

CHATHAM BOROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

January 9, 2019

8:00 p.m.

Commissioner Kate Murphy called this Regular Meeting of the Chatham Borough Environmental Commission to order at 8:00 p.m. in Room 212, middle level, Chatham Borough Hall. Mrs. Murphy announced that all legal notices had been posted for this meeting.

Name	Present	Absent
Kate Murphy	X	
Ben Lampert	X	
Patricia Soteropoulos	X	
Kevin Murphy	X	
Torri Van Wie	X	
Joseph Treloar	X	
Kyle Muir	X	
Len Resto	X	
Council Member Jocelyn Mathiasen		X
Liz Holler – Minutes Secretary	X	

Administration of the Oaths of Office

The following Commissioners were sworn in to serve a new term on the Environmental Commission: Joseph Treloar and Kate Murphy. Len Resto had been sworn in as a Commissioner at the Chatham Borough Reorganization Meeting on January 3rd.

Reorganization Resolutions for 2019

Resolution #19-01: Resolution establishing the Commission's Annual Meeting Schedule for 2019

Mr. Murphy made a motion to approve Resolution #19-01. Mrs. Van Wie seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. Resolution #19-01 was unanimously approved.

Resolution #19-02: Resolution designating the Official Newspapers for the Publication of Legal Notices for the Year 2019

Mr. Murphy made a motion to approve Resolution #19-02. Mr. Resto seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. Resolution #19-02 was unanimously approved.

Resolution #19-03: Resolution electing the Commission's Officers for 2019:

Mr. Lampert made a motion to approve the following slate of Commission Officers for 2019:

Chairman: Len Resto

Vice Chairman: Kate Murphy

Ms. Soteropoulos seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. Resolution #19-03 was unanimously approved.

Regarding Resolution #19-01, Mr. Resto pointed out that there will be a conflict for the starting time of the September 11th meeting. A ceremony is usually held at the 9/11 Memorial Garden that evening. Mr. Resto made a motion to move the meeting time of the EC meeting for September 11, 2019 to 8:15 p.m. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken. All Commissioners present voted aye.

Motion to Adopt Meeting Minutes

The meeting minutes of December 12, 2018 were approved as amended.

In reference to an item in the December 12th minutes, Mr. Treloar explained how smart grids operated.

Reports/Pending Business

Planning Board

Mr. Muir reported that the Planning Board held their Reorganization Meeting on January 2nd. No applications were heard that night. The January 16th Planning Board meeting has been cancelled.

Borough Council

Mr. Resto reported that the Borough Council held its Annual Reorganization Meeting on January 7th. It was very well attended.

Organic Landscaping on Borough Property

Ms. Soteropoulos summarized an email that she had received from Mr. Dey. Mr. Dey reported that Mr. Torello, Director of Public Works, has received the Borough soil sample analysis from Rutgers Extension. The three fields that were tested showed alkaline, not acidic. These results are different from the tests conducted by Lincoln Landscaping. Also, Borough Administrator Steve Williams will be setting up a meeting with Mr. Torello, Rich Young from Chatham Twp., Carol Nauta from the Bd. of Recreation, to discuss best practices for organic lawn care. Mr. Dey will notify the Commission when the date of this meeting will be established.

Mr. Dey also had reported that Mr. Torello had provided him with the testing area of each field. A map of each field will also be provided. Also, the NJ Chapter of the Northeast Organic Farming Association had sent Mr. Dey a list of the New Jersey based companies that have been certified by NOFA. Unfortunately, most of these companies that are not near Chatham. However, Mr. Dey will recommend two other companies could be approached, besides Lincoln Landscaping. The Best Practices meeting with Borough Administrator Williams will focus on the correct procedures.

Mr. Murphy asked what the Borough Council had approved for the treatment of Borough properties.

Mr. Resto answered that the Borough Council approved Mr. Dey's recommendation for obtaining an RFP for a landscaping company that will not do chemical treatments on Borough properties.

Close to this topic, Mr. Resto reported that he had contacted Administrator Steve Williams today about the trees that had recently been truncated by JCP & L at Shepard Kollock Park. Three ash trees, close to the riverbank, had been chopped down by JCP & L. If the river overflows, Mr. Resto felt the tree-choppings will become floating logs. Mr. Resto also pointed out that the trees, along the trail, that had been trimmed and cut by JCP & L only had a very remote chance of reaching the power-lines.

