

Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council
General Meeting
February 6, 2020

Attendees: EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair), Mike Topping (Vice Chair), Elisabeth Cichonski (Secretary), Beth Behrend, Brian Nicas, Ben Felzer, Ben Guthrie, Lily Eyvazzadeh, Dan Eyvazzadeh, Martha Christine (Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife [BBFW], Citizen's Climate Lobby [CCL]), Kathy Fox (Bethlehem Food Co-op), Doug Roysdon, Josie Miserendino (Waste Reduction Committee [WRC]), Katharine Targett Gross (Lehigh University [LU]), Karen Berry, Elke Rockwell (WRC), Ed Gallagher (Gadfly)

Call To Order @ 7:06 PM.

1. **Approval of minutes (January):** Motion to approve the minutes made by Brian N. and seconded by Ben G. The January Minutes were approved unanimously.

2. **Place citizens' comments on agenda**
 - a. **Doug Roysdon: Ice House Programs:** Doug runs the Ice House Tonight series, up to 100 local performers/organizations (environmental and cultural topics). He asked the EAC if there are any topics that members might like to speak on. He suggested presentations on plastics and updates on the City's Climate Action Plan. The PA plastic bag ban will be lifted in July (July 1), so the presentation on plastics will tentatively be scheduled for August. The EAC will send a letter to the City to remind them of the state-wide ban being lifted. Doug would like to form a committee to discuss topics to bring to the Ice House, and get the word out to other organizations about Ice House topics/forums/performances. Lynn requested a motion to approve the formation of a committee to work with Doug Roysdon to develop topics to present at the Ice House. Beth made a motion, seconded by Brian. The EAC will touch base with the City/WSP and ask when they are ready to present an update on the City's Climate Action Plan.
 - b. **The Nurture Nature Center** is showing a series of movies as part of their film series: Imagined Futures, Global and Local. The next movie, *Save Our Lands, Save Our Towns* will be played on Saturday, February 29, 2020 at 1 PM. *The Biggest Little Farm* will be shown on Thursday, March 26th, 2020 at 6:30 PM.
 - c. The Pollinators movie will be on February 19th at 7:30 PM. The Care for Creation committee met the critical mass required to bring this film to Arts Quest. Tickets are still available.
 - d. Citizens Climate Lobby (CCL) submitted a draft resolution to support the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act, which they would like to present at City Council. The Allentown EAC endorsed this resolution prior to presenting this to City Council. Martha asked if the Bethlehem EAC could endorse CCL's draft resolution. Lynn requested a draft copy via email for EAC members to review prior to next meeting for approval.

3. **Chair's comments & amendments to agenda:** Councilman Reynolds has been reappointed as liaison to the EAC.
The EAC sends our condolences to Councilman Reynolds and his family on the passing of his father.
The EAC Network Conference is Saturday, May 2, 2020 in Upper Merion Township. Lynn will be speaking on the best practices panel and will be speaking in an afternoon break-out session. Other members from the EAC are invited to attend. Registration information will be distributed once Lynn receives it.

The Water We Share Friendship Dinner in partnership with Lehigh Dialogue Center, Lehigh Conference of Churches, the Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley and the Sierra Club will be held on Feb. 20 at 5:30 PM at the Jewish Community Center of the Lehigh Valley.

4. Board comments and announcements:

The Lehigh River Stocking Association is concerned about the watershed issue relating to NYC.

The shad tournament (\$20,000) prize will be on April 23-26th in Easton.

Northampton County conservation school will be held from July 12-18 this summer for age 13-17. Campers should have some introduction to biology prior to attending.

