford. Diane Wexler will know more tomorrow about the Wantage meeting. Craig Williams was in a compressor station in upper state New York and said it was very loud. Diane Wexler spoke about one in Mahwah that was a huge station and she could hear the gas running through the pipes.

**Silver Spruce:** Peg Distasi reported that the owner was in court and not evicted from the property, and allowed to remain. The Courts are pressuring the daughter now that she is of age to where the money is hidden. The owner will be paying for testing even though he tried to get out of it. Cold weather has everything on hold.

### **Goals for 2021**

Diane Wexler said to pick a subject to bring to the Town Council meetings. Peg Distasi will bring it to the meeting. Peg Distasi commented that there are two meetings a month. Do we send a letter to the council asking for time or use the public comments. Peg Distasi will represent the Commission with topics from the Environmental Commission and the concerns for them to be aware of.

Peg Distasi sent five items to look over at the Environmental meeting.

Diane Wexler suggested the gas station. Peg Distasi stated that in April 2000 they were in violation with the DEP. They lied to DEP about following all the rules. Rules were not followed. The Station by Acme, Catherina Sawoszczyk stated a Landscaping Company threw everything into the stream. The Getty put up a big fence and you can't really see it. You can't tell how far they are from the stream. There are large objects in the river such as a cart and a traffic barrier.

Diane Wexler suggested that maybe a group of scouts or high school Environmental group would be able to clean it up in the spring. There is a potential for obstruction, but the stream is flowing. Craig Williams questioned if the fence was a visual barrier or for surface content. Catherina Sawoszczyk stated the fence was 8 foot high. Craig Williams stated it was a visual and not to obstruct flow. Peg Distasi called the DEP person and a lady that works with him (Gina) and had no response. The Town Engineer called the owner of the property and Cory Stoner sent a letter. Diane Wexler stated that Cory Stoner will guide you to the next step. We need a monthly follow-up. Any actions have to come from the Town Council. Peg Distasi wants to send a resolution to the Council for February 2021 goals.

Peg Distasi mentioned the trout stream had three major flooding's this year. Water was flowing down Breakneck to the stream. The water was coming from the National Activity Center construction site. Cory Stoner looked at it; it is a Township Road, Conservation Committee to monitor the site/stream then report to the Council. Catherina Sawoszczyk and Peg Distasi will monitor the stream and send pictures. Catherina Sawoszczyk wants the stream acknowledged. Peg Distasi said to maybe put a plaque by the parking lot of the National Activity Center stating it is a FW1 stream. DPW could post it. Peg Distasi and Catherina Sawoszczyk will set a goal for Earth Day. Craig Williams stated to push the goal of Green Energy with a bulk purchase agreement to offer to homeowners and a deal for Commercial too. It would turn most of the town to solar.

Peg Distasi stated that Craig Williams in 2018 talked about a Spill Fund. Craig Williams stated he does not recall. Maybe get some money for the stream. Craig Williams stated that the information should be on the DEP website. Once we get the information we can forward it to the Council. Peg Distasi will do the research and asked for the subject to be put on the agenda next month. Peg Distasi thanked Catherina Sawoszczyk.

#### **New Business:**

None

#### **Public Participation**

A motion from Craig Williams to open the meeting to the Public, second by Bonnie Tadrick. All in favor.

Jessi Paladini stated an interest in the town brook. In 2019 the public reported to the DEP what was happening. She observed for two hours the construction site with the men dumping into the brook. She went up to them and asked what they were doing; they had no idea of the situation. The Owner came and had no idea it was stream encroachment. In 2020, they were seen doing it again. When she went to Town Hall the Mayor and Councilman Shortway made fun of her for reporting it. The Vernon Eagles has 14 residents to help clean up the stream. You can't tell if a stream is contaminated by just looking at it. Shrubs/wood chips take root and narrow the stream.

James Santonastaso welcomed Bonnie Tadrick. Thanked the board and appreciates what they do. With Tennessee Gas people do not know about all the problems.

Motion to close the meeting by Catherina Sawoszczyk, second by Craig Williams. All in favor.

**Commissioner Comments:**

Peg Distasi: Wants to know what is happening with the Black Creek landfill. DPW, what is their plan on clean up and storing. There has been no activity. We need to form a follow up committee. Millings and silt fence fell down and not put back up. We need to see if they are meeting requirements.

Diane Wexler: We need to learn about the DPW process

Peg Distasi: The landfill must be maintained, we are going to have children present. Bonnie Tadrick and Peg Distasi will work on it.

Peg Distasi mentioned logging on Canistear Road, Lake Laurel. She is concerned about flooding. Who do we go to?

Bonnie Tadrick: looking forward to working with Peg Distasi.

Catherina Sawoszcyk: has passed by and walked the entire site by Acme. Also, saw the Canistear logging, who and why the project? Why not contact the Town because it affects us all. She feels it is a good idea to attend Council meetings.

Diane Wexler: A great meeting, we will send the letter out, she will keep us posted on the progress with the Compressor Station.

**Adjournment:**

Craig Williams made the motion to adjourn the meeting, second by Bonnie Tadrick. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted:

Debbie Coulson

Recording Secretary