

Meeting Minutes

March 13, 2014
7:30 PM
Conference Room D

Mt Lebanon Environmental Sustainability Advisory Board

Attendees:

Andrew Baram
Patrick Eberz
Maria Joseph
Pam Scott
Abby Moryz-Lawmor, Mt. Lebanon Environmental Team
Bonnie Cross, Staff Liaison & Assistant to the Manager
Elaine Cappucci, School District Liaison
Commissioner Fraasch Fraasch, Commission Liaison

Absent:

Kathleen Hrabovsky
Matt Hoover

High School Students:

No high school student liaisons were present at this meeting.

Others in Attendance:

David Huston, resident

Call to order: The official meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by Acting Chairperson Andrew Baram.

Public Comment: No members of the public commented at the meeting.

Approval of February Meeting Minutes: Due to the change in municipal staff liaisons, the draft of the February minutes was unavailable for review. At the suggestion of the school district liaison, approval of the February minutes was tabled to the April meeting.

Special Presentations: MELANIE PFEIFFENBERGER, of PRC (Pennsylvania Resources Council) presented PRC programs that strive to increase recycling in commercial businesses, institutions, and multi-family units. Melanie explained that PRC is working through a grant to increase awareness and participation in recycling among Mt. Lebanon businesses and multi-family dwellings. She has met with Beverly Road merchants and will continue to meet and speak with other businesses.

Andrew asked what success PRC had, given that it is an added expense to recycle. Melanie explained that she tries to assist by looking for economies of scale, e.g., businesses in a given area sharing in the expense.

School Board Business

Elaine had nothing new to report. Andrew questioned why Carl Salemi, District Facilities Manager, was not moving forward on the food composting at the middle schools. Also mentioned was that there was currently no ESB member from the School Board. (I am not sure what this comment is regarding that there is no ESB member from the School Board?) Elaine said that she would check on these issues.

Commission Business

Pay-As-You-Throw: Andrew discussed the meeting for March 17, from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. with Steve Lisauskas from WasteZero. Commissioner Fraasch will meet with Steve Lisauskas prior to the meeting and show him around Mt. Lebanon. Andrew felt that PAYT would save the community a lot of money and the main thing standing in the way is resistance to change.

Artificial Turf Update: Commissioner Fraasch advised that there had been no discussion of turf at the recent Commission meeting. She has been in discussion with some residents that are members of the Sierra Club regarding the artificial turf. One of the members shared a water run-off map. She advised that since it had been voted on, there will be a turf field; the only question is what type of fill there will be and that she is advocating organic. Andrew asked about more funding for the organic and Commissioner Fraasch suggested the possibility of money from the unassigned fund balance.

Maria stated that the Sierra Club members in Mt. Lebanon would be willing to put on educational programs to inform the residents about artificial turf. Maria and Pam will work on the educational component and keep the group informed.

Commissioner Fraasch reported that the statement from the ESB that was given to the Commission at the 2/24 meeting regarding the artificial turf would not be put on the municipal website. The group discussed this and decided that no further action needed to be taken since the statement was included in the Commission minutes.

Deer Management: Commissioner Fraasch advised that contrary to what had been believed, Pennsylvania has no prohibition against deer sterilization. The cost to cull is \$600-900/deer; to sterilize, about \$1,000/deer. There is grant money available. Other jurisdictions that obtained it ended up paying nothing. Since the Commission in general is hesitant about culling, this may be an alternative.

Robb Hollow Park: Commissioner Fraasch updated the members on the Commission meeting of March 11, 2014. As background, she explained that for two years, Mt. Lebanon has been working on the Public Works (PW) facility. The 2012 Recreation bond was intended to cover the golf course, Robb Hollow, the pool and PW, but the pool came in over budget and there wasn't sufficient money to cover the other items. Some money was given to provide a master plan meant to get the PW facility organized. From the consultant report at the 3/11/14 meeting, it has morphed into a huge project of \$8.6 million. Commissioner Fraasch stated that she requested that a budget be designated to limit the size of the project, but isn't sure she has the support to do this. She is also concerned that the plan takes PWs much further down than intended, and that the longer this is delayed, the longer that Robb Hollow will be delayed.

Commissioner Fraasch also brought up the issue of a group that is concerned that the flower beds throughout the municipality are not being kept up. It was questioned why there was no Parks Director and Commissioner Fraasch said that this might be something that needs to be questioned. Andrew asked that the group be kept informed.

ESB Business

Revisions to ESB Mission, Duties, Membership, and Accomplishments Update: Commissioner Fraasch explained that the Commission members reached out to their liaisons regarding this information. Commissioner Fraasch had met with Maria and Kathy and compiled a draft mission statement and website information that was sent out to the board members for review. The other boards had only looked at mission statements and not their web presence as a whole, so the ESB was ahead in reviewing this. She suggested that a formal vote be taken on the mission statement, as well as whether to consider electing a co-chair.

The members discussed the mission statement and felt that there was not enough information to make a decision at this meeting. The members requested that the staff liaison research the original mission statement for the next meeting.

Andrew then questioned the members regarding whether they felt a co-chair was needed. After discussion, it was agreed that it made sense to have someone designated to conduct the meeting in the absence of a chair. Maria nominated Andrew as co-chair; Abby seconded. Andrew was unanimously voted as co-chair.

ESB Member Terms

(Mention of this was at the beginning of the meeting under the 'School Board business.)

ESB Award 2014

Three candidates were discussed: Bob Hedin, Susan Stamatov and Robert Doherty.

Environmental Team Update: Abby reported that the Earth Day Planning was in full swing. The final selection for the poster contest was very good and would be appearing in the magazine and in posters around town. She is working to secure vendors. Commissioner Fraasch requested that a ribbon-cutting ceremony be included for a new swing that was donated by Mt. Lebanon Partnership for developmentally disabled children; Abby responded that she was aware of this and is coordinating it. She is also very excited that the new website is up.

Also mentioned was Zaheen Hussein, who is starting a new program to help communities form a climate action plan. Mt. Lebanon already has one. Additionally, he is working to assist families that don't qualify for utility assistance funding in getting grant money for heating repairs.

Abby provided an update regarding the High School. Boxes had been provided for recycling writing utensils. In addition, for Earth Day, the high school would be bringing bugs and dirt for the kids to play with.

Grant Opportunity Update

Andrew questioned what grant submissions were underway. The staff liaison reported that the information had been sent earlier to Kathy and Commissioner Fraasch, and that this information would be forwarded to the other members.

Andrew also mentioned the alternative fuel vehicles grant through DEP and asked whether the municipality could be involved. Per Tom Kelly, Public Works Director, retrofitting the equipment would void the warranty with the manufacturers.

New Business

There was no new business.

Adjournment: At 9:30 p.m. Maria made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Patrick and unanimously approved.