Mr. Treloar pointed out that it can be very expensive to treat ash trees. If an ash tree becomes infected, it will become a hazard with limbs that could easily fall and hurt people and buildings. The diagnosis of a diseased ash tree can also be costly.

Community Solar

Mr. Resto reported that he had received a letter from the state DEP talking about what they are doing with solar and the different grants that are available. However, no date was noted in the letter.

Relating to this letter, Chrwmn. Murphy recalled that last May the Clean Energy Act was enacted. Any town can decide whether they want to install solar paneling over a parking lot or on a field not in use or on roofs. This would involve a 3-year pilot program which would start in early 2019. A town would have to apply for this program.

Mr. Resto felt that the grounds of the Joint Sewer Plant Facility would be a perfect location for a solar panel installation.

Commissioners discussed the costs involved with installing paneling in the Borough, plus such an installation would have to be where tree canopies don't exist.

Mrs. Murphy noted that there is webinar available on this subject.

Mrs. Van Wie suggested a meeting be organized to include surrounding towns to talk about this energy aggregation component, but also the plastic bag issue. Mrs. Van Wie felt it would have to be decided whether solar installations would be viable financially for people and benefit them in the long run.

Mrs. Murphy reminded Commissioners that this pilot program will begin very soon. She will listen to a new webinar coming out soon on this matter. Mr. Resto expressed an interest in also watching the webinar.

On other matters, Mrs. Murphy reported that she had attended a Chatham Township Environmental Commission meeting last night. A presentation was given on discouraging local businesses from using plastic bags. Mrs. Murphy suggested a regional effort be done to ban the use of plastic grocery bags.

Mr. Resto reported that the Chatham Township Presbyterian Church from noon to 3 p.m. this Saturday, will be collecting used Styrofoam.

Mrs. Murphy announced that on Tuesday, February 19th, the Chatham Twp. Environmental Commission is having a speaker who will discuss the ins and outs of recycling. The Township Environmental Commission is asking the Borough Environmental Commission if they would like to participate in this event. Mrs. Murphy pointed out that a Green Team meeting is scheduled the same night.

The Borough Commissioners indicated they would like to participate. Mr. Resto felt that Susie Robertson, a Green Team member, would definitely be interested in this presentation by the Township.

Related to this topic, Commissioners discussed the recent problem of plastic bags contaminating the town's recycling. Unfortunately, residents have been putting plastic bags in with the approved items of recycling.

Mrs. Murphy reported that the Chatham Borough Commission has been asked to co-host an ANJEC event in Madison. Assemblyman John McKeon is going to speak on plastic. Commissioners agreed to co-host this event.

Mrs. Van Wie offered to work on a flier reminding residents not to put plastic bags in regular garbage. Residents should be informed that plastic bags can mess up the recycling process and costs additional dollars to taxpayers.

Facebook Page

Mr. Lampert reported that things on Facebook have been quiet. He responded to an inquiry about Christmas tree recycling from a Chatham Twp. resident.

Mr. Lampert noted that the Chatham Township's Recycling website is very attractive, and well-organized. Perhaps the Borough Commission could update their webpage in the future.

Mr. Resto stated he will arrange for a meeting with Susie Robertson and Borough Administrator Steve Williams to work on the Recycle Coach for Chatham Borough. Mr. Resto pointed out that Recycle Coach really needs to be promoted.

Pilgrim Pipeline

Mr. Resto reported that the Municipal Pipeline Group is trying to organize a meeting with DEP Commissioner McCabe. The Commissioner did not respond to the Municipal Pipeline's first letter.

Mr. Resto had a press release from the DEP for Mr. Treloar. This article was about grants for electric chargers for cars.

At 9:02 p.m. the meeting adjourned.

The next Chatham Borough Environmental Commission meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 13, 2019, 8:00 p.m., Room 212, Chatham Borough Hall.

Respectfully submitted:

Liz Holler
Recording Secretary

cc: Mayor Bruce Harris
Chatham Township Environmental Commission