

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
January 12, 2022 8:00 p.m.

Commissioner Torri Van Wie called the Regular and Reorganization Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. Commissioners were present at this virtual meeting by way of Zoom. Mrs. Van Wie read aloud the Statement of Adequate Notice. All legal notices have been posted for this meeting.

Ms. Holler, a notary public, swore in the following to serve new terms on the Environmental Commission:

Susan Robertson
Joseph Treloar

Yana Doyle will be sworn in at the next meeting.

The roll call was taken:

Name	Present	Absent
Torri Van Wie	X	
Pat Soteropoulos	X	
Rozella Clyde	X	
Joseph Treloar	X	
Ben Lampert		X
Yana Doyle		X
Susie Robertson	X	
Council Member Jocelyn Mathiasen	X	
Liz Holler, Recording Secretary	X	

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

Dr. Clyde made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 8, 2021 meeting as amended. Mr. Treloar seconded the motion. The minutes of December 8, 2021 were approved as amended.

Annual Resolutions for the Commission

Resolution #22-01

Mr. Treloar made a motion to approve the 2022 Meeting Dates for the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission as listed in Resolution #22-01. Dr. Clyde seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. Resolution #22-01 was unanimously approved.

Resolution #22-02

Dr. Clyde made a motion to approve the designation of the official newspapers for the publication of legal notices for the Environmental Commission for the year 2022. Mr. Treloar seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. Resolution #22-02 was unanimously approved.

Resolution #22-03

Dr. Clyde nominated Torri Van Wie to serve as Chairman of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission for the year 2022 and Patricia Soteropoulos as Vice Chairman. Mr. Treloar seconded the motion. A voice was taken. Resolution #22-03 was unanimously approved.

Discussion Items

Chrmn. Van Wie reported that she and Vice Chrmn. Soteropoulos had met with Mayor Kobylarz in December to discuss initiatives. Mayor Kobylarz was receptive with the Commission bringing these initiatives forward to the Borough Council. Chrmn. Van Wie reported that she will give a presentation on the goal for energy hopefully at the first or second Borough Council Meeting in February. She is working on a time slot for this presentation with Borough Administrator Steve Williams.

Dr. Clyde felt that it would be very important for the Environmental Commission to give at least one presentation a year to the Mayor and Borough Council.

Borough Council

Council Member Mathiasen noted that she and Council Member Dempsey were recently sworn in to serve another term on the Borough Council. No major business was done at the Reorganization Meeting, just administration of oaths and appointments. The budget process has begun. Council Member Karen Koronkiewicz will now be serving as Chairman of Budget and Finance. Council Member Mathiasen reported that there had been no major changes regarding the Council's Committee appointments.

Dr. Clyde asked how much time would the Commission have to submit the requests they would like to see included in the budget.

Council Member Mathiasen answered that the Commission should try and have those items ready by their next EC meeting.

Chrmn. Van Wie and Mrs. Van Wie discussed the status of possible grant money for charging stations to be installed in the Borough. Progress is moving a little slow with that project, possibly because of Covid.

Dr. Clyde said that she would still like to see EV chargers installed at the Public Works Plant and Borough Hall. She recommended these chargers be included in the Commission's budget requests this year. The EV chargers should be in place before electric powered vehicles join the municipal fleet.

Council Member Mathiasen agreed with this suggestion. The EV charger would help with any hybrid vehicles the Borough may purchase in the future. She asked Mr. Treloar if he could create a spreadsheet on what it would cost to install a run-of-the-mill, not metered charger, that a Borough employee could plug into.

Mr. Treloar agreed he could make such a spreadsheet; however, he felt an installation like this would cost a lot less than a charging station obtained with the grant money. Perhaps two stations could be installed. Mr. Treloar also agreed to attach a short memo to go with the spreadsheet, reporting the costs of these types of EV chargers.

Council Member Mathiasen suggested the Commission first send an email to Ms. Fornaro, the Borough CFO, reminding her that the Environmental Commission usually has a budget request of such and such amount; however, this year it may extend beyond that amount for a certain item. The Finance Committee will then look it over. Council Member Mathiasen reminded Commissioners that it will be a very tight financial year for the Borough. She cannot promise all the budget items will be approved: however, it's a good idea to at least ask. She will forward the CFO's email to the Commission.

Planning Board Liaison Report

Chrmn. Van Wie reported that she and the Planning Board had recently discussed the EC's goals for the new year – to create more renewable energy and to pursue the Sustainable Jersey's Gold Star in Energy. She was met with a little push-back; however, the majority of the Board members were receptive to the idea of

installing solar panels wherever possible. Chrmn. Van Wie had pointed out to them that most energy reduction is a result of the installation of solar panels.

Chrmn. Van Wie stated that she would also like a conversation be started with the Planning Board about taking another look at the Borough's Master Plan. She would like Dr. Clyde to be part of that conversation. Chrmn. Van Wie will email Planning Board Chrmn. Favate and the Board's Planner, Kendra Lelie, to arrange a side conversation about this matter.

