

Sierra Club of Pennsylvania, Southeastern PA Group Executive Committee Meeting
February 4, 2015
Meeting held at CityCoHo, 2401 Walnut Street

Attending: Bill Brainerd, Dennis Winters, Emily Davis, Jim Wylie, Mathew Himmelein, Karen Melton, Dave Moscatello, Anne Lovett, Robin Mann, Mike Hoppus, John Butler, Jon Paul Jawarski

By phone: Len Finegold, Pat Beaudet

The Meeting was called to order by Ann Lovett at 6:45.

Secretary: Minutes were approved as emailed

Treasurer: Addition donations of \$549 were received from the end of the year appeal. Expenses included Post office box, bank fees, newsletter and \$100 for rent. The balance in the C4 account is \$2190. The Treasurer's report was approved.

Standing Committee Reports

Newsletter/Communications: The newsletter will go out on February 24th with a deadline for articles of Feb 11. As it will be send electronically, space is not an issue. Pat clarified that only the November Issue is printed because it contains the ballot for SPG elections. This issue will include reports on Beyond Coal events, a report on the January education program and a piece on the upcoming program, an article on smog, the KXL rally and 350 XL activities.

Jim will add links from our website to Brian Crenshaw's video on the veterans program.

Conservation Committee: Jim reported briefly on the brainstorming meeting he chaired. He had developed a spread sheet of the issues generated and will send a link to the spread sheet that is in google docs as well as a report – see link for full report on Committee activities.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XkCTyx_W6FrVDgNU24qLnRExmw3ow9g66izW91XEUI/edit#gid=0 (contents of email attached at end of minutes)

Political Committee: This committee is in need of new members. Bill would like to have members from each of the counties to work on endorsement recommendations. Dennis volunteered to help in Philadelphia County. Member Scott Alberts (Greg Vitali's campaign manager) is interested in joining the committee. Pat will add a request for members to the upcoming newsletter.

Education Committee: Bill reported that the Steve Luxton, Director of Conservation Services at Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA) will be the Speaker in March. He is a residential energy efficiency expert. Bill also reported the Michael Mann, a climatologist from Penn State, will speak in November – probably the 16th. Bill said he would need funds for lodging and travel for Dr. Mann. Several people thought he would be a popular speaker and that we might want a larger space. Dennis will look in to the Academy auditorium.

Nomination Committee: no report

Old Business:

Fund raising: There was a discussion of using electronic payment systems. Pay Pal, credit cards and QGive were discussed. The Allegheny group uses pay pal. Jim and Dennis will continue looking in to this.

New Business:

Delaware County Land for sale to developer: A large tract of land belonging to the Archdiocese of Philadelphia may be sold to developers. The site along Rte 320 (Sproule Road) is current mostly woods but also contains a school for youths with developmental disabilities (Don Guanella School) from by Catholic Social Services which will be closed. This site is in the Darby Creek floodplain and there is concern (water quality, flooding) about the effects of development on areas downstream such as the Eastwick neighborhood. Access is not being permitted for an environmental impact statement.

Youth Group Training: We were not able to put together a team for this training but it will be offered in the future

Stand on Billboards: There is concern about billboard along Lancaster Pike and the lack of a uniform state law to control them. Bills introduced at the state level do not get out of committee. Bills must be submitted by local governments. Bill board fall under the Sierra Club's visual pollution policies: "The Sierra Club opposes billboard development along highways and supports measures to restrict these billboards. Furthermore, the Sierra Club opposes any variance from its above-mentioned position, including [proposals] to allow billboards which carry environmental messages on federal-aid highways."

Announcements:

Next Meeting: March 4, 2015 at City Coho

Better Mobility 2015 Mayoral Forum: 19 March 6:00 to 8:00 PM, Cherry Street Center hosted by Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia.

