

## CAPE MAY POINT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES

June 11, 2025

Start Time: 10:00 AM

End Time: 11:17 AM

The Environmental Commission of the Borough of Cape May Point was called to order by Chair PM at 10:00 AM and the Open Public Meetings Statement was read. This meeting was held electronically via ZOOM under local operation guidance from the NJDCA pursuant to P.L. 2020, c. 11. Sandy Alison, Sean Burcher, Rich Johnson, Mary Lynn Mackenzie, Paula Massanari, Emelia Oleson, and Tom Reilly were present.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of TR, seconded by MLM, the minutes of the May 14, 2025 EC meeting were approved by all present.

### ON-GOING BUSINESS

**Commissioner Liaison Report:** SY took Dr. Sousa's lake management course, and from that received a lot of information that has been helpful. Dr. Sousa recommended a full analysis on the lake, which the three Commissioners agreed at the last borough meeting was the best course of action. The water analysis is complete, but there are still other parts to do. They have also learned more about the mats that lay on top of a lake to suppress vegetative growth by not allowing sunlight which would be a non-chemical solution to the growth at the south end. Clearing the island of invasive species is going to be so difficult that the State Park is recommending that the Borough look at doing a controlled burn on a non-windy day as a possible solution. Once cleared, it can be replanted with native plants and maintained. SY has heard some concerns about this method, so they are looking at it very carefully.

Separately, Clean Flo conducted an analysis of the lake, and the good news is there is no harmful algae bloom at this time. The number of blue-green algae is higher than desired, which can evolve into a harmful algae bloom (HAB). SY is happy to share the report with anyone who would like to see it. They recommend another sample be taken at the end of the summer. Clean Flo has provided us their summer product to reduce muck for Public Works (PW) to disperse in the lake, and there will be another application at the end of summer. They also recommend we look at their product Bio Boost.

Regarding the water report, we have two sources of nutrients in the lake. Internal sources are the accumulated organic matter, and external sources come from stormwater runoff, animal waste, fertilizers, etc. All of those things accumulate, which increase phosphorous and nitrates. We will also be identifying all of the vegetation in the lake. We have the lilies, which are overgrown, and we have a variety of weeds we want to identify so that we know what we are dealing with. SY and Bill Gibson (BG) have had calls with the company that sells the lake mats so that he could understand how they work and are maintained. SY will be speaking to references for the product later today. Finally, we have asked Solitude and Tigris for quotes on a full analysis of the lake. Solitude came back first with a quote for \$36,000. We have yet to get Tigris' quote.

In other news:

- ANJEC is holding a seminar this month on June 24 where Dr. Sousa is the speaker. The topic is managing nutrient load. PM said everyone should have received an email on this.
- Lantana was planted around the benches at the lake.
- Jonathan Westcott is planning Dune Day. He will be open to any recommendations from the EC on that plan.
- Unfortunately the Oystercatcher chicks on the beach did not survive.

Questions/Feedback for SY:

- TR asked if Dr. Sousa recommended anyone for the Borough to hire to assist with analysis of the lake. SY confirmed that he consults with several organizations, and he did not have any recommendations.

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- SA said her concern about burning is that poison ivy could become airborne as droplets that could be breathed in. SY said they would consider potential respiratory issues.
- EO asked if they would consider not burning the island, but cutting vegetation, painting stump, and pinning newspaper and cardboard down. SY said that vegetation is so thick it would be an overwhelming task, and there would still be roots and reemergence.
- Goats were also discussed as another method of clearing that could be used, but they can swim away and would need to be fenced in.
- PM asked if SY was interested in the EC putting together a formal recommendation about all of these various ideas, or if she feels she has enough information to move forward. SY said she would never turn down information from anyone. She feels like we need to move forward and make some decisions about the lake, and would welcome input from the EC at any time.
- RJ said that there is discussion about whether or not people should be allowed to fish on the lake. SY said Commissioner Geiger is looking into the issue with the Solicitor. Mayor vanHeeswyk had provided an article on the catch and release fishing and how it causes pain to the fish, but PM said the NIH has published information that refutes what was in that article. She encouraged everyone to read more about this topic. MLM said that she has seen a lot more fishing this year, in spite of the fact that there is an ordinance in place, and it would be good to understand why it was put into place.

