

KINGWOOD TOWNSHIP ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2022
7:00 pm

Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the Environmental Commission was called to order by Chair Debbie Kratzer at 7:02 pm. The below Notice Requirements were read aloud.

Notice Requirements

Adequate notice of this meeting was provided in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act and published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier News on February 10, 2022. A copy of this Meeting notice was telefaxed to the Express Times and posted in the Kingwood Township Municipal Building on February 16, 2022.

In order to ensure full public participation in this meeting, all members of this Commission, and also members of the public are requested to speak only when recognized by the Chair so that there is no simultaneous discussion or over talk. All persons are requested to utilize the microphones which are provided for your use through your computer or phone if the meeting is being held virtually or by the Township if the meeting is being held in-person. Your cooperation is appreciated.

Due to the continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic this meeting was conducted by a virtual Zoom meeting. Information on the meeting notice was posted on the Kingwood Township website.

Roll Call

Present

Maureen Syrnick
Debbie Kratzer
Lois Voronin
Mara Tippet
Ralph Celebre
Betsy Combs
Gail Ashley

Absent

Cynthia Niciecki
Sandra McNicol
Timothy Cahalin

Chair Debbie Kratzer announced that the only item on the agenda was a special presentation on New Jersey's Changing Climate, which will be given by Dr. David Robinson. Chair Debbie Kratzer invited everyone on the Zoom meeting (26 participants) to visit the Kingwood Township website for information on the annual Tree Giveaway being held on April 9, 2022 and to consider volunteering at a tree planting project at Bull's Island on April 30 and May 1, 2022.

Gail Ashley introduced Dr. David Robinson, Distinguished Professor of Geography, and the New Jersey State Climatologist (since 1991) at Rutgers University. Gail Ashley previously worked with Dr. Robinson at Rutgers University.

Dr. Robinson's presentation on New Jersey's Changing Climate covered many topics and some highlights included:

- There are five diverse climate zones in New Jersey: North, Central, Southwest, Pine Barrens and Coastal. These climate zones experience a wide variety of weather and climate conditions.
- In New Jersey, 1955 was the hottest, driest July on record followed by the hottest, wettest August on record with two major back-to-back hurricanes (Diane and Connie) which caused devastating and deadly flooding.
- New Jersey experienced a drought in 1964-1966, the first since the 15th century according to tree ring records.

- There were three “Top-10” floods on the Delaware River in three consecutive years: a tropical storm in September 2004, snow melt from a Nor’easter in April 2005 and a late season Nor’easter in June 2006.
- In New Jersey, the average September rainfall is 4” however, on September 1-2, 2021, New Jersey experienced an EF-3 tornado and many areas received two-months’ worth of rain in six hours from post-tropical cyclone Ida, resulting in deadly flash flooding and extensive river flooding. Kingwood Township reported 6.78” of rain from its two weather stations located at the Route 12 State Police Barracks and the Rutgers Snyder Research Farm.
- Since 1895, in New Jersey:
 - 2011 and 2018 were the wettest years on record
 - November and December 2021 were the driest November and December months on record
 - 15 of the 20 warmest years have occurred since 2001, 19 of the 20 warmest years have occurred since 1990
 - 2012 was the warmest year on record, 2020 was second and 2021 tied for third

Public Comment – Privilege of the Floor

There were 26 participants attending Dr. Robinson’s presentation. Attendees asked questions regarding New Jersey weather such as snowstorm trends and accumulations, the frequency and strength of windstorms, the conditions that create tornadoes and the types of crops that farmers need to plant because of the changing climate.

After Dr. Robinson answered the questions, Chair Debbie Kratzer thanked Dr. Robinson for his presentation. Chair Debbie Kratzer also thanked Gail Ashley for organizing and inviting Dr. Robinson and the members of the public for attending the special presentation on New Jersey’s Changing Climate.

Adjournment

Gail Ashley made a Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 pm, seconded Mara Tippet, which was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra Hutton, Secretary