

The Board of County Commissioners of the County of Monmouth

DIVISION OF PLANNING



TERI O'CONNOR
County Administrator

Email:
teri.oconnor@co.monmouth.nj.us

JOSEPH BARRIS, PP, AICP, CFM
Director of Planning

Email:
joe.barris@co.monmouth.nj.us

Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the MONMOUTH COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL Thursday, February 7, 2025, 5:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:11pm.

2. ROLL CALL – ATTENDANCE

Members present: Dan Beckleman, Scott Thompson, Ellen Smith
Members absent: Paul Johnson, David Koskta, Peter Volpe
Staff present: Melissa Bezahler, Harriet Honigfeld, David Schmetterer

3. REORGANIZATION

A. Election of Chairperson – Ms. Bezahler asked for nominations for Chairperson. Ms. Smith made a motion to nominate Mr. Scott Thompson as Chairperson. Mr. Thompson stated he was intending to nominate Ms. Smith as Chairperson. Ms. Smith advised she would accept a nomination for Vice Chairperson but not Chairperson. Mr. Thompson indicated he would accept a nomination for Chairperson. Mr. Beckelman seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, Mr. Thompson was appointed Chairperson.

B. Election of Vice Chairperson – Mr. Thompson asked the Council for nominations for Vice Chairperson. Mr. Thompson nominated Ms. Ellen Smith for Vice Chairperson and Mr. Beckelman seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, Ms. Smith was appointed Vice Chairperson. Ms. Honigfeld advised Mr. Thompson and Ms. Smith that in their roles as Chairperson and Vice Chairperson, they will be members of the Stormwater Advisor Committee and will be added to the email distribution.

C. Approval of 2025 Meeting Schedule – Staff reviewed the proposed quarterly meeting schedule which was designed to maximum council participation. Mr. Beckelman motioned to approve the 2025 calendar and Ms. Smith seconded the motion. With a voice vote, the MCEC 2025 calendar was adopted.

4. REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES: Mr. Beckelman made a motion to approve the minutes for the August 1, 2024 meeting. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. With a voice vote, the meeting minutes were approved.

5. REGULAR REPORTS

A. Chairperson – Mr. Thompson stated that he thoroughly enjoyed the October Joint-Council Meeting on the CHANJ project, and wishes it was better attended. He thanked the membership for the nomination to Chairperson and stated he would do his best.

- B. **Staff** – Ms. Bezahler shared the Monmouth County Environmental Council bulletin analytics of the Fall 2024 and Winter 2025 newsletter.

6. OLD BUSINESS

- A. **Monmouth County Municipal ERI/NRI ‘database’** - Ms. Bezahler reviewed with the Council their idea of using the MCEC section of the County webpage to host municipal Environmental Resource Inventories (ERI) or Natural Resource Inventories (NRI). Ms. Bezahler advised that members were to gather the ERI/NRS published by the municipalities and to forward them by weblink or PDFs which would be compiled and uploaded to the County webpage. Ms. Bezahler asked if the Council would like to continue this initiative. After some discussion, it was decided that the MCEC will continue to work towards this goal.
- B. **Climate Change Roundtable** – Ms. Bezahler reviewed the previous discussion regarding a potential climate change roundtable, reminding membership that they could engage in discussions outside of regular meeting to focus this topic. Ms. Honigfeld brought to the Council’s attention that the NJCRC will be hosting a 2026 conference and it might be more beneficial to join and work on that event rather than creating a separate event. The membership discussed this and agreed it would be better to pursue involvement in the NJCRC event rather than organizing their own climate change roundtable.

7. NEW BUSINESS

- A. **Topics for Environmental Newsletter articles** – Ms. Bezahler encouraged Council members to submit articles for the newsletter, highlighting activities or events from their communities that could be shared. She noted the newsletter’s growing subscriber base and positive reception, with no unsubscribes. Mr. Thompson agreed, emphasizing that the outreach could help attract new members and increase community engagement.

8. MEMBER REPORTS

- Mr. Beckelman stated he will check in with Aberdeen/Matawan area to see if there are any events coming up.
- Ms. Smith noted that she shared the CHANJ information with Wall Environmental Group who was excited about that. Caroline McFarland, Watershed Ambassador had presented to the Wall Environmental Council.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

- 10. ADJOURNMENT** - There being no further business, Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Beckleman made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:47pm.