CAPE MAY POINT ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION MINUTES

May 13, 2026

Start Time: 10:00 AM End Time: 11:27 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 Allison, Sean Burcher, Rich Johnson, Paula Massanari, Emelia Oleson, and Tom Reilly were present. Mary Lynn Mackenzie was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of TR, seconded by EO, the minutes of the April 8, 2026 EC meeting were approved by all present.

ON-GOING BUSINESS

Commissioner Liaison Report: SY provided the following update on the tree damage from February: 55 private trees were reported down, 9 were taken down on public property and right of way, and 6 trees have been planted. 36 lake mats have been installed in Lake Lily and the island vegetation has been cut down. CleanFlo took a water sample in April, but SY hasn't yet received the analysis results. The vegetation debris and roots still need to be addressed on the island. Places where the lake mats were settled appear to be doing their job in suppressing unwanted vegetation. Mat maintenance will include blowing off the silt to prevent a muck buildup on top of the mats.

TR reported that the Friends of Lake Lily have identified a landscaper to remove the island vegetation and move it to the street for PW to dispose of. In addition, the landscaper will remove the roots from the invasive vegetation next week to provide a clean slate for the island re-planting. They also suggested adding a tarp to shade the island to prevent regrowth following the clearing. PM asked if the Tree Committee would weigh in on the trees for the re-planting. TR shared that everyone's input would be welcome in the plant selection for the island.

Beach clean up is ongoing. Every five years, CMP has to reapply to the state for maintenance. This is CMP's reapplication period, but there have been some delays waiting for state approval. The Pavilion Circle well is still producing too much iron even with the filters. Due to the amount of water used, the filters are unable to keep up. Bill is further investigating what it will take to process that much water while removing metals.

The light trespass recommendations were affirmed. PW will look at public spaces/buildings and move that lighting towards the five principles. The Planning Board will also look at uplighting, landscaping, and new construction. Atlantic City Electric (ACE) has been contacted multiple times, but SY has not been connected to someone for further discussion with the company. PM recommended sending the questions to ANJEC who have a direct contact with ACE.

Elaine plotted 95 street lights in CMP. Currently, when the lights are replaced, they are using the LED lights that put off even more light which is not the goal. There's also a concern about spotlights on people's properties and what lighting should/should not be used. SY included that pursuing the education portion of the recommendations with SB would be beneficial for addressing that. PM added that if there was a speaker hosted by the Science Centers, a series of complimentary light trespass communications could be shared. SY has a speaker in mind and will share the information with SB. Currently, there is not a plan to do a formal ordinance around lighting.

There have been some concerns about dead trees in the dunes. Due to poison ivy, there are some removal concerns for this season, but PW are looking at trimming the branches over the winter.

There were no questions/feedback for SY.

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Triangle Park: The Audubon representative will be visiting the park to assess the site. PM is still waiting to hear back from the grant application. SA reported the tree giveaway was announced May 4 and within 3 hours all the trees had been claimed. There are currently 20 people on the list with 4 on the waiting list.

Planning Board: There were no updates on the Planning Board.

Mayors' Monarch Pledge: PM and MLM have discussed and divided all the MMP action items. The black-eyed Susans planted last year were successful, and they are hoping to plant 5 more at Stites. They decided not to do a milkweed giveaway again this year since it required them to re-pot and care for the plants a week prior to the event. Instead, they are hoping to purchase butterfly weed plants to be put in around the lake. There are also six asters on the list for Triangle park, 20 lantana plants, mulch, and hummus with a total cost of $500.

Native Tree List: The tree replacement ordinance will come up at the next Commissioners' meeting and SY will cover it under the Commissioner's Report moving forward. SY added that the fringe tree could still be discussed. PM was able to get two neighbors to assist with the regular watering of the fringe tree and the red maple. TR asked after the tree species which were difficult to source. PM shared redbud, dogwood, and black cherry had all been unavailable.

Stormwater Project: RJ shared they've been waiting for the water analysis result from Lake Lily to add or develop a second article depending on the results from the test. SY included there are still four drains to test and will be meeting with RJ, TR, and PW to form a plan to test the first flush of an upcoming rainfall. If the results are not available by June 1, PM suggested that they send the first article in June and then do a follow-up communication with the testing and lab results.

Dune Preservation: The no trespassing signs were reinstalled with the exception of Alexander. MLM and TR finalized the letter for photographers to inform them of the importance of staying out of the dunes during shoots. CL will email their letter to photographers in the community. There will be a second letter sent to visitors and homeowners to inform them about dune trespassing. MLM and TR are still moving forward on publishing a version of the letter in the newsletter. SA suggested providing a copy of the letter to local realtors to include in rental packets.

NEW BUSINESS

Training video for Commission Members: All members present watched the volunteer training video. Follow-up commentary included: There is not currently a reasonable period for public comment. PM will put it on the agenda to discuss at the next meeting. PM also highlighted not texting other members during meetings. Moving forward, it would be best practice for communication with PM (ec@capemaypoint.org) and SY (syunghans@capemaypoint.org) to go through the EC email addresses.

Formal vote on tree giveaway expenditure: PM called for a vote to approve the expenditure of 20 sweet bay magnolia costing $1,000. On motion of RJ, seconded by SA, the cost was approved by all present.

Vote on purchase of plants for MMP: PM called for a vote to approve up to $500 dollars for purchasing plants for the MMP. On motion of SB, seconded by TR, the cost was approved by all present.

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5/1 Tree committee meeting update: SY reported the Committee discussed that 6 trees were purchased and 4 were planted: black gum, sweet gum, red maple, and the fringe tree. They are being watered by partners across the Point and all have a protective guard. The Committee recommended the tree giveaway remain during the spring season since less community members remain in the area during the fall.

Four years ago, a state-mandated Community Forest Management plan was developed by Heartwood Consulting. Part of the plan is an inventory on public property which requires significant mapping data. The requirements have been prohibitive for many municipalities. The state has since provided a way to receive funding when renewing the management plan to assist municipalities. Heartwood will be able to incorporate the inventory—with state funding—during the next renewal period.

Additionally, the invasive patrol work is a part of the management plan. The patrol contributes to the Borough's commitment to managing the forest. SY would like to highlight these efforts and the benefits they have with the Borough as well as re-addressing topping trees. They discussed the dead trees in the dune and how they should be managed. SY will continue to talk to PW, DEP, and NJ Forest Service to find the best solution. SA shared that previously, Christmas trees were used to stabilize the dunes and were quickly covered. The Committee understands the unsightliness of the trees in the dunes, but the priority remains the environmental impacts and public safety. RJ asked about the potential of selecting plants for the dunes that have the extensive root systems to help with stabilization but don't grow tall enough to impair views such as dune grass.

CORRESPONDENCE:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- A snapping turtle video from KR in the neighboring State Park was shared with the group.
- A thank you note was sent to Public Works expressing the Commission's gratitude for taking care of all the downed trees in the community following the storm.

PUBLIC PORTION/ADJOURNMENT

On motion of RJ, seconded by EO, the meeting was opened to the public. 1 member of the public was present, but did not wish to speak.

On motion of SB, seconded by TR, the meeting was adjourned at 11:27 am.

Respectfully submitted, Courtney R. Lacombe, EC Secretary