Reminders:

Conservation Committee Member Specialties:

- MTR – Jim Wylie
- Energy Conservation & Efficiency – John Butler
- Wind – PTC support – Gillian Norris
- AEPS support – Karen Melton
- Water – Robin Mann
- Smog – Gary Lytle/Jackie Wilson
- Transportation – Dennis Winters
- Land Use – Dennis Winters

Meeting Call-in Number:

1-866-501-6174, PIN is 1004100#.

Notes from Jim:

Thanks to all that contributed to and attended the conservation brainstorming meeting yesterday. I think we made some great progress and hopefully will be the genesis of some serious organization and action around some local environmental issues. Here are the decisions and actions that I recorded. Please help me with anything I missed.

Brainstorm Spreadsheet – be sure and click on the tabs at the bottom to see strategies, tactics and resources.

Decided – not to limit the number of issues that we try to tackle at this point. We will document all that we have descriptions for and solicit for volunteers. If we don't get volunteers (especially a champion) for an issue, then that issue will wait till next year.

Decided – we will put the short description of each issue on the SPG web conservation page. As the content increases, a cmte can have their own page or pointer to a facebook page or whatever the cmte wants.

Decided – we will “advertise” all cmtes to all regions, but the convio mail will be customized for each region to put the locally relevant issues on top. We will put a blurb in the upcoming newsletter about the conservation cmtes, but will use a separate blast date to just talk about “Call For Volunteers”.

Decided – we will not promote the outings/nature appreciation suggestion with the conservation cmtes. Hopefully there will be an outings cmte or leader that will take the lead on those. Or, more likely I think, outings will be regional things.

Decided – (I'm not sure I have this right) the purely political issue of “Elect A Green Mayor” will stay as a conservation cmte (and solicit for volunteer help), but if the political cmte wants to take jurisdiction of this, that would be my vote.

Decided – no need to schedule another group meeting. Wait till we have a response from our call of volunteers and see if we need to take other drastic action.

Decided – not to collapse similar or related issues (like “commuting in Chesco” and “commuting in Montco”) because each has their own unique problems and opportunities. However, there is good reason for similar groups to share info and experiences. Jim, as conservation chair will make sure the appropriate level of collaboration takes place between groups.

Decided – no formal approval process for volunteers. It will be Jim's responsibility to make sure there is one champion for each cmte that will communicate goals and actions planned.

Action – Jim will draft a flyer with intro to SPG and list of 2015 issues we are trying to address. “Come Join Us”. Flyer can be used at tabling events, etc.

Action – Jim will update the conservation cmte web page with the list.

Action – Peggy/Jim will sign up for a table at the Tristate Sustainability Symposium March 6.

Action – Mike will draft a description for an anti-fracking cmte.

Action – Jim will review the cards that we brainstormed for strategies/tactics/resources and add to the spreadsheet any new ones.

Action – All of us will work to improve the spreadsheet, particularly by adding links and names/contacts for resources that can help the cmtes when they become active.

Action – Emily (blindsight!) will research each issue and see if there is a SC club or chapter position on each of the issues. Enter into appropriate column on the spreadsheet.

So, currently the list of 14 issues we will recruit for is:

MarinerEast Pipeline Chester County

Bakken Crude Oil Trains SPG Region

PennEast Pipeline - Bucks County (+)

Energy Hub Philadelphia

Energy Efficiency - Phila Residential Philadelphia

Rooftop Solar Energy Philadelphia

Seize the Grid SPG region

Elect a Green Philly Mayor Philadelphia

Sustainable Food Chester County

Zero Waste Experiment Chester County

Elcon Recycling: Hazardous Waste Treatment Facility - Bucks County Bucks County

Americas RedRock Wilderness Act (ARRWA) SPG Region

Sensible Commuting Chester County

Sensible Commuting: Montco Montco

No Delco issues. John suggested a couple of opportunities during the ExCom meeting – Darby Creek Runoff Mgmt and Billboards. If John can write up a description of these issues I'll be happy to include in the call for volunteers.

I'm going to be out of town next week (xc skiing in Adirondacks) but I should be able to check my mail once a day. Let me know if anything hot.

Thank you again for your help on this brainstorming exercise.