

APPROVED
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY COUNCIL
February 2, 2021
VIRTUAL MEETING MINUTES

Virtual Meeting began at 7:30PM.

Present: Paul Minor, Letty Savage, Jim Porcelli, Stephanie Gundling, Cassandra Miller-Butterworth, Kim Freithaler, Denise Rose, Rege Ebner

Guests: Pennsylvania Game Warden Zeb Campbell; Suburban Whitetail Management, LLC (SWM) representatives Luke Leonard and Michael Clinebell

Jan 5, 2021 Meeting Minutes approved.

Old Business:

- Update on deer population control options

The purpose of the EAC inquiry into deer control within the Borough is to attempt to determine whether or not the current deer management effort may be reduced, maintained, or increased.

Some residents have noticed a significant drop in the number of deer, ever since the ordinance prohibiting feeding the deer was enacted. Commencement of the archery hunting program in public parks has decreased the population, as well. As part of Franklin Park's conservation efforts, maintaining an appropriate deer population protects this important resource. Deer are a valuable recreation resource. Residents, hikers and photographers enjoy watching the deer and their fawns throughout their life cycle. It is also important that their numbers allow the deer herds to remain healthy.

The factors the EAC is considering are automobile accidents caused by deer, the overall health of the deer population, and land damage caused by deer.

Our assessment is preliminary and requires additional data.

Mr. Leonard and Mr. Clinebell discussed the current method using archers to manage the deer population on public land in Franklin Park. There is no fee to the Borough for SWM services. The Borough allows archers associated with SWM only on public land. SWM must make separate arrangements with private land owners and may hunt only in areas of at least 3 acres. Archers are required to donate at least one of every three deer they kill to a local food bank. We discussed the option of introducing sharpshooters to assist in managing the herd. However it appears there are additional restrictions for this approach that make it less desirable. We also discussed the possibility of deer sterilization. However, that appears to be a short term solution and does not appear to be cost effective. Mr. Clinebell indicated that the present strategy appears to provide a good balance for managing the deer on public land within the Borough.

Warden Campbell stated that deer reproduce quickly and that a single deer may have 2-3 fawns each year, with a high natural mortality rate. Average lifespan of a deer in Franklin Park was estimated to be 6 years. He also stated that the number of deer predators is very low in our area and essentially only fawns are vulnerable. Warden Campbell also stated that chronic waste disease is a problem in areas as close as Ligonier, but is not yet a problem in Allegheny County.

For a more detailed analysis, it would be necessary to acquire information on deer-caused accidents, the health of the deer population in the Borough and the condition of the foliage on public lands. Therefore it would be necessary to engage the services of a biologist and an arborist.

This topic will be addressed again next month.

- Update on recycling glass

Through an agreement with the Pennsylvania Resources Council (PRC), the Borough will soon implement a program whereby a glass receiving bin will be placed within the parking lot of the Municipal Building to accept all glass, regardless of color, and maintained by PRC. The Borough will have a 6 month trial period before making an additional commitment. Franklin Park residents and others will be permitted to use this bin. However, it is hoped that if residents of different municipalities utilize this service, the municipality of which they are a resident will contribute to the costs of this service.

Update on recycling types 3-7 plastic.

It does not appear that Whole foods is accepting type 5 plastic any longer for recycling. It is possible another company TREX may accept plastic bags and similar plastic for recycling and we will look into that matter.

Update on big Sewickley Creek property – No report at this time.

MS4 training – no report at this time.

New Business

Stephanie suggested providing a document identifying the current recycling guidelines within the Borough. This may be a standalone document or a supplement to any existing guidelines.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:00 PM.

Jim Porcelli

EAC chair