

Minutes: OPA Environment & Natural Assets Advisory Committee Meeting July 2025

Members Present: Pat Ryan Garcia (Chair), Brian Burgess, Jennifer Compston, John Maziuk, Anne O'Connell, Don Wolski, Jeff Heavner (OPA Board Liaison).

Members Excused: Pat Benner

Call to Order: Pat Garcia called the meeting to order at 11:03 a.m.

Approval of Agenda

Anne O'Connell made a motion to approve the Agenda. Jennifer Compston seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Approval of April Minutes

Don Wolski made a motion to approve the minutes which was seconded by Brian Burgess and approved unanimously.

CHAIRPERSON'S COMMENTS

- The chair reported that the Summer *Green Street* column about composting for the Ocean Pines Report was drafted by Patty Gamby and edited by the chair. She said the deadline for the Fall edition is September 15. Fall garden cleanup was suggested as a topic.
- The chair reported that Anne O'Connell's one-year term extension expires in October and that she may request an additional extension if interested. The chair added that her first term expires in September and that she will not request a second term due to time constraints and personal priorities. She said that the members should elect a new chair at the August 27 meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Oyster Gardening Project & Sign

- Brian Burgess reported that he was the 2nd quarter oyster cage maintenance volunteer and that he had turned in mature oysters and obtained new spat. Don Wolski offered to take on the 3rd quarter cage maintenance.
- Board liaison Jeff Heavner reported that he had requested a sign for the ENA committee's cage which will be a duplicate of the one created for the Marine Activities Committee with a credit line for ENA.

Invasive Vines on South Gate Pond Trees

- Board liaison Jeff Heavner reported that on behalf of the committee, he had photographed invasive vines covering trees on the Route 589 side of the SG pond and sent them to OPA management with a request that they be attended to.

Horn Point Field Trip

- The chair reported that a tour is not possible on the committee's September meeting date. She asked the members to send her other September dates that would work for them to visit Horn Point.

PLanning for Earth Day 2025

- The chair said that as Earth Day 2025 (April 22) falls on a Wednesday it might be possible to partner with Beach Heroes-OC again on a cleanup effort around South Gate Pond. She noted that there should be sufficient parking for volunteers in that area. Board liaison Jeff Heavner reported that parking is also permitted on the grass adjacent to Route 589. Don Wolski suggested a fall cleanup after leaves have accumulated and perhaps a second one on Earth Day in conjunction with the Recreation & Parks Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

Committee Relationship with OPA Board

- The committee discussed a document that compiled concerns raised by former member Patty Gamby in a series of emails about her resignation. Communication between the committee and OPA management was a particular concern as the committee doesn't always know when a charging document has been accepted or if/when projects requested are underway. The board liaison suggested that committee members attend or view Board of Directors meetings because that is where charging documents that have received positive feedback from directors are discussed and hopefully approved for action. Further discussion focused on issues that concern more than one committee and how collaboration might address that.

Encouraging Planting of Native Trees

- The committee discussed compiling a list of native trees and encouraging OPA to pursue planting them whenever a need for a new or replacement tree is identified. It was suggested that this request be formalized in a charging document.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Don Wolski, seconded by Anne McConnell and approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:21 p.m.