**Invasive Patrol:** PM joined the group on Monday, and removal continued on the west side of the lake. PM has drafted an article about the removal, encouraging that people join the volunteer group on Mondays, which she would also recommend that EC members consider doing.

**Triangle Park:** Catherine Busch had recommended that coral honeysuckle be planted at the arbor. SY bought two, and Ray from PW cleared the arbor and planted them. There are two dead trees in the forested part that need to be removed. Given that we will be taking out two trees, we will have room to plant more and have money available for this in the tree fund.

PY spoke to the Invasive Patrol team about the forested area of Triangle Park regarding the invasive vines that have grown there. There are some invasive vines there too, and PM asked if the Invasive Patrol at the lake if they would be interested in assisting. They want to continue to focus on the lake and circle. PM is looking to organize a two-hour work session, so if you are interested please let her know.

**Planning Board:** MLM said there are no applications for the EC to review at this time, but the PB will be looking at the EC's recommendation for a light trespass ordinance as time permits. MLM has been educating herself as the EC liaison so that she has the background knowledge to support the process. Cape May's ordinance is more focused on light trespass from one property to the next. She has also reviewed the Dark Skies website, which is already linked on the borough website. MLM is looking for input from the rest of the EC on this topic. EO said that Barb Bassett had relied heavily on Dark Skies when putting together the EC's documented position. PM said that if you check the Dark Skies map Cape May Point does show light at night, and it affects migrating birds, insects, reptiles and humans. When the opinion paper was put together, individual members were assigned topics and they brought back the information which

**Mayors' Monarch Pledge:** The Cape May Point Taxpayers' Association (CMPTA) is going to start including a Monarch Minute in their newsletters. MLM will be responsible for providing this to be included. The black eyed Susan have been planted at the two beach entrances will be watered by PM and MLM all summer, and will require backup caretakers in the event they are not in the Point. PM wrote an article about the plants which will be launched in July as part of pollinator awareness month. PM mentioned the milkweed plugs that were donated to the EC which are currently being cared for by KR. These will be given away at the Civic Club Bazaar to residents.

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**Salem Oak Sign:** SY said we are hoping to have a mockup of the sign soon. It was recommended that we do two signs, one temporarily and one permanent once the tree is more established.

**Native Tree Listing Update:** SY has been working on the list of native trees that are currently in the tree removal ordinance to add additional options. MLM suggested that the Borough create something that is easier to follow. SY is working on a flow chart to assist people. MLM asked who enforces the ordinance; SY said that there is a detailed process being followed by the Clerk's Office and PW to ensure that it is followed. SY said that we could also consider making the tree list a resolution so that changes can be easily made without going through changing the ordinance every time.

### NEW BUSINESS

**Hiring of EC Recording Secretary:** EO directed SY to meet the CMC watershed ambassador, Courtney Kirberger (CK), who will be the next EC Secretary. PM and SY have both met with her. She has a background in Environmental Science, training, reporting, and all of the things we were looking for. PM said that CK will be meeting with KR at the end of July to begin her training. PM asked if there were any concerns from the EC, and none were raised. Courtney will be joining us at the August meeting alongside Kelly.

**Draft article regarding Invasive Patrol:** PM sent everyone the Invasive Patrol article she mentioned earlier. She asked for feedback, and hearing none, requested KR queue the article for launch.

**Draft article regarding MMP:** PM sent everyone the article on the MMP and the Commission's plan to proclaim July as Monarch Month in CMP. She asked for feedback, and hearing none, requested KR queue the article for launch.

### CORRESPONDENCE

None.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

PM said that based on feedback we will be cancelling the July meeting. There are no pressing issues that need to be addressed. The Dune Day Plan will be reviewed and voted on at the August meeting. She asked if anyone had a concern, and seeing none, confirmed we will cancel.

### PUBLIC PORTION/ADJOURNMENT

As there were no members of the public in attendance, on motion of MLM seconded by TR, the meeting was adjourned at 11:17 am.

Respectfully submitted, Kelly L. Redington, EC Secretary