Several EAC and BBFW members met with David Shaffer to discuss the City's tree inventory. Mr. Shaffer's primary goal is to get the tree inventory up to date. Currently, the City wants interns to do this work, but it may be too extensive. The purpose of the tree inventory is to count the number and species of street trees. Bethlehem is a Tree City so we should be maintaining our data on our trees. David is currently getting quotes from contractors to survey trees in Bethlehem and will present the quotes to the city upon receipt. The EAC was able to find matching grants for him to apply for. Elke requested that the EAC share more information on the tree replacement process on our pages (permit application process, tree selection, etc.). Brian recommended checking on the City's website. All agreed this could be a good topic of discussion at the Ice House. Ben F. will be speaking at the Sierra Club meeting on Monday, Feb. 10th about air pollution in the Lehigh Valley.

5. Committee reports:

- a. **Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife (BBFW):** BBFW met on January 17 with Darlene Heller (Director, Planning & Zoning), Matt Dorner (Chief Engineer), David Shaffer (City Forester) and Chris Brown (landscape architect) to develop an outline of a schedule for the Rose Garden grant. They discussed what the City could do in-house and what would need to be contracted out. They plan to begin renovations by removing concrete and macadam at the Rose Garden beginning in August. At the BBFW meeting on 2/7 a schedule for maintenance along the Greenway and Hoover Mason Trestle will be developed.
- b. **Waste Reduction Committee:** The Waste Reduction Committee met twice to discuss the Restaurant Waste Reduction Task Force, and decided last week that the group's objective would be to identify restaurants that are shifting to more sustainable practices, and follow the Green Restaurant Standard to create a pilot program and find ways to implement the Green Restaurant Standard in Bethlehem. This will likely require the group to find a non-profit who will support the study and program long-term. Other steps in this process will be to refine a set of survey questions from a prior student research paper and investigate opportunities to educate restaurant Owners.

6. External committee reports:

- a. **City Council: No report**
- b. **Planning:** The EAC is still trying to get on a schedule with the Planning/Zoning department so plans can be reviewed and comments made by the EAC prior to approval at the Planning Board Meetings. Lynn has invited Tracy Samuelson

from Planning/Zoning to attend one of our EAC meetings. Unfortunately, in the state of Pennsylvania, a member of the EAC cannot be on the Zoning Hearing Board.

- c. **Zoning:** No report.

7. Unfinished business:

- a. **Website:** Brian has created a website for the EAC using square space (bethlehemeac.org). The minutes, bylaws, projects we are working on, calendar of related events, letters that we have written, contacts for recycling, City Forester, etc. have been uploaded as well as bios for each EAC member. Brian made a motion to go live, seconded by Mike. Lynn will call the City tomorrow to ask them if they can put a link to our new website on the City's homepage. The City was fully supportive and has paid for the yearly hosting fee (\$144) and domain name (\$16) outside of EAC's yearly budget of \$150. We appreciate their support of our new web page.
- b. **EAC Committees:** The EAC is looking for help with the various committees. Kathy was chair of the solar committee, but must step down due to her roles in another organization. Ben F. is interested in becoming part of the Green committee and CAP.
- c. **Lehigh Valley EAC Network Gathering March 11:** Meeting will be held at 7:00 pm at Illick's Mill. All EAC members in the Lehigh Valley have been invited to attend.

8. New business:

- a. **Student letters:** Ed Gallagher (Gadfly), Kathy Fox, Elisabeth and Bill George of Touchstone theater have formed a group to review papers submitted at Festival Unbound: Sustainability Forum in hopes of connecting students with community activist groups to create projects or to share their pieces at a public meeting. Ideas are still preliminary and the group is working on reading through the 180+ papers. The next meeting will be held on February 14th.
- b. **EAC logo:** Members of the EAC are interested in an updated logo for the EAC. Brian suggested that the EAC invite members of the community to submit art. The EAC will provide specifications. Martha suggested contacting the Charter School for the Arts, the Vo-tech, NCC, and high schools in the area. Perhaps the contestants could have their work presented at the Bethlehem Public Library also. Brian and Elisabeth will work on specifications for the logo and outreach.

9. Agenda for next meeting

Meeting Adjourned @ 8:32 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Elisabeth Cichonski, Secretary