

**Bethlehem Environmental Advisory Council  
General Meeting  
August 3, 2017**

**Attendees:** Present were Council members Lynn Rothman, Jack Gambino, Brian Hillard, and Mike Topping. Also in attendance were: Breena Holland, Lehigh University; Tom Moroz, LV Social Impact Center; Julie Pineiro, Monocacy Creek Watershed Assoc., Martha Christine, BFW; City Councilman William Reynolds and Tara Zrinski, of the Northampton County Council of Democratic Women (NCCDWEC).

**Guest Speaker:** Breena introduced Tom and explained that she has applied for a Pell Grant to apply digital media to her course development in environmental justice with her students. This course will include many aspects of the "Global Warming"/"Climate Change" discussion, which is often involved with any discussion of environmental justice. She thought that the information created by her students could then be used by the City in its Climate Action Plan.

Tom explained that his organization is interested in collaboration between public, private entrepreneur and non-profit organizations, which are primarily concerned with social welfare/justice issues. He has enlisted us as partners in this endeavor. They plan to present two Pecha Kucha events this fall. A Pecha Kucha is like a mini Ted Talk. It's a presentation format where presenters have exactly 6 minutes and 40 seconds to present 20 slides that tell about their project (20 seconds per slide). The time limit helps keep the discussion going and have more people involved. The purpose of the talks is to bring more awareness and action on Climate Change and related environmental issues in the Lehigh Valley. The arts community and local colleges, as well as other groups, will also be contacted to join in the development of a database, including mapping, of organizations in the Lehigh interested in environmental and social justice issues. Breena's students can help with the technical aspects of any presentations or the summation of reports. They are supported by the LV Community Foundation and hope to create a video of the process.

It was noted that some organizations might have a particular position on an issue that some may not agree with, but with a common concern about the environment, we have to find a way to work together on those agreed upon environmental issues. Church groups and sportsmen's clubs can join with the various watershed and bird organizations to promote a given agenda. Also, an effort should be made to contact people who have been underrepresented on most environmental groups, such as inner city residents and people of color.

Councilman Reynolds gave a brief history of the City's efforts in lessening the carbon emissions from city owned properties and the recent work to begin developing a Climate Action Plan. In order to achieve this, he noted that the public has to be educated about the need for a climate action plan (and then invited to participate in its development), recognizing that many elements can be involved including state & federal regulations as well as local inducements, regulations and sometimes enforcement. He hoped to make the City's plan a model for other municipalities in the area.

**Approval of July Minutes:** After some minor corrections Jack moved and Brian seconded approval as corrected; approved.

**Chair's Comments:** A riparian buffer area is now being maintained along the Saucon Creek in Saucon Park and signs have been put in place to explain the reasons for the "no mow" area. Lynn noted a work party is planned to remove invasive plants along the creek and plant new bushes and trees in the area. She will try and coordinate a date with people from the Saucon Creek Watershed Association as well as Wildlands Conservancy. We are still looking for an additional member for the EAC.

**Board Comments and Announcements:** Mike reported that Jodi Schnalzer, the City Water Quality Control Manager, had offered to attend one of our meetings to discuss the City water-sampling program.

**Committee Reports:**

**BBFW:** Martha Christine reported that the Bethlehem Backyards for Wildlife has received a \$10,000 grant from the LV Community Foundation to develop a plan for plantings and paths in the Rose Garden.

**Monocacy Creek Watershed Association:** Julie Pineiro stated that the MCWA is now back in operation and that they are involved with stream cleanup activity and possibly some programs at the Burnside Plantation.

**Climate Action Plan:** Lynn and Brian will go to the next meeting. At present, it appears that the City has been using about 50% renewable energy sources in its facilities and that natural gas will replace oil to some degree.

Tara Zrinski, an employee of Solar City, stated that many existing regulations concerning the placement of solar panels on roofs are unnecessarily strict due to improvements in the technology. Revised sample regulations and the changes in the technology that support them are available to local zoning and subdivision & development personnel who enforce these regulations. She will send copies to the EAC for distribution.

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:36 PM.**