Mr. Treloar discussed what he recently found out about developer's fees. Some Planning Board members had expressed concerns about these fees when Chrmn. Van Wie had given her EC goals and objectives to the Board.

Dr. Clyde pointed out that Madison Borough has an environmental inventory that is given out to all the planners. It is not mandatory, but it raises the discussion. She encouraged Commissioners to look at this environmental check-list which is available on Rosenet. Dr. Clyde will send copies of the check-list to all Commissioners.

Mr. Treloar asked Council Member Mathiasen for any news on the Borough's garbage contract.

Council Member Mathiasen answered that the Borough's current garbage approach has been extended for 18 months. This extension will allow the Borough to make a good RFP to provide the Borough good information on what the options and costs would be.

Council Member Mathiasen gave an update on the Borough's recycling situation. Some money is now coming in from collected paper. A future meeting will be held between the Borough and MUA to talk about better recycling enforcement.

Council Member Mathiasen reported that the Borough Clerk, Tamar Lawful, has recently resigned.

On other matters, Commissioners briefly discussed composting for the communities and how to get the word out. Mr. Treloar suggested letting the residents know the basics of composting on their properties, like the disposing of coffee grounds. Perhaps a flyer could be organized on that topic or a table could be set up to inform the public about self-composting.

MadChat Updates

Chrmn. Van Wie brought up the possibility of the Mayors of Chatham Borough and Madison come together to meet with Rachel Erlach who is both a Madison Council Member and an architect who has done net developments. She felt it would be a good move to know how large developments can be done in a net zero fashion. Chrmn. Van Wie and Madison Council Member Rachel Ehrlich will continue working together on that conversation.

Related to the net zero development, Chrmn. Van Wie reported that a meeting should be set up with State Assembly representatives to discuss what options there would be to lobby for better building standards. Currently there are not many options for the Boards and Commissions to ask for better standards. They cannot go beyond the State mandates.

Chrmn. Van Wie noted that there were also conversations about collaborating possibly with Madison and Westfield about banning two stroke gas engines. Washington DC has now put such a ban in place. Chrmn. Van Wie recommended that this two stroke ban be done like the plastic bag ban – having a number of towns involved at the same time. Chrmn Van Wie pointed out that it is very important for the DPW to take the lead on this. Council Member Mathaisen felt it would help to have some brain-storming done with the Department heads on this situation. Spread-sheets could be done to see where emissions could be cut back.

Climate Action Resolution

Ms. Soteropoulos and Mr. Treloar discussed the wording “electrification of heating systems” in the resolution. Ms. Soteropoulos felt that wording would sound scary to residents. Mr. Treloar explained that this wording comes from the State of New Jersey, not the municipality. It will not force residents to make any changes to their heating systems.

Chrmn. Van Wie made a motion to approve the Climate Action Resolution. Dr. Clyde seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye. The Climate Action Resolution was approved.

Chrmn. Van Wie will send this resolution to the Borough Administrator, Steve Williams, with a note reporting that the EC had approved this resolution on this date and requests that the Borough Council adopt this resolution as soon as possible. Mayor Kobylarz and Council Member Mathiasen should be copied in on this message.

Dr. Clyde reported that Madison Borough passed its Climate Action Resolution last week.

Chrmn. Van Wie reported that she and Dr. Clyde and others have been working on a Climate Action template. It may be something Sustainable Jersey may want to leverage as a tool in their activities. This template will be available to everyone. It will provide spreadsheets for towns to do calculations and watch the progress they make improving activities like emissions reductions. Chrmn. Van Wie will distribute the final version of the template to the Commissioners.

Gold Star Energy

Chrmn. Van Wie noted that one of the achievements to obtain the Gold Star is to have municipal operations drop 3.6 per cent a year for 3 years. Proof has to be submitted to show the municipal operations are dropping to that extent. Another goal is to make the town electric friendly. Chrmn. Van Wie suggested certain Commissioners who match up with assignments that they are familiar with. She volunteered to work on the goal of making the Borough more solar friendly. Mr. Treloar offered to partner with Chrmn. Van Wie on that assignment. Chrmn. Van Wie brought up the goal for residential energy efficiency outreach. Perhaps Mrs. Doyle, Mrs. Robertson, and Dr. Clyde would be interested in working on this initiative. Related to this, Chrmn. Van Wie reported that she will be attending a meeting on January 19th about solar paneling being installed at the sewage treatment plant. Mrs. Robertson will attend this meeting with Chrmn. Van Wie. This would help with the initiative to make the town more solar friendly. Commissioners discussed the possibility of installing solar panels in the parking lot at Shepard Kollock Park.

At 9:15 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission Meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 10, 2022, 8:00 p.m. It will be a virtual meeting.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary

