

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council**  
**General Meeting**  
**August 1, 2019**

Attendees: EAC Members: Lynn Rothman (Chair), Mike Topping (Vice Chair), Elisabeth Cichonski (Secretary), Brian Hillard, Beth Behrend, Brian Nicas.

Martha Christine (Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife [BBFW]), Mike Halbfoerster (City of Bethlehem-Director of Recycling), Jane Cook (Monocacy Creek Watershed Association [MCWA] & BBFW), Josie Miserendino, Elke Rockwell, Lauren Fosbenner (Lehigh University [LU]), Jackie Cook (LU), Karen Berry, Emily Freudenberger (Trail Tenders of the Lehigh Valley), Maya Elias (Liberty High School Environmental Conservation Club [LHSECC]), Brynn Szemenyei (LHSECC), Brian Treston, Ben Guthrie.

**Meeting called to order @ 7:00 PM**

1. **Approval of Minutes:** Motion to approve the minutes was made by Mike T., seconded by Brian N. The July minutes were approved unanimously.
2. **Citizens Comments:** The Congregation at Central Moravian Church is interested in helping the EAC/BBFW with community efforts such as the Hoover Mason Trestle clean-up and asked that we reach out to the them about similar events.  
The Greater Lehigh Valley Renewable Energy Expo will be held at DeSales University on Thursday, Aug. 22<sup>nd</sup> from 6-9 PM.  
Make the Road “Know Your Rights” will be presented on Aug. 19<sup>th</sup> from 6-8 PM at 347 N. 8<sup>th</sup> St. in Allentown.
3. **Chair’s comments:** After the last meeting we sent a letter to the Chair of the Bethlehem Parking Authority making recommendations for any new or existing parking garages.  
The YWCA Great Decisions event will be held on Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>. They have invited a representative from the Bethlehem EAC to talk about any recommendations or plans on how the City is addressing climate change.
4. **Board Comments:** There will be a presentation at the Bethlehem Public Library on Oct. 29<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM on plastics and their impact on our community. EAC member Beth Behrend will be speaking.  
On Aug. 17<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM, there will be a community cleanup along the Monocacy Creek where Musikfest is, near Sand Island up through Jordan Park, organized by the Monocacy Creek Watershed Association, in conjunction with others such as Trout Unlimited and the Bethlehem Food Co-Op. The rain date is Sunday 8/18 at the same time.  
The community MS4 meeting coordinated by the Northampton County Conservation District has been rescheduled from Sept.12<sup>th</sup> to Sept.5<sup>th</sup>.
5. **Committee Reports:**
  - a. BBFW: There are a few Hoover Mason Trestle cleanups scheduled: Aug. 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 AM and Aug. 28<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM. BBFW recently received approval to have signs made for the native pollinator gardens so visitors will know that they are maintained by BBFW. BBFW is having a photo contest—entries are due on Sep. 7<sup>th</sup>. The awards ceremony will be on Oct. 16<sup>th</sup>. There is also a youth category.
  - b. Community Energy Efficiency Initiative (CEEI): Brian H. met with Victoria Montero from the Hispanic Center. August 24<sup>th</sup> is Community Day. At this event, the Hispanic Center distributes backpacks with school supplies. Brian is working on a bi-lingual flyer with energy saving tips to put in the students’ backpacks.

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Martha suggested reaching out to PPL. She received some free LED light bulbs to send home with the kids who are attending Climate Camp. Brian T. suggested the PPL rebates program.

6. **External Committee reports:** None.

7. **Unfinished Business:**

- a. Climate Action Plan: The City budgeted for consultants to write a climate action plan. The EAC is currently reviewing these proposals.
- b. The Pennsylvania Pollinator Protection Plan (P4): The EAC discussed possible locations for a pilot pollinator garden. P4 is sponsored by PennDOT. PennDOT provides the plants, we provide people. Brian N. will confirm that the islands in the middle of Broad Street and on Pennsylvania Ave are both options for the pilot garden. Lynn will find out who we need to contact from the City to request planting pollinator gardens in these locations. BBFW requested to be kept in the loop about this project.
- c. Climate Action Network: There may be benefits to having a regional climate action network to provide a space for resources, education, and collaboration. Brian H. has been networking with other local EAC's to facilitate its development.

8. **Reorganizing Waste and Recycling at Sand Island: Maya Elisa and Brynn Szemenyei from Liberty High School Environmental Conservation Club (LHSECC)**

In the past, the Liberty High School Environmental Conservation Club has organized groups to pick up trash, collaborated with Trail Tenders, set up disposal/recycling for fishing line. Their goal is to put recycling bins on Sand Island, especially at the Ice House, playground, basketball and tennis courts, and at the picnic area at the tip of Sand Island. They noted that there is also no trash can at the picnic area, which is another improvement the club would like to make. They suggested labeling trash cans as "Landfill" instead of "Trash", so users become more conscious of how they dispose of their waste. The club is working to obtain grants and they are planning to fundraise or ask local businesses for donations to finance this project.

Mike H. provided some feedback on how trash and recycling is handled separately at the City under different contracts. The primary issue with recyclables is contamination. The first step to overcoming this is educating the public.

The LHSECC should consider attending a council meeting to voice their opinion.

The EAC recommended a follow-up study to determine how quickly the trash cans fill up to gather some baseline information and predict how frequently the recycling cans would need to be emptied. The EAC recommended sturdier cans with lids and suggested that the future recycling cans have round holes for bottles to minimize contaminants.

Mike H. suggested that the club start simple and evaluate the loads in each container (plastic, glass, aluminum) and provide containers for the most common loads, and add signage at each receptacle.

The EAC will post information from Mike H. and the LHSECC on Facebook.

Elke and Josie are putting together a video presentation on plastic pollution on Sept. 27<sup>th</sup> at the Unitarian Church and invited the Environmental Club at Liberty to come.

**Meeting Adjourned @ 8:30 PM.**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Elisabeth Cichonski, Secretary