

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
October 5, 2023**

Attendees: EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair), Ben Guthrie (Secretary), Katie Trembler, Vibhor Kumar (Virtual), Mike Topping (Virtual), Mandy Tolino (Virtual)
Guests/Community Members: Councilwoman Kiera Wilhelm, Doug Roysdon, Jane Cook, Sam Randall, Steve Olshevski (Virtual), Elke Rockwell (Virtual), Lisa Pammer (Virtual).

Call to Order – 7:00 PM

- 1. Welcome**
- 2. Approval of minutes (September):** Motion by Katie Trembler, seconded by Mike Topping. Approved unanimously.
- 3. Bethlehem City’s Large Organizations and Institutions and Public Engagement CAP Committees (Angela Stein):**
 - a. Large Organizations and Institutions Committee** - Working regionally to establish a Lehigh Valley Green Ribbon Commission. Goal would be to pull together large organizations such as hospitals, universities, and large employers to work on climate issues.
 - b. Public Engagement Committee** - The CAP Annual Meeting is planned for November 15th at 9:00 AM in Town Hall. Will be livestreamed for those unable to attend in person. Each committee will provide updates to the public on recent and ongoing efforts. Following that meeting, the city will be launching the first ever Bethlehem climate challenge. The challenge will be run through the We Build Bethlehem website.
- 4. Chair’s comments and amendments to agenda**
 - a. Climate Action Plan Education Grant** - The Nurture Nature Center has received a grant to work with Bethlehem and Easton to assist with implementation of the climate action plans. Their focus is on educational programming.
 - b. Tour of Recycling Center** - EAC members have been invited to a rescheduled tour of the recycling center and yard waste center on Monday, October 30 at 9:00 AM.
 - c. EAC Network Fall Gathering** - Will be held at West Chester University on October 21, 2023.
- 5. Board comments and announcements**
 - a. Park cleanup at McNamara Park (Katie Trembler)** - There is a park cleanup scheduled this Saturday, organized by Community Action Development
- 6. Committee reports**
 - a. Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (Jane Cook)** – Work was recently completed at the Southside Greenway Meadow to clear the rock-paved perimeter around the garden and to reset the large stones that define that perimeter along the grassy

edge. The Hoover Mason Trestle at the Steel Stacks is lush now with the asters in full bloom along with the goldenrod and brown-eyed Susans. The next garden bed work session will be on October 10 at 10:00 AM.

- b. Green Committee (Lynn Rothman on behalf of Ben Felzer)** – The next (virtual) committee meeting will be on Tuesday, September 12.
- c. Bird Town PA (Vibhor Kumar)** – There is a mini-grant opportunity for \$500 if any EAC members or committees have project ideas.
- d. Waste Reduction Committee (Katie Trembler)** – No report
- e. Transportation Committee (Ben Guthrie)** - Ben and Steve attended the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study meeting on September 20th. Two items of note to the EAC were discussed: an update to the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and an EPA grant through the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant funding program. There is a follow up meeting at the LVPC office on October 18th. Ben also suggested that the EAC submit a comment on the LRTP in support of projects that support the goals of the CAP.

7. External committee reports

- a. Monocacy Creek Watershed Association (Jane Cook)** – MCWA installed improved deer protection fencing and mulch on the trees at Monocacy Meadows that were planted a couple of years ago. On October 4, the MCWA finished planting native perennial flowers along the terraces below the overlook at Gertrude Fox Conservation Area. The severe windstorm in September resulted in three large trees being blown down onto the trail at Gertrude Fox. Northampton County is hoping to clear away the huge branches, but it will take a while to get that done.
- b. Saucon Creek Watershed Association (Mike Topping)** – Wildlands Conservancy will be planting 700 native trees on Thursday, October 12 from 9:00 to 12:00 and 1:00 to 4:00. The SCWA recently sent letters to municipalities along the corridor seeking contributions. They have not yet received a response.
- c. City Council (Councilwoman Kiera Wilhelm)** - Cafe the Lodge will be installing a new garden and may be looking for community support. If there are any future environmental initiatives.?
- d. CTAC (Lynn Rothman)** - There have been seven pedestrian safety events this year where the City partnered with the police to issue tickets or warnings to drivers that did not yield to pedestrians. The bike share program has lent out 107 bikes so far this year.

8. Old business

- a. Climate Action Plan (Lynn Rothman)** - At the last Environmental Justice Committee meeting they discussed ongoing efforts including native plant installations and improvements to Saucon Park.
- b. Water Fountains (Lynn Rothman)** - A modern water fountain with bottle filler was recently installed at Fairview Park. The installation serves as a pilot project for future installations in the city. The estimated cost is \$2,500 for purchase and \$2,500 for installation. This was a follow up to input provided through citizen

comment to the EAC and EAC representatives meeting with representatives from Dept. of Public Works.

9. New business - None

10. Citizen's comments

- a. Bethlehem Landfill (Doug Roysdon)** - Doug asked if the EAC can make inquiries to the city regarding the city's official stance on the landfill expansion in Lower Saucon.

11. Next Meeting

- a. Meeting Date** – November 2, 2023

12. Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Ben Guthrie, Secretary