

Lower Gwynedd Township EAC Meeting Minutes

July 9, 2025, 7:00 PM

Township Building Conference Room

Members in Attendance:

Mark Schafer, Chair (via Zoom)

Rea Monaghan, Vice Chair

Maureen Nunn

Bob Sawyer

Karleigh Burns

Marianne Grey

Associate Members: Suzanne Smith-Oscilowski, Rich Valiga (via Zoom)

Board of Supervisor Liaison: Tessie McNeely

Staff in Attendance: Sandi Feight, Recreation Director & John Farrell, Project Manager, Valerie Liggett, Gilmore & Associates

1. Call to order: Ms. Monaghan called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Approval of May 14, 2025, meeting minutes- Minutes were approved as presented.
3. Forest Evaluation and Strategic Management Plan – Gilmore & Associates

Mr. Farrell provided context for the study, emphasizing the goal of improving forest health and managing the township's tree bank funds effectively. The study involves Gilmore Associates arborists, focusing on township-owned properties and creating a long-term methodology. Val Liggett, Gilmore & Associates outlined the strategy for the report, including site evaluations, limitations, and recommendations. Her report discussed strategies for managing and expanding woodlands, determining priority rankings for tree removal, and recommendations for tree bank expenditures. She looked at six areas selected for evaluation by Township staff based on knowledge of trees: Dagger Road Trail, Penn Oak Trail, Trewellyn Trail, Meadow Creek, Fox Field, Equestrian Trail, Centennial Trail, Penn Ambler Park.

Ms. Liggett discussed the ranking system for tree removal, based on public works' capabilities and liability. Priority one removals include trees in striking distance of populated locations, structures, or utilities, and verified resident complaints. Priority two removals include trees not near populated locations but with severe physical conditions. Priority three, removals include trees located on private property or with conditions not requiring immediate action. Her report includes recommendations for invasive species management, planting site maintenance, and documenting invasive species.

Mr. Farrell emphasized the importance of a deliberate approach to tree removal and planting, considering the large number of trees involved. The township plans to use public works staff for initial tree removal, renting equipment as needed, and potentially bidding out larger projects. The report will be available for the August board meeting, with initial drafts of priority lists and technological details.

4. New Business

a. Battery & Techno Trash Collection Updates

- i. Ms. Feight stated July 12 will be the last battery collection until Cirba Solutions can sort out the shipping issues.

5. Old Business

a. Update: "Birds and Brews: What is a Forest?":

- i. Those who attended the event said it was very well run and the information shared regarding conservation was very beneficial.

b. Program Handbook Update

- i. Ms. Feight stated the program guide booklet was on SharePoint and she would share the link with members. In addition, she would add the new EAC members. Ms. Feight reminded the EAC that the guidebook is a living document and she had made up dates for the battery collection, the tree giveaway and other programs which have had changes.

6. Committee Update

a. Going Green Update

- i. Ms. Nunn provided an update on The Going Green, there are several applicants to date. Township staff have been advertising on social media outlets and e-newsletter. Staff will reach out to the business community.

b. Tree Giveaway Updates

- i. Ms. Smith-Oscilowski has selected the species and number of trees for the giveaway and will be going and marking the trees later in the summer. Registration will start on September 1, and we will be using the registration software. Giveaway, Saturday, October 4

c. Bird Town – No Report

7. Single Use Plastic Waste

- a. Township staff will be reaching out to the larger box stores to encourage stores to voluntarily stop using plastics in their stores.
- b. Ms. Burns and Ms. Feight will work together to come up with strategies, vendors and other options for restaurants.
- c. Ms. Burns also added that her restaurant recently started composting and she is composting 500 lbs. of food weekly, which is cutting down on her trash. She hopes to find a Styrofoam recycler which will cut down on her waste enabling her to decrease her trash pickup in a week.

8. Liaison Reports

a. Board of Supervisors

- i. Ms. McNeely gave an update on several development projects.

b. Parks & Recreation

- i. Ms. Feight gave an update on happenings; many were discussed throughout the meeting.

- c. Comprehensive Plan
 - i. Mr. Valiga gave a very detailed update on the comprehensive plan. That the planning process will soon be ending after nearly two years of work.
- 9. Points of interest/General comments
 - a. Volunteer Banquet will be held October 9th at Old York Road Country Club; more information will be sent out to the committees.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, August 13. Ms. Feight noted that it is the same evening as the last concert of the Summer and she will be going back and forth.

Meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm

Next Monthly Meeting: August 13, 2025