

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE
BOROUGH OF SADDLE RIVER
HELD: OCTOBER 27, 2014**

PRESENT: Commission Chairman Bob LaViano, Emily Kaufman, Nicholas Turturro, Ron Yates, Andrew Epstein, Jerry DeCrosta, Council Representative

ABSENT: Nik Aktas, Jeff Liva: Planning Board Rep

PRESIDING: Commission Chairman Bob LaViano called the meeting to order at 6:35pm; Commission Secretary Joy Convertini read the following statement:

PUBLIC NOTICE: “Notice of this meeting in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act Chapter 231 of the laws of 1975, has been given by posting a notice of the scheduled dates of all regular meetings of the Environmental Commission of the Borough of Saddle River on the bulletin board in the Municipal Building and in the office of the Borough Clerk and by emailing a notice thereof to the Ridgewood Newspapers and The Record on December 23, 2013 and on the Borough website.”

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A motion was made to approve the June 23, 2014 minutes by Nick Turturro. Seconded by Ron Yates
Roll Call Vote: AYES: Unanimous

WORK SESSION:

The following members of the Saddle River Board of Health were present to collaborate with the Environmental Commission on the deer management issue in the Borough:

Dr. Duncan Carpenter, Dr. John Azzaritti, Dr. Frida Parker, Dr. Constantine Rossakis, George Tashji, Stafford Patentas, Dr. Al Kurpis, Council Representative, Angela Musella, Health Officer, Darlene Mandeville, Environmental Health Specialist

Deer Management Issue: Bob LaViano thanked members of the Board of Health in attendance for joining forces with the Environmental Commission in order to address this very serious issue in Saddle River. He reiterated that deer are responsible for the destruction of the general landscape, are a public safety concern on roadways, causing traffic accidents and pose a public health risk with the spread of Lyme disease. There is an increased population of coyotes due to the significant deer presence in Saddle River.

Bow hunting is currently prohibited in the Borough of Saddle River and Bob LaViano stated that the first step in this process is to amend the current ordinance to allow bow hunting in some fashion, to be determined. He further stated that then, individual property owners would grant permission for bow hunting on their property and the details of when hunters would be actively hunting would have to be registered with the Police Department.

Council Representative Jerry DeCrosta stated that Community Based Deer Management Permit (CBDMP) should also be explored as it enables a municipality to consider alternative methods of deer management. A Borough resolution endorsing the CBDMP permit application must be submitted and accepted by the New Jersey Division of Fish & Wildlife and all costs for this deer control must be paid by the municipality. This permit process can take four to six months but hunting is not limited to the designated hunting season.

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE
BOROUGH OF SADDLE RIVER
HELD: OCTOBER 27, 2014**

Dr. Kurpis stated that the Mayor and Council are looking for a recommendation from both the Board of Health and the Environmental Commission justifying why culling the herd is now a necessity.

Bob LaViano stated that there are two alternatives to culling the herd in Saddle River; allowing local hunters to obtain a permit to bow hunt and, after details of when and where they would be permitted to hunt are resolved, they would hunt during the designated season only. The second alternative would be to hire a professional firm, such as United Bow Hunters of New Jersey, who would apply for a CDBM permit, and hunt within the Borough at no cost.

Dr. Rossakis stated that many residents as well as neighboring municipalities will not be in favor of this concept.

Both Boards were in agreement that all alternative methods to deal with this issue would not be as effective as bow hunting.

Methods of field dressing the deer and disposal were also discussed in detail at this time. It was suggested that any venison obtained be donated to a food bank.

Police Captain Cosgriff joined the meeting at this time. Captain Cosgriff stated that any hunting done within the municipality would require a change in the Borough Code to permit bow hunting, and then guidelines would have to be followed and monitored. He further stated that he was familiar with United Bow Hunters and the benefit to utilizing this organization is that the hunters are already vetted and are accomplished.

Dr. Rossakis stated that using United Bow Hunters is the most viable alternative; Bob LaViano and Dr. Kurpis were in agreement.

Jerry DeCrosta stated that there are several large tracks of land within the Borough and it was suggested that residents that have over ten acres of land be contacted to determine if they would permit hunting on their property.

Dr. Kurpis reiterated that a recommendation must be jointly presented to the Mayor and Council to include the following:

- **The current ordinance, Chapter 109 “Firearms”, Section 109.3 prohibits hunting in the Borough of Saddle River. The amendment of this ordinance is necessary in order to permit bow hunting during the state specified hunting season and also to permit bow hunting in the off-season, with a special state-issued permit.**
- **The New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife and organizations such as United Bow Hunters of New Jersey be consulted to prepare a plan of action.**

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE
BOROUGH OF SADDLE RIVER
HELD: OCTOBER 27, 2014**

- **A committee shall be appointed to draft new regulations permitting bow hunting during hunting season and permitting bow hunting in the off-season with a special state-issued permit.**
- **A special meeting shall be held in order to present a plan to any interested members of the public.**

Health Specialist Darlene Mandeville stated that she is in agreement that all other alternative methods would not be as effective as an organized hunt.

Stafford Patentas stated that permits should also be issued to professional outfits only and not to private individuals as it is not a recreational endeavor. She further stated that the venison meat should be donated to the food bank. She inquired about hunting over bait and this was addressed in detail at this time.

Bob LaViano stated that the main objective is to reduce the deer population and not to permit hunting recreationally in Saddle River. If individuals wish to hunt in Saddle River, they will be required to be a member of a vetted organization such as United Bow Hunters.

The coyote population was discussed and Captain Cosgriff stated that they are becoming more aggressive and this must be addressed as well.

As there was no further joint business to discuss, the Board of Health members in attendance left the meeting at this time.

Roadside Appearance: Bob LaViano stated that he feels that many residents have been diligent in cleaning up their property along roadsides throughout the Borough.

Hazardous Tree Removal: Jerry DeCrosta stated that this program has been very successful and will be ongoing in order to prevent dead trees from causing problems, especially during storms. The Commission addressed the increase of bamboo within Saddle River and all were in agreement that this invasive species should be banned.

Tree Planting Initiative: Bob LaViano stated that the pink Dogwood is the Borough tree and there is considerable interest in conducting a tree sale with the Wandell students on a yearly basis. The Landmarks Commission is also working with the Borough in order to continue to plant Dogwood trees annually throughout the Borough.

Marker Property/Community Garden: Bob LaViano stated that the Community Garden has not been successful due perhaps to a lack of sunlight and inferior soil. The Marker house was also discussed and Bob LaViano stated he would like to see it restored. Jerry DeCrosta stated that the home is not ADA compliant for public use and the restoration process would be expensive. If the home was taken down, the access to Rindlaub Park would be more efficient from East Saddle River Road and the current culvert would not need to be replaced.

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION OF THE
BOROUGH OF SADDLE RIVER
HELD: OCTOBER 27, 2014**

Tree Ordinance Status: Bob LaViano stated that he is unaware of the status of the tree ordinance, which has not yet been adopted. A public hearing on this ordinance will take place at the next Mayor and Council Meeting scheduled for November 17, 2014. The Tree City Designation was also discussed as it is still pending, based on the adoption of the tree ordinance.

Town Newsletter Submission: Bob LaViano stated that the deer management issue should be addressed in the newsletter as well as complimenting residents on their efforts in improving roadside appearance.

NEW BUSINESS:

OLD BUSINESS:

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the regular meeting of the Environmental Commission.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy C. Convertini
Secretary