

Kutztown Environmental Advisory Commission Minutes

Monday December 2, 2024

In-person meeting at Kutztown Borough Hall: EAC Members: Todd Underwood (Chair), Kathy Kelly (Secretary) by Zoom, Lisa Ladd-Kidder (L-K) (Borough Council Liaison), Randy Wert by Zoom, Lisa Foreback, Cheyenne Friscia (KU student rep).

The meeting was called to order by Todd Underwood at 7:00 pm.

- Cheyenne moved to approve the minutes from the November 2024 meeting and 2nd by Randy.
- Announcements: Todd to reach out to CJ Penzone for status.
- Public Comment: None
- Budget update: KEAC spent \$1488 out of \$1500.
- Subcommittee Reports
 - A. Community Education
 - The KEAC webpage is current.
 - Todd to update Facebook page.
 - Native Plant of the month is currently being brought up to date by Cheyenne.
 - Kathy to participate in PSU Webinar on PFAS and Biosolids. She will do a white paper to be posted for community education.
 - B. Water and Air Quality
 - Lisa L-K provided the team with information from a recent report which looked at precipitation and groundwater elevations in our area. She will ask Troy Smith for copies of the water levels of the Borough wells for the past years.
 - C. Recycling and Trash
 - No updates.
 - D. Parks and Trails -Todd Underwood (chair)
 - The new posts to replace the trail markers damaged by vandalism will be installed when the ground thaws.
 - The new signage for the Saucony Creek Trail has been received and installed. Todd to contact the Police Department that they now officially start to enforce the rules.
 - The hitching rail for the horses has been installed. A sign is needed to state, "Pedestrian Traffic only in the Park." Todd to talk with Public Works.
 - Todd reported that the final grant agreement is signed.
 - Todd relayed a discussion for the establishment of a "meadow" between the Saucony Creek and the Kutztown Borough pool area. This would be accomplished by using environmentally friendly herbicide and would take 2 cycles of application and clearing over a couple of years. This would also be instrumental in removing and preventing the reemergence of invasive vegetation. Todd to investigate further. The protection of the Saucony Creek water shed is paramount.
 - Todd gave a presentation to Bird Town PA along with a walk through of North Park highlighting the riparian restoration along the Saucony Creek.

- PA American Water offers an environmental grant program that opens in Feb. and runs through March 2025. It was recommended that we consider applying for a few projects across our network that would address improving, restoring, and protecting watershed and/or groundwater supplies and also promote water conservation. Todd to investigate further.
- It was suggested that we develop some ideas for fundraising. Cheyenne and Todd suggested stickers (everyone loves stickers) to promote the Saucony Trail and North Park. Money raised would be used to help support the two areas. Cheyenne is going to work on a few designs and check out prices and sources.
- Winter/Spring tree removal will occur in an area in North Park where a storm took out a lot of trees. There are bare areas that are being taken over by invasive plants. Looking to the future Todd is suggesting to plant acorns (oaks) and hickory nuts directly into the soil. Research has shown that seeds directly planted, establish more quickly and have a better root system. The seeds and resulting sprouts will be protected by tubes. However, a reliable source of water needs to be established. It was suggested that a large tank (250 – 500-gallon size be purchased and set at the site, including a lock to prevent unauthorized use. The intent is to have Public Works refill as needed as there is an access road at the proposed location. It is estimated that refilling would occur a few times a year, depending upon tank size and moisture.
- Next planned planting event of a variety of native trees is planned for April 2025 on the Saucony side of 737.
- A new bird feeder capable of holding 5 pounds of bird seed has been purchased, installed, and filled at North Park

Motion to adjourn by Todd Underwood at 08:08 pm, 2nd by Kathy.