

**Readington Township
Waterwatch Advisory Meeting Minutes
August 15, 2023**

OPEN MEETING

The meeting was called to order by Chair Orlandi at 7:08 p.m. stating that the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act have been met and that this meeting had been duly advertised.

Members in Attendance

Mario Orlandi – Chair
Steve Foster
Richard Geissler
Jonathan Heller
Lauren Huelsebusch
Marlene Orlandi
David Owen
Rene Rao

Absent

Agostino Pietrangelo

Minutes

It was moved and seconded, a motion to approve the minutes for June 27, 2023, as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Guest Speaker:

None

Committee Member Updates

Mr. Foster - No update to report.

Ms. Rao - The annual well testing program for October is getting set up. Since the Readington News will no longer be in existence starting in September, other avenues for communicating this to the residents need to be identified. The members discussed options available, including asking Raritan Headwaters Association (RHA) for assistance in reaching out to people via their email lists. Ms. Rao reported that there will be four (4) dates in October where test kits can be picked up and dropped off at the municipal building; there will be one (1) day for Three Bridges. RHA may offer a refresher course for volunteers.

Ms. Orlandi - Reported that she had a good conversation with Will Daly, the Civics teacher at Readington Middle School. Mr. Daly will be the resource members can work with to get students involved with municipal government. Members discussed ways to get students more involved. A possibility of having students volunteer with the well testing program was suggested.

Mr. Heller discussed the grant the township received for reforestation and the need for a large number of volunteers for planting trees. Ms. Orlandi will be including this opportunity next time she speaks with Will Daly.

Mr. Owen - Reported that the trails are all open and that four (4) of the noticeboards have been renovated.

Mr. Owen stated that there is a new act being put forward called the SHIP IT Act which will allow for an increase in the weight of trucks on all highways to help address supply chain issues. The Hunterdon County Commissioners intend to oppose it.

With regard to the Darts Mill property – RHA is now occupying their space. The document outlining the changes that were to be made that was prepared by Chair Orlandi was submitted to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and they have provided a written approval. Mr. Owen also reported that someone had sprayed Round Up at the mill ruin. Mr. Owen and Ms. Huelsebusch updated the members on the other buildings in the Darts Mill area.

Mr. Heller - Recommended requisitioning monies from Open Space, under stewardship funds, for activities/projects that need to be done by this committee, especially if the committee wants to send flyers to all Readington residents addressing well testing, water concerns, and septic issues. Members also discussed identifying grants that can be pursued.

Ms. Huelsebusch – Nothing further to report over what was shared during Mr. Owen’s update on Darts Mill.

Mr. Geisler - Nothing to report.

New/Other Business

Stream Monitoring – will start up again next year. Mr. Foster suggested offering training well before the actual stream monitoring is set to begin.

Kathy Hale – is a Principal Watershed Protection Specialist with NJ Water Supply Authority’s Watershed Protection Program Division. She wants to share what she does with the committee and what her organization does. She is looking to partner with Waterwatch and may have funding available to offer for projects.

Tree Planting Event – will take place along Chambers Brook in collaboration with RHA. There will be approximately 1,000 trees to be planted. A neighboring property owner will be allowing a parking area for the planting. A small number of volunteers will be needed to assist with the planting.

Tatiana Hlinka – a sophomore at Hunterdon Central High School and president of the school’s environmental commission, reached out to Chair Orlandi to inquire how she can become involved with Waterwatch. Members discussed options including making her a junior

member on the committee. This would allow her to act as a liaison to other students. It was suggested that Chair Orlandi send her an official invitation to the September Waterwatch Committee meeting.

Comments

Mr. Heller reported that he would reach out to Ms. Masinda to get an update on the Rockaway water testing that she was doing as part of a grant that she received.

Mr. Foster asked all members to look ahead to the next several months and identify topics and/or events that can be used to create an educational theme for each month. Members will be asked to supply their educational ideas at the September meeting.

Adjournment

It was moved and seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Radziewicz
Advisory Boards Secretary