

LAWRENCE NATURE CENTER COMMITTEE

Minutes of December 9, 2009 Meeting

Attendance: Rick Dutko, Teresita, Helen Dutko, Pepper Evans, Lisa Ilaria, Madeline Price, Steve Groeger, John Gaskins, Anne Demairas, Chris Altomari, Linda Townsend, Heidi D'Ascoli, Jessica, Tom.

Property:

- Rick is attending the community planning presentation made by the Rutgers students to GEPNA on December 17th. Some of the suggestions involve Drexel Woods trails.
- The Harris family offered to help improve the trail connecting Drexel Ave. and Meadowbrook Ave. Greg Whitehead will deliver mulch possibly this week, and calls for help to spread the mulch will be made at that time.
- Madeline says that SAVE would like to help with the trail clean up.
- Best and safest routes from LIS to the nature center were discussed for future class trips. It is about 1.1 miles via route 206. It is a big responsibility for a teacher to shepherd a class of varying abilities on foot.
- Rick will be meeting with Michael Van Cleft of Ecological Solutions to assess the placement and creation of a Native Species Garden on December 17th at 1:30. Chris Altomari and Linda Townsend will also attend.
- Rick contacted the DEP about including the 130 foot piece of wetland near Meadowbrook Park in the plans already covered by the GP17 permit. It will be assessed for Flood Hazard Applicability Determination which could require a \$1,000 fee, but hopefully will be accepted in the other permit for free. A boardwalk in this area will greatly improve accessibility for schools to the Nature Center. There is a time limit to improve the property once the permit is given so a plan needs to be put in place.
- Rick found a grant available through the New Jersey Recreational Trails Program for up to \$25,000 for trail improvement which is due December 15th. He will work with LNC volunteers to see if a document can be prepared in time.
- Rick found a grant available through the Conserve Wildlife Matching Grant Program due January 15th, 2010. Must address the NJ Wildlife Action Plan to be eligible. See Rick if you are interested in helping write this grant.

Treasury:

- Anne reports no change from last month.
- Steve reported \$8,481.54 in trust fund. The Trimmer estate donation has not been received yet.
- Several suggestions were made for future projects/purchases. Steve said that property improvements such as street lights may be covered by the township.
- Rick noted that we need a banner or better display when we present at festivals/fairs like the Lawrence Library Environmental Fair November 14th.
- Rick and Carol would like to purchase a digital projector for visiting guest speakers and LNC presentations. Carol will follow up with Steve.

By-Laws Committee:

- Teresita and Pepper have reviewed many non-profit bylaw documents and have created a draft which they will present to a lawyer for critic.
- Pepper registered the Friends of the Lawrence Nature Center and got a Tax Identification Number as a non-incorporated group status.

Programs:

- Madeline is working with the SAVE advisor and the LHS environmental teacher Mr. Hartog, to run a collaborative class between the high school students and EPS students.
- Lisa and Teresita are collecting ideas for adult programs at the LNC in the future. She has a mushroom expert in mind for the spring.
- Ideas to attract teens were discussed. Stoneybrook Watershed ran a Halloween night lead by the Hopewell drama department that attracted teens.
- Book club and coffee house with music was discussed.
- Carol spoke with Stoneybrook Watershed, Mercer County Soil and Water Conservation, and Mercer County Improvement Authority about Earth Day. So far, no dates or plans are made anywhere. Times and dates were discussed. Many people liked April 24, 1-5 or 2-6 p.m. There is a stream clean up planned for April 24,25 May 1,2 and it may be possible to combine the two events. Carol will speak to Andy Link for his input. Pepper will check when the Mainstreet Jubilee is planned. Stoneybrook Watershed would like to run a nature week during spring break for Lawrence students March 29-April 2nd. Steve will discuss the regulations further with them.

Library:

- Anne and committee are reviewing the books we have and will decide what to do with the library, the reference section, future needs and will report back to the committee.

Upcoming:

- Rick and Tom will be meeting at the LNC December 20th, 7:30 am for the 110th Annual Christmas Bird Count.
- January 18th, Washington Crossing Audubon program "Down the Shore" by Jeffrey Hall, at 8 p.m.

Meeting Dates for 2010:

January 13th, February 10, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11, September TBA, October 13, November 10, December 8.

Happy Holidays